

A Bag Full Of Miracles

A Three-Act Musical-Comedy
For Senior Theatre

by

Tom Northam

Story, Lyrics and Music by Tom Northam
Musical Orchestration by Ron Pronk

ACTOR'S SCRIPT

Copyright © 2003 by Tom Northam

This is an ArtAge Publication / published by arrangements with VALOR Productions,
Incorporated and the author.

Published in the United States of America by ArtAge Publications, P.O. Box 12271,
Portland, Oregon 97212-0271

Printed in the United States of America

Production-In-A-Packet™ Series - A Bag Full Of Miracles

ISBN: 0-0660412-0-9

All rights reserved. Except as authorized in the License Agreement, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise without the written permission of the publisher.

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that all materials incorporated in this **Production-In-A-Packet™** and the play **A Bag Full Of Miracles**, including story, lyrics and music, contained herein, are fully protected under the Copyright Laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including the Dominion of Canada, and all other countries of the Berne and Universal Copyright Conventions. All rights, including professional, amateur, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio and television broadcasting, and the rights of translation into foreign languages, are strictly reserved.



DEDICATION

To those who dare to dream,
find joy in giving,
and have the love of laughter
...yours is the real world.

The Author

ACT I, SCENE 1

Scene: *Street scene in San Francisco. People from all walks of life are meandering around.*

Time: Present

MAGGIE

(*ENTERS*) Check your appearance: 1. Clothing (*Brushes and straightens her jacket and skirt/slacks*) 2. Hair (*Feels hair*) 3. Nails (*Looks at each hand*) 4. Shoes (*Polishes right foot against left pant leg, and repeats with other*) 5. Breath (*Checks with hand, then puts in mint or spray from purse to make sure*) Ring door bell or firmly knock. Be sure of yourself and exert positive energy. Hello, I'm your Miracle Girl. (*Repeats with different inflections*) Identify the "Lady of the House." Are you the Lady of the House? (*Repeats with different inflections*) Identify the decision maker. Ensure that you use your time effectively. Are you the decision maker? No, that doesn't sound right. You must be the decision maker? Oh, dear, this isn't going to be easy. Be positive, self-confident. Use your newly learned selling techniques and skills. You know your products. Good luck.

MUSIC:

SOMEONE YOU'VE NOT MET

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

Introduction:

Good Morning (*1st Person*), Good Morning (*2nd Person*), Good Morning (*3rd Person*)

Verse 1:

There's a beautiful way to start the day, you say "Good Morning"
And say it to somebody you don't know.
It's a magical way to make each day a brand new dawning
So brighten up your life just say "Hello"
It's a marvelous way so give it a try,
Don't let a stranger pass you by,
Go out and meet a person you don't know, Why?
You might even make a friend by saying "Hi."

Verse 2:

Whenever you pass a stranger, smile and say "Hello There!"

Ensemble

A stranger's only someone you don't know.

Joins

It's a wonderful way to let a person know that you care.

Maggie

A smile may be the best part that you show.

So give 'em a grin, here's what I'll bet

The more you give, the more you'll get.

Go out and meet a person you don't know—Yet!

Your best friend may be SOMEONE YOU'VE NOT MET!

[Song repeated one (1) time.]

End Tag: Your best friend may be SOMEONE YOU'VE NOT MET!

[EXITS SL]

[BLACK OUT]

ACT I, SCENE 2

[SCENE: Windesmeer House, Knob Hill, San Francisco, California. **Lady Anne** is seated SR at the dining table and **Elmer Strunk** is standing over her shoulder explaining the papers before her.]

STRUNK

While your stock was doing...fairly well, Lady Windesmeer, it seems to have dropped a little lately. The Dow-Jones average is down by over 4,000 points, and the Feds are not showing any signs of relief either. I'm a little concerned about your total portfolio; however, just as in the past, I'll take care of you, as always.

LADY ANNE

Honestly, Mr. Strunk, I don't know what I'd do without you. I just don't understand all of this...points...feds...Dow...or...whatever? Ever since Lord Windesmeer passed on, you've been my stronghold.

STRUNK

I'm really afraid, Lady Windesmeer, that you might want to consider selling your home.

LADY ANNE

Sell *Windesmeer House*? No! This has been my home most of my life. I couldn't live anywhere else! I've already let the servants go and shut down most of the rooms. There must be another way!

STRUNK

I'm trying Lady Windesmeer, I'm trying, and we can hope for the best, but as it appears now, we've about run out of options, and I do know somebody who might be interested in buying *Windesmeer House*. In any case, we have the stocks and bonds portfolio to take care of...I have it ready for signature.

LADY ANNE

There just has to be another way. I'll do anything to keep from selling my home. Maybe this will help. Where do I sign, Mr. Strunk?

STRUNK

Right there. You've made a very wise decision...and like I said, I'll take care of you...just like I always have.

LADY ANNE

Oh, thank you very much. You are truly a wonderful person...what would I do without you?

STRUNK

Lady Windesmeer, you flatter me. I'm just a humble lawyer helping where I can. And if there is anything I can do, please don't hesitate to call, I'm always glad to come. You're my most important client! Now, I really must be off. As usual, you're a delight to work for. Good Day, Lady Windesmeer.

LADY ANNE

(Interrupting him several times during the last parts of speech above) Oh, Mr. Strunk...*(With difficulty)*...Mr. Strunk...Is there any...ah... money that I don't have to invest? I seem to be running a little low on cash at the moment.

STRUNK

I wish you'd said something a little earlier, Lady Windesmeer, I'm planning to leave for a short vacation this afternoon *(Looking at his watch)*—5 :30 flight, but never fear, I'll see that a deposit is made to your checking account before I leave.

LADY ANNE

Oh, I'd hate to upset your vacation plans, Mr. Strunk! Just don't worry about me, it's okay, I'll be fine. You go on now, and have a wonderful vacation.

STRUNK

Well, actually, it's more like an extended weekend, but I can certainly make a deposit. *(Looking at his watch as if rushed)*

LADY ANNE

No, no, no! Just go along and have a well-earned rest! Don't bother about me.

STRUNK

Well, if you're sure. Good day, Lady Windesmeer. I'll see you in a few days. *(EXITS)*

LADY ANNE

(Begins to straighten things up—busy work. She stops, looks up at portrait painting of Lord Windesmeer over the fireplace) Oh Winston, why did you leave me? I don't know how to do all of this! You managed everyone else's financial affairs, why didn't you take care of mine. Mr. Strunk says I'm running out of money. Why would you do that to me? **[DOORBELL]** *(She heads for the door, wiping her eyes.) (To self)* I'll bet Mr. Strunk forgot something. *(Opening door)* Come in. Oh!

MAGGIE

(ENTERS) Hello (*handing Lady Anne a pink calling card and as rehearsed*), I'm Margaret Hill and I'm here to make your life a beautiful experience. I'm your *Miracle Girl*!

LADY ANNE

Well, I'm certainly glad to see you! (*Looks back to painting*) Thank you, Winston.

MAGGIE

(*As memorized*) As your *Miracle Girl*, I'm here to offer you the latest in *Miracle Products*—and they are truly “miracles.” Are you the lady of the house?

LADY ANNE

(*A little stunned*) I'm the “only” of the...house...ah...Yes, I am.

MAGGIE

Wonderful! Then you are in charge, you are the decision maker?

LADY ANNE

Well, yes, I guess I am!

MAGGIE

Good! (*As memorized*) You will see immediate improvements in the condition of your skin and tone quality...and this, the moment you apply *Miracle Cosmetics*. Wrinkles will disappear in an instant and you will see the beautiful glow of your youth.

LADY ANNE

(*Blandly with a bit of sarcasm*) You've got to be kidding!

MAGGIE

Oh, no! I'm really not. I've been using *Miracle Cosmetics* for two weeks now, and you'd be surprised if you ever tried to guess my age.

LADY ANNE

(*With a touch of sarcasm*) Yes! I'm sure that I would. What can I do for you...ah...(looking at card)...Miss Hill?

MAGGIE

Oh no, Mrs...?

LADY ANNE

Windesmeer...Lady Anne Windesmeer.

MAGGIE

Well, Mrs. Windesmeer...it is *I*, who am here to do for *you*! (*Pause and starting to come unglued*) Did you say “Lady Windesmeer?” Lady Anne Windesmeer? As in the social columns...like *the* Lady Anne Windesmeer of *Windesmeer House*?

LADY ANNE

That’s what they seem to say...in the papers.

MAGGIE

(*Totally unglued*) Oh, dear! Where...ah...how...ah....when...ah...What have I done!? And on my first call, too! Oh, Lady Windesmeer, I’m so sorry to have disturbed you. (*Packing up her stuff*) I’m so embarrassed! *Miracle Girl*, indeed! I’m sorry. (*Tries to exit*)

LADY ANNE

Hold on, Miss Hill, I may just need a *Miracle Girl*! Why don’t you just come here and sit a spell....and call me Lady Anne...most do. (*She sits on the sofa, SL*) Now, suppose you tell me about these *Miracle Products* you have.

MAGGIE

(*Sets the Miracle Sample Case on the coffee table and opens the case*)

MUSIC: A BAG FULL OF MIRACLES

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

Chorus: I’ve got A BAG FULL OF MIRACLES, A BAG FULL OF MIRACLES.
There’s something for each wish that you may dream.
Destiny brought me to your door—or certainly so it seems.
There’s everything here that you may need
To make your life complete!
I’ve got A BAG FULL OF MIRACLES just for you.

Verse (1): There’s a *Miracle* cleaner you can drink,
Or brush your teeth, or clean the sink,
Or polish brass and silverware,
Or mop the floor or style your hair.

There's nothing in the world that it can't do!
 It's the *Miracle* secret-formulated product, just for you.
 It keeps your cat and dog from shedding,
 Brightens clothes, keeps weeds from spreading
 It kills roaches, fleas and even ants!
 And cut in half with water feeds your plants! (Chorus)

[*Lights fade as Maggie moves to apron into single spot. Lady Anne closes Miracle Case, picks it up and EXITS when lights are out on stage.*]

Verse (2): There's a *Miracle* tonic you can take
 When you can't hear, or start to shake,
 Or ankles swell, or feet feel broke,
 For aching backs, or raw sore throats.
 There's nothing in the world that it can't do!
 There's a *Miracle* secret-formulated product, just for you.
 Our rainbow colored vitamin pills
 Will hide grey hair; cures all known ills.
 Will restore your memory, and your sight!
 And excess weight will vanish over night!

Verse (3): Try our *Miracle Girl* vanishing cream
 Gives tired skin a youthful sheen.
 Hides blotches, bags, unwanted hair
 Makes wrinkles go with nightly care.
 There's nothing in the world that it can't do!
 There's a *Miracle* secret-formulated product, just for you.
 Our lipsticks, polishes match each other
 Blushes, brushes, perfumes, powders
 Gels and sprays and colors for your hair.
 And a full line of sexy underwear!

I've got A *BAG FULL OF MIRACLES*, A BAG FULL OF MIRACLES.
 There's something for each wish that you may dream.
 Destiny brought me to your door—or certainly so it seems.
 There's everything here that you may need
 To make your life complete!
 I've got A *BAG FULL OF MIRACLES* just for you.

[BLACKOUT]

ACT I, SCENE 3

[SCENE: *Great Room, one week later. Lady Anne is on the telephone pacing.*]

LADY ANNE

(Pacing with phone) Yes, but I don't understand Miss. He said he would be returning last week. Would you please have him call me as soon as possible. It's most urgent. Thank you. *(Hangs up telephone)*

[DOORBELL] *(Walking to the door)* Now, who could this be?

MAGGIE

(Offstage) Hi, Lady Anne, it's your Miracle Girl.

LADY ANNE

Oh, hello Miss Hill, please come in.

MAGGIE

(ENTERS with Miracle Sample Case and carrying a small pink bag with tissue) I have the products you ordered last week. I know you're going to love them..

LADY ANNE

How much are they?

MAGGIE

Only seventy-four dollars and seventy-six cents (\$74.76). I gave you an introductory price discount.

LADY ANNE

(Sitting on sofa) I'm afraid at this point...it might as well be seventy-four *hundred* dollars. For I find myself in the embarrassing situation of...having no funds. You see my lawyer, Elmer Strunk seems to have disappeared. He took a short holiday, but has not returned as planned. He manages my accounts.

MAGGIE

Oh dear, *(Sitting in dining chair, SR)* I more than understand your situation. I can delay collection a few days...but I did have to pay before delivery.

LADY ANNE

Oh my, this truly is embarrassing. You see Miss Hill, Lord Windesmeer took care of all of these matters, but since he passed on, Mr. Strunk has been managing my accounts. I'm sure he is very reliable;

however, he said the stock market has been so bad that my resources have dwindled. Now, he seems to have been delayed in sending me a check.

MAGGIE

Lady Anne, how well do you know Mr. Strunk?

LADY ANNE

Well, not too well personally...but he said he was highly recommended, and he's such a nice person. Why did you ask?

MAGGIE

(Rising and pacing) Lady Anne, I'm not a financial person, but from what I hear on the news, the stock market has been exceptionally good for quite some time now. I only wish I could invest. You see, I sell *Miracle Products* to supplement my retirement income from the Seltzer Academy. I was young when I started, so I really wasn't concerned about their pension plan. To be perfectly honest, the landlord has raised my rent, and I was having difficulty paying before he raised it!

LADY ANNE

(Rises and walks toward Maggie) Miss Hill, now I'm really embarrassed. I didn't realize that you had your rent problems to deal with, and now I'm beginning to wonder if Mr. Strunk might be less than the person I think he is.

MAGGIE

Don't you think it's strange you haven't heard from him? How long has it been?

LADY ANNE

(Now pacing) Well, he knew I was running short on cash, and he should have returned last week.

MAGGIE

I think we'd better check-up on your Mr. Elmer Strunk, Esquire! May I use your phone?

LADY ANNE

It's over there on the end table. *(Indicating SL at end of sofa)* By all means...help yourself.

MAGGIE

(Already dialing as Lady Anne is speaking. She sits on sofa) Hi Jane...Maggie Hill. Oh, I'm fine. Thanks, enjoying retirement...Oh, yes, lot's to do...you know what they say. Say, Jane, I know you're busy, but would you do me a big favor? Could you look into the background of a lawyer named Elmer Strunk? Oh!...you have? No...no, it's not for me...a friend of mine...she has become financially entangled with him. Well, I don't know, he seems to have disappeared. Oh...he does? Oh, dear...Oh, no!...Oh, my God! *(Very discouraged)* Okay, thank you Jane. *(Hangs up)*

LADY ANNE

Well?

MAGGIE

It doesn't sound good! Jane is the head of the Law Department at the Academy. She said that Strunk has a reputation for taking advantage of widows and seems to get his hands on everything including the kitchen sink...and the sad part of it is, he gets away with it legally. You haven't signed anything have you?

LADY ANNE

(Closing her eyes and shoulders sagging in defeat) I'm afraid I have—just before he left on his holiday. He also said that I should consider selling *Windesmeer House*. He said he knew of someone who might be interested.

MAGGIE

Sure, he wants it himself.

LADY ANNE

(Sitting on SR end of sofa) Without any money, it's going to be rather difficult to keep it.

MAGGIE

Lady Anne? I have an idea. Would you consider taking in a boarder or two?

LADY ANNE

Like a "bed and breakfast?" Hmm...Oh, dear...the rooms are in no condition to rent out...I'm afraid I'm in no condition to get them ready, either. Besides, I know they're going to need painting and repairs and that takes money...which I guess I don't have.

MAGGIE

Well, I have to pay rent someplace. How'd you like to have a real live *Miracle Girl* living with you?

LADY ANNE

It may take a miracle...do you suppose we *could* start a bed and breakfast? I think I may have an idea or two of my own...this house is filled with Winston's heirlooms. Maybe some are worth selling!

MAGGIE

Let's hope so...my paltry rent check won't paint or build too much. But...I guess money's money, and every cent counts... 'cause my guess is that *your* money is very busy paying for Elmer Strunk's bed and breakfast, somewhere! Who knows, maybe someone, someplace will be smart enough to slip a little arsenic in that creep's cornflakes!

LADY ANNE

Hmm....that's a mean spirited thought, Miss Hill! (*Pause, little evil giggle*) Perhaps...someday... someplace...someone...will!

[CURTAIN]

ACT I, SCENE 4

[SCENE: A few days later. *Great Room. There are crates and boxes, paintings, furniture, all around.*
[From offstage because of costume changes]

MAGGIE

Lady Anne, did you realize that...(Grunt)...selling this stuff would turn you into a stevedore? (Giggling)
Clear. Watch it! Oops!

LADY ANNE

Got it! No I didn't...Oops! Well, I thought I had it!

MAGGIE

You okay?

LADY ANNE

Yes. Say...do you cook? I mean we're talking bed and *breakfast*.

MAGGIE

No...I've never cooked in my life. I thought you did.

LADY ANNE

Uh-oh! We've got problems!

MAGGIE

Maybe not...just a limited menu. Do you have any idea what's living in this crate?

[**Lady Anne's back side appears as she is backing down the stairs carrying her end of a wooden crate. The crate has packing materials coming out of the sides. Maggie is carrying the other end. Both are giggling**]

LADY ANNE

(Breathlessly) Miss Hill, am I ever going to be able to thank you for helping me with this...stuff?

MAGGIE

(Also breathlessly) Don't need to. (Changing subject, flopping onto sofa) My God, getting old is hell, isn't it?!

[*They both continue to laugh and giggle through the next few lines*]

LADY ANNE

Well, you're just getting started...(ungraciously flopping down on dining chair)...but I've had better days. Never in my life did I ever think I'd be hauling stuff down from the attic!

MAGGIE

(*Staying flopped back and not moving*) The bright side is...at least Strunk didn't get his hands on this...whatever it is!

LADY ANNE

(*Not moving*) Maybe we'll wish he had!

MAGGIE

(*Not moving*) Well, let's find out...got a crow bar?

LADY ANNE

(*Not moving*) I suppose there's one in the garage somewhere.

MAGGIE

Never mind, (*Rising*) I'll use the fireplace poker! (*She goes to fireplace, SL, and gets poker. She pries it open, pulls out stuffing and lifts out this "thing" which is a samovar or a creation*) What is it?

LADY ANNE

You don't know, either?

MAGGIE

And you've lived without it?

LADY ANNE

It was in Winston's family...so I'm sure it's an heirloom. If there was more than one of anything...they collected it! (*Pause*) There's writing on it, but I can't read it.

MAGGIE

(*Laughing*) Probably "Made in Taiwan."

LADY ANNE

(Laughs) With our luck...it was! *(Pause)* Actually, it's very corroded, but it looks like Russian writing on it. Whatever "it" is!

MAGGIE

Perhaps when Pruitt gets here, he'll know.

LADY ANNE

Well, he's supposed to be the top antique expert in the Bay area. **[DOORBELL]** Speak of the devil...timing's perfect...if this is him. *(Goes to door and opens it)* Hello...Mr. Pruitt...I presume?

PRUITT

(From offstage) My card. *(ENTERS)* Percival Pruitt, Dealer of rare antiques.

LADY ANNE

This is my good friend, Miss Hill, formerly Director of Art, Music and Drama at the Seltzer Academy.

MAGGIE

How do you do, Mr. Pruitt. Your reputation precedes you.

PRUITT

(He rudely acknowledges the introduction with the wave of a hand. Then stops and a bit shaken) Why? What have you heard?...ah...well, yes, thank you...I do experience a degree of success. I have a very exclusive clientele. I have sold some of the finest pieces in the entire Bay area.

LADY ANNE

(Matter-of-fact) Yes. We're relying upon your expertise. You see, I'm trying to clear out some of the heirlooms that have come through my husband's family. Lord Windesmeer, passed on recently, and I have no reason to keep them. We'll need your assistance in pricing them as well. What is your fee?

PRUITT

(Crosses Maggie to SL and continues inspecting items) I take two-thirds of the selling price.

MAGGIE

My God, that's over 66%!

PRUITT

Very astute, Miss Hill and I'm sure that sounds like a lot; however, my name alone, carries the "mark of celebrity." It adds immediate value and certain success, and I do have my reputation to guard and preserve. (Sings)

MUSIC:

I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW

Lyrics and Music© 2003 by Tom Northam

Verse:

I can turn trash into treasure. (Un Huh.)
But I don't do it for free. (Are you kidding?)
I'm not your fairy God Mother (Un Uh, Honey)
I'm just in this business for me: (*Giggle*)

Chorus:
(*Ragtime*)

You can call me anything you want to, Honey
'Cause I'll make my living off you!
I'm an old-time, junker-man; a high classed raggy-man
Who makes lots of money. It's true!
I'll take your cast-offs, throw-away's, all the stuff you've packed away
And sell it for much higher than new.
I'm an antique dealer,
A real wheeler-dealer,
I can sell what is worthless to you
And that's the little magic I do, 'cause
I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW, yes
I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW!
I'm a dealer for the "hard-to-please," Believe me!
I have a picky clientele.
It gives 'em greater pleasure, when they buy a new-found treasure
It's the *only* one that I'll ever sell.
I'll haul another from the celler, and I'll sell it to a feller
Whose thrilled with his new rarity
I'll create a little mystery,
Authenticate its history,
And tie it with a ribbon of blue.
And that's the little magic I do, 'cause
I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW, yes
I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW!
So, ramble through the crannies your attic, Dearie'
Search through every box that you find
Tucked back in your closet, left where someone lost it
You could find a hidden treasure or two.
I'll never hear you holler, when I hand you every dollar
That you get from what was worthless to you
What's brand new to the buyer,
Was ready for the fire,

By the feller whose the seller, that's you
 And that's the little magic I do, 'cause
 I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW, yes
 I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW!

Tag:

It'll give you greater pleasure,
 When I sell your trash as treasure
 And that's the little magic I do, 'cause
 I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW, yes
 I CAN MAKE OLD THINGS NEW!

PRUITT

Now, shall we commence. (*He starts poking through boxes. Seeing the samovar*) What is...that?

MAGGIE

(*Seeing an opportunity to act. She looks at Lady Anne and winks*) Mr. Pruitt, It's a very rare Russian piece. I would think it should fetch a small fortune.

PRUITT

(*Rising to the bait*) Of course, I, naturally, suspected that it was. I was merely seeking its background. Do you have any way of authenticating this?

MAGGIE

Excuse me, Mr. Pruitt. This is Lady Anne Windesmeer, the widow of Lord Winston Blair Windesmeer... the ninth. The House of Windesmeer has a long and distinguished reputation for having one of the finest collections of royal antiquities in the world. (*Changing voice to bland*) Try looking on the bottom.

PRUITT

But of course! (*Inspecting the bottom*) I can't read it, but in my professional opinion it is Russian.

MAGGIE

(*EXITING to the kitchen*) Let me get some *Miracle Cleaner*.

PRUITT

Cleaner? Oh no! Don't you know that you can't clean it? That would disturb the patina and reduce its value!

LADY ANNE

Mr. Pruitt, (*rising*) as it is, we have no idea of its real value. Something is better than nothing, I've always thought! At least we'll know what it says.

MAGGIE

(*ENTERING with bottle of cleaner and still acting and reciting her memorized sales speech*) This is our lucky day, I just happen to have an extra bottle. Here, let me demonstrate. (*She moistens a cloth with the cleaner and commences to rub the bottom of the "thing"*) You see how the corrosion and tarnish are gently lifting and coming away...and. look...yes...(becomes herself) It is Russian!...but some of it is in English..."To my dear friend, Lord Winston Blair Windesmeer...Catherine." (*With feigned great awe*) Catherine the Great?

PRUITT

(*Close to euphoria, he totally loses his composure*) Oh, my dear ladies, this is truly a rare find. I have clients who will fight for this. Imagine, it's from a real queen.

MAGGIE

Actually, an empress.

PRUITT

Oh yes...yes..yes....and Percival Pruitt will sell it. It will be all over the *Chronicle*, the *Times*. This might even make the cover of *Newsweek*!

MAGGIE

(*Feigning his excitement*) Yes, yes, yes...You'll be world famous! Imagine, Catherine the Great!

PRUITT

(*Patting his heart*) I must place some calls. Ladies, we're going to fetch a fortune! (*Biting his knuckles, he EXITS*) Oh, yes, yes, yes!

[**Lady Anne and Maggie** just stand, then look at each other and break into laughter.]

LADY ANNE

"Catherine the Great?"

MAGGIE

Well, could you prove that it isn't? Besides, when I don't know what to do, I call upon my life-long talents. (*Dramatically with great emphasis placing the back of her left hand against her forehead*) I act, Lady Anne, I act!

[BLACKOUT]

ACT I, SCENE 5

[**SCENE:** *Great Room, a few weeks later. There is an easel with a poster picture sign of Windesmeer House: "San Francisco's Finest Bed & Breakfast." There are workers, painters coming in and out of the doors, going upstairs, coming down stairs, into the kitchen, etc. There are still crates around with stuffing spilling from the boxes. Percival Pruitt is poking through them. He's carrying a clipboard with a calculator attached. As he finds a piece, he squeals and punches a few buttons on the calculator and squeals with "aw's and oh's and yes's."*]

PRUITT

Yes, yes...this place is a "treasure chest!" Every queen in town wants a piece of the kingdom. They can't buy enough. Good thing too, with all the health and safety codes, it's costing a fortune to open this place...and they thought *they* were going to be rich! (*Opening another box*) Oh! This one's special! (*Holding up a glass dish or vase*) Have I got a new home for you! (*Clutches it to his bosom*) Hmm (*sigh*). [**DOORBELL**] (*Calling up the stairs*) Lady Anne...there's someone at the door...(no answer)...Miss Hill...(no answer). Oh well! It's probably another...sweaty workman. (*Goes to door and opens it. Then with his feigned voice of importance*) Yes, (*Pause, clearing his throat and suddenly all nice*) may I help you?

DR. BONNER

(*ENTERS. He speaks with a lilt of Irish*) Me card sir. I am Dr. John Bonner. Are you the man of the house?

PRUITT

Hmm! I wish I were, Dr. Bonner...I wish I were. (*Extending hand*) I'm Percival Pruitt, Dealer of....Rare Antiques. Oh, (*Tittery chuckle*)...here's one of my cards. (*Hands it to Dr. Bonner and places the Dr.'s into his pocket*)

DR. BONNER

Glad to make your acquaintance. Is the owner of the house available?

PRUITT

Hmm.. That would be Lady Anne Windesmeer.

MAGGIE

(*ENTERS carrying a box*) Well, here's another load, and we really need it...the remodeling is costing a fortune. (*Seeing Dr. Bonner*) Oh! Hello, may I help you?

PRUITT

Miss Hill, this is Dr. Boner.

DR. BONNER

(Quickly correcting Pruitt) Bonner! John Bonner. How do you do, Miss Hill?

MAGGIE

What can I do for you, Dr. Bonner?

DR. BONNER

I've admired your lovely gardens for months now, madame, and I can't help but notice that they've fallen into a bit of disrepair. And I was wonderin'...

MAGGIE

(Cutting him off) If you're selling something, Dr. Bonner, we're really not interested at this time!

LADY ANNE

(ENTERS carrying another box or stack of plates, which she sets on the table) Mr. Pruitt could you come upstairs with me a moment? *(Sees Dr. Bonner)* Oh, we have a visitor? Hello. Excuse us a moment. Mr. Pruitt, there are several crates upstairs that are too large and too heavy to bring down. Could you inventory them there?

PRUITT

(Instantly sounding like a He-Man) Of course, Lady Anne. Right away. *(He glances back to Dr. Bonner and reluctantly turns and EXITS up the stairs)*

LADY ANNE

(Looking at Dr. Bonner) I'm sorry, you're...?

MAGGIE

I was just telling Dr. Bonner that we weren't interested in buying anything right now.

DR. BONNER

Oh, no, madame! Sellin's not me line. I'm just a man who enjoys a lovely garden, and your's is wantin' a bit of tender love and care.

LADY ANNE

I'm aware of that, Dr. Bonner. You've come at an awkward time. We're doing a lot of remodeling and are having to cut back a little. The gardener, poor man, was just one of the servants that we've had to discharge.

DR. BONNER

I'm terribly sorry for that, but perhaps 'tis good for me. You see, I'd love to be able to bring your gardens back to their former glory.

MAGGIE

I'm afraid you don't understand, Dr. Bonner. Lady Anne is telling you that we do not have the means at this time for a gardener...we've had to invest it elsewhere. Surely, you understand. We simply can't pay you right now, but it was very kind of you to ask.

DR. BONNER

Oh no, madame! I'm afraid that *you* don't understand. I'm not interested in *work* or *pay*, I'm offerin' to take care of your gardens for the joy of doin' it. If you'll have me.

LADY ANNE

Dr. Bonner, did I understand you to say you were not interested in work...or pay? Gardening is not an easy job, and I certainly couldn't expect someone to do it for nothing.

DR. BONNER

I'm afraid you *don't* understand, madame. Gardenin' is never work for me, 'tis me pleasure; me joy! And I gladly do it. As for nothin', there might be a wee thing you could do for me.

MAGGIE

(*An aside*) Here comes the rub.

LADY ANNE

And what might that be, Dr. Bonner?

DR. BONNER

It appears you have quarters above the garage that I've not seen a light in lately. Could it be they might be vacant?

LADY ANNE

Well, yes they are, but they haven't been used for many years now. Our gardener never stayed here, and Lord Windesmeer loved to drive himself. They must be in a terrible condition.

DR. BONNER

Makes no difference. I'm sure 'tis nothin' a little elbow grease couldn't take care of.

MAGGIE

Dr. Bonner, are you suggesting that you'd be happy to do the gardening in exchange for a place to live?

DR. BONNER

Oh, yes, and I'll do the drivin' too. And keep the car lookin' grand.

LADY ANNE

Dr. Bonner, when something sounds too good to be true, it generally is. You're not a thief, or worse...hiding from the law?

DR. BONNER

(Laughing) Oh, no! Not at all, I am what I am.

MAGGIE

And what might that be? Doctor Bonner—that is *if* you are a “doctor?”

DR. BONNER

Oh, I'm a doctor alright—a surgeon.*(Indicating that he'd like to sit)* But after me wife and daughter were killed in an accident, I couldn't bear to continue me practice. So, I closed it down and moved to the United States.

MAGGIE

(Softening) From Ireland, Dr. Bonner?

DR. BONNER

Aye, you have a keen ear...from Dublin, madame. I moved here in hopes of findin' a new life. And so far, the only thing that takes my mind is gardenin'. I've been driftin' and livin' here and there, and so, here I am in San Francisco—livin' down the street in a hotel, lookin' at the Golden Gate Bridge. It's lovely, but it's still bein' alone, and that can get terribly lonely sometimes.

MAGGIE

I know what you mean, Dr. Bonner.

DR. BONNER

Oh, I read a lot, and I walk a lot, and that's how I noticed your lovely gardens. So that's why I'd love to care for them...and I'll drive your car and fix up my own little place near others. So what do you say?

MAGGIE

You know, Lady Anne, it would be nice...and helpful...to have tailored grounds and a clean car to greet our guests. Dr. Bonner, do you by any chance cook?

DR. BONNER

Oh, sure I can...but nothin' anyone would eat! Includin' myself! I'm not without means, so I can eat out, or I'm willin' to pay if, perhaps, you could add one more plate to your table?

LADY ANNE

(Lifting a plate from the box) You know Miss Hill, I believe that we do have an extra plate...and do you happen to have some more of that *Miracle Cleaner*? I believe Dr. Bonner is going to need it.

MAGGIE

(Immediately Irish) I believe I could do better than that, me Lady. I'm sure an extra pair of hands might help as well.*(Maggie and Dr. Bonner walk towards garden doors)* Tell me Dr. Bonner, how are your carpentry skills?

DR. BONNER

Oh...the Lord's own craft. Well, unlike the Lord, I pound to fit and paint to match...but my miracles take a little longer.

MAGGIE

Really? *(Maggie and Dr. Bonner EXIT)*

(Lady Anne closes her eyes, leans her head back in chair. She smiles, then looks up to Lord Windesmeer's painting, pauses and says respectfully)

LADY ANNE

Winston...you never cease to amaze me!

[BLACKOUT]

ACT I, SCENE 6

[SCENE: Great Room, one month later. **Dr. Bonner** ENTERS pushing **Mrs. Wiggums** through the doorway in a wheelchair. She appears to be nearly comatose, opening her eyes occasionally around, then closes them again. **Norman Justice**, ENTERS carrying a couple of suitcases. He is followed by **Roxie**]

DR. BONNER

Well, here we are. Welcome to *Windesmeer House*.

ROXIE

(Blandly through her chewing gum) Nice. (Sits on the sofa and picks up an artifact and looks at the bottom)

LADY ANNE

(ENTERS, extending her hand to greet them) Good morning, I'm Lady Anne Windesmeer and welcome to *Windesmeer House*.

ROXIE

(Ignoring the hand, and puts her feet on the coffee table) It's charming. This is an expensive neighborhood, ain't it?

LADY ANNE

Thank you, we've always enjoyed living here. (Reaches down and eases Roxie's feet off the table)

NORMAN

Boy, I'll bet your taxes eat you up! Must be why you're renting out rooms? Ha, ha, ha...only kidding.

DR. BONNER

Mrs. Justice, what seems to be the problem with your mother?

ROXIE

Oh, she's not my mother, she's my aunt (Pronounced: "Ant"), and it's Wiggums-Justice—you know with a hyphen. Oh, she's just old...sleeps most of the time. We try to keep her comfortable.

NORMAN

Yea, she's a handful alright. I'm glad we're rich, 'cause her medicine could put us in the poor house! We just keep popping pills in her...keeps her quiet. (*Yelling at her*) You're a pretty good ole gal, ain't you, Auntie? Ha, ha, ha...only kidding!

MAGGIE

(*ENTERS, sees the Justices and does a double take, then extends her hand*) Hello, I'm Maggie Hill...you must be eager to see your rooms—they have a wonderful view of the Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge. You'll find that we are in a perfect location to sight-see San Francisco. We're very close to Lombard Street—it's the "most (*looking at Norman*) crooked street in the world." We're near the cable cars and not too far from the Mark Hopkins. You'll certainly enjoy seeing that.

ROXIE

Oh, no, I ain't going to waste no time looking at hospitals, I want to go to Fisherman's Waif and the big chocolate candy place...Garden Alley's.

LADY ANNE

Oh, Yes...(Correcting her) Ghirardelli's...is quite enjoyable and the cable car, right up the street, will take you directly there as well as Fisherman's Wharf.

NORMAN

Well, I'm not so set on Fisherman's Wharf, probably stinks like dirty feet...Ha, ha, ha...only kidding.

ROXIE

Well, Norman, that ain't no nice way to talk. You'll have to excuse him...he's just showin' off!

NORMAN

Aw, Roxie, they ain't nothin' wrong with stinky feet...I mean it ain't like talkin' 'bout going to the toilet or...you know...! Ha, ha, ha...only kidding.

ROXIE

Norman, just shut up will ya? Shut your mouth! I'm sorry, but ever since we won the lottery, he just shows off and says anything that come out of his little pea brain. Now these are nice folks, they don't want to hear nothin' dumb outta you! So, why don't we just go and see our rooms and wash up. (*Nicely*) Is it alright if we leave my aunt down here for a little bit? Promise, she won't be no trouble.

DR. BONNER

Sure, I'll look after her. You go ahead.

MAGGIE

(Exiting up the stairs) If you'll just follow me, I'll show you to your lovely rooms.

[**Maggie and Roxie EXIT**]

NORMAN

(Shoving his elbow into Dr. Bonner) Don't let her talk your head off. Ha, ha, ha...only kidding. She'll tell ya the same story a hundred times before you can get away from her. *(EXITING he yells up the stairs)* Hey Roxie, how'd you like me to buy ya a place like this one?

ROXIE

(Yelling from off-stage) Oh, Norman...just shut up!

LADY ANNE

(Walking DSL to her chair, she sits) I'm afraid they are not at all what I was expecting. This is not going to be as easy as I thought it would be. What seem's to be the problem with Mrs. Wiggums?

DR. BONNER

(Looking into her eyes) Well, her pulse is slow, and her pupils are dilated. I'd say she's been over medicated. She's practically comatose.

LADY ANNE

That isn't good, is it?

DR. BONNER

(Shaking his head) Not at all. The poor dear hasn't been alert for sometime. Hasn't eaten well, either. Frankly, I believe that she's been abused, but there's really not much we can do about it. Sorry to say.

MAGGIE

(Entering) Well, things *are* going to get better. 'Cause I don't think they could get worse! *(She flops into a chair)* Now what do we do?

LADY ANNE

Well, Miss Hill, we've come too far to turn back. Somehow, I believe that it will work itself out.

DR. BONNER

Lady Anne is right. I'm sure we're just starting out near the bottom of the barrel...so to speak.

NORMAN

(ENTERS) Say, you've got a nice little place here. *(Walks over and sits at dinning table, slamming his hands down)* When's dinner? *(Picks up a dish or bowl and looks on the bottom)*

MAGGIE

This is a "bed and *breakfast*," Mr. Justice. We only serve *breakfast*. You're very fortunate, though. You'll be able to select your other meals from a wide variety of lovely restaurants.

ROXIE

(ENTERS) What kinda soap is that in the john...er...bathroom? Sure smells good. Bet it was expensive, wasn't it?

LADY ANNE

It's *Crabtree & Evelyn*. I'm glad you enjoy it. My, what a lovely dress.

ROXIE

(Strutting around to model) Oh, this old thing. Norman bought it for me at SAKS...you know...SAKS *Fifth Avenue*...on Rodeo Drive? In Beverly Hills?

LADY ANNE

Yes, I'm familiar with it. Are you going sight-seeing?

ROXIE

Yea, and me and Norman was wondering if you'd like to "babysit" my aunt 'til we get back?

NORMAN

I'll give you a thousand dollars...that's one big one, if you will. Like I said, it's not like she'll run around busting stuff. Ha, ha, ha...only kidding.

DR. BONNER

We'd be happy to accommodate you. We'll see that she's well cared for.

MAGGIE

Yes, you go ahead and enjoy yourselves. Don't give us another thought.

ROXIE

Well, if you're sure it's okay. Norman, give the nice folks the money. I can't wait to get to Garden Alley's.

NORMAN

(Counting out the money) Here's ten one-hundred-dollar bills...and there's plenty more where this came from. Good thing too, 'cause Roxie's going to find *two million* ways to spend it. Ha, ha, ha, ...only kidding.

DR. BONNER

(Discouraging) Could I drive you someplace, or *(brightly)* would you rather take the cable car? They're a lot of fun.

NORMAN

Oh, we'll take the cable car. Besides, Roxie's got her walking shoes on. We love to walk. Come on Roxie, let's go see San Fran. I want to see Alcatraz, you know..."The Joint." Ha, ha, ha...only kidding! *(They EXIT)*.

LADY ANNE

(After they've gone, calling after them) Enjoy. *(Deliberate)* Ha...Ha...Ha. Only kidding!

[BLACKOUT]

ACT I, SCENE 7

[**SCENE:** *Great Room. Many hours later. The lights are low and there is a fire in the fireplace. Mrs. Wiggums is laid out on the sofa and covered with a coverlet. The wheelchair is near the sofa. Dr. Bonner is seated in the wingback chair (SL) with a coverlet over his lap. His head is leaning forward—obviously he’s dozed off.*]

MRS. WIGGUMS

(Raises her head up, looks around very dazed) Aw...aw. Naughty girl, ya wet the bed! *(Flops back down)*

DR. BONNER

(Shaking his head awake) Mrs. Wiggums, are you alright?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Blanche, you’re a naughty girl. You shouldn’t have done that. Well, I couldn’t help it!

DR. BONNER

That’s alright, Mrs. Wiggums, we kinda expected that. You’re going to be alright, you’re goin’ to be just fine.

MAGGIE

(ENTERS down the stairs) Have you heard anything yet? It’s been over 17 hours since they left. Do you think we should call the police? And what are we going to do with poor Mrs. Wiggums?

DR. BONNER

She’s showin’ signs of withdrawal. Only the good Lord knows what they’ve been givin’ her.

MAGGIE

I know I shouldn’t have...but I looked through their luggage. They didn’t bring anything for Mrs. Wiggums, and there’s nothing in the other case except for Roxie’s “tasteful outfit.” Either they travel light, or they were planning to buy quite a bit...

DR. BONNER

(Completing Maggie’s sentence)...or didn’t plan on stayin’ in the first place. Frankly, I think they’ve ditched the poor old dear.

LADY ANNE

(ENTERS down the stairs) Did I hear you to say they've ditched her. Surely you're...kidding, *(Catching herself)* Oops...sorry.

MAGGIE

Lady Anne, I'm afraid Dr. Bonner may be right! The trouble is now, what do we do with her? *(To Dr. Bonner)* She looks terribly undernourished. Isn't there something you can do for her?

DR. BONNER

Legally?

MAGGIE

Doctor Bonner!

DR. BONNER

What I mean is, there's nothin' I can do that would be legal, except prescribe chicken soup. I'm not licensed to practice in the United States. All I can say is, she needs to be weaned from whatever they had her on.

MAGGIE

Well, it's obvious that she needs something. So, chicken soup it is. *(She rises to go to the kitchen, then leaning back into the room)* Wait a minute. *Miracle Products* has a full line of food supplements and vitamins. Would they help?

DR. BONNER

Couldn't hurt. That and a lot of tender, loving care. It may take a miracle.

MAGGIE

Miracle Products to the rescue...I'll get my bag. *(Sniffing)* I think she could use some cleaning up as well.*(EXITS to kitchen)*

DR. BONNER

It's a good thing we put a plastic bag under her. *(Walking to Mrs. Wiggums)* Let's try to get her into her wheelchair and to her room. *(Lifting her up a little)*...Here we go, Mrs. Wiggums.

LADY ANNE

I'll get her some nightclothes and slippers and meet you there. *(EXITS up the stairs)*

MAGGIE

(ENTERS from the kitchen with her Miracle Sample Case Dramatically, as if on radio)

...and, rushing through the darkened corridors of *Windesmeer House*, clutching a bag full of miracles—it's...Florence Night-in-Gown!

END OF ACT I

ACT II, SCENE 1

[**SCENE:** *Great Room two weeks later. The wheelchair is lying overturned and empty, CS*
[From offstage]

LADY ANNE

She's not in her room!

MAGGIE

Did you look in her bathroom?

LADY ANNE

Not there. Neither is her wheelchair.

MAGGIE

Maybe she's downstairs! Let's look.

LADY ANNE

(*ENTERS down the stairs*) Her wheelchair is here, but she's not in it!

MAGGIE

(*ENTERS down the stairs*) Look around, maybe she fell out! (*Looks behind the sofa*)

LADY ANNE

I'll look in the garden. Check the front door.

MAGGIE

(*Goes to front door and calls back*) No, it's locked.

LADY ANNE

The only place I haven't checked is under the table. (*Starts looking under table SR*)

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*ENTERS from kitchen, walks over to Lady Anne*) What you lookin' for?

LADY ANNE

(Rising up sees Mrs. Wiggums) YOU!

MRS. WIGGUMS

Well, I'm not under there, but I'll help you look!

MAGGIE

(Returning from hall sees Mrs. Wiggums) Mrs. Wiggums, you can walk!

MRS. WIGGUMS

Sure I can...and I can cook the burners off the stove! Did I ask you if you'd like some coffee? Yes, you did, Blanche....you've said that before. So, don't rub it in ...I needed to get back to work. *(Looking at Lady Anne)* How are you?

LADY ANNE

I'm fine, and I'd love some coffee.

MAGGIE

I'd love some coffee, too.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Okay, I heard you the first time! *(Looking at Maggie)* Where'd you come from?

MAGGIE

Well, upstairs. Pardon me if I act a little strange, but the last time we saw you, you were still kinda out of it!

MRS. WIGGUMS

Yeah, well, I had a time alright, and then somebody told me I'd be alright, so I said to myself: *(blasting)* Blanche! *(flinching at her own voice)* You're alright...and you don't need to be pushed around any more. Not in that chair—not by nobody. Did I tell you this before?

LADY ANNE

(Rising) I don't think so. Did you carry that wheelchair down the stairs?

MRS. WIGGUMS

The wheelchair? Thought I told you. Guess I didn't...I sort of bounced it down. Probably woke you up with all the racket. Would you like some coffee? I sort of helped myself. Kitchen's a mess, but I found everything. I'll get you some coffee if you'd like some?

LADY ANNE

I'd love some coffee, with sugar.

MAGGIE

Me too.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(To Lady Anne) Didn't find any sugar cubes, so I'll just bring the bowl...*(To Maggie)* you can have as many as you want. *(Walking towards kitchen)*

MAGGIE

Bring two cups of coffee, please, Mrs. Wiggums.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Oh, sure, thanks. Don't mind if I do! *(EXITS)*

LADY ANNE

I believe you'd better get Dr. Bonner, Miss Hill.

MAGGIE

Me too! *(EXITS through French doors to garden)*

MRS. WIGGUMS

(ENTERING from kitchen with a tray and two cups, and sugar, puts them on the coffee table and sits on sofa.) It's real nice that you want me to sit with you. We should get acquainted. I don't think I know you.

LADY ANNE

(Going to the sofa, sits next to her SL) Well, Mrs. Wiggums, I guess we don't, do we?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Then how did you know my name? I don't know yours.

LADY ANNE

I'm Lady Anne. Actually, you've not been feeling too well.

MRS. WIGGUMS

And you hired me anyway? That's wonderful. You seem nice, but you don't look familiar.

LADY ANNE

In time, Mrs. Wiggums, in time.

DR. BONNER

(ENTERS from garden with Maggie) Top-o'-the-mornin', Mrs. Wiggums, and how are we feelin' today?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Well, now there's another one I don't know, but you look familiar. Do I know you?

DR. BONNER

Oh, course, you do Mrs. Wiggums, I've been kind of your doctor. Didn't I tell you, you'd be fine.

MRS. WIGGUMS

You're the one? Where's Roxie? I haven't heard her yet? Haven't seen "Nasty Norman" either. *(To self)* That's a blessing. *(Seeing Maggie)* How are you?

MAGGIE

I'm fine and how are you?

MRS. WIGGUMS

I think I'm fine. I know you...what's your name?

MAGGIE

I'm Maggie Hill, and yours?

MRS. WIGGUMS

I'm Blanche Wiggums. (*Rising*) Would you like some coffee?

MAGGIE

I'd love some, and bring some for Doctor Bonner, too...(*Catching herself*)...ah, as well.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Happy to do it. (*Reaches and snatches Lady Anne's cup and saucer from her hands, places it on the tray with the other items and walks towards kitchen*) (*To self*) Blanche...kitchen's a mess, but it's sure nice to be back home. Yes, I think so. Did I tell you I'd been sick? Don't think you did. Well, let me tell you...(EXITS into kitchen). [DOORBELL]

[*Lady Ann, Maggie and Dr. Bonner all look at each other with question about Mrs. Wiggums*]

MAGGIE

I'll get it. (*Walks to door and opens*) Hello, may I help you?

NANCY

(ENTERS) I hope so. I'm Nancy Day, and I saw your "bed and breakfast" sign, and was wondering if I might speak with you?

MAGGIE

Certainly. Come in Miss Day. What can I do for you.

NANCY

I'm looking for a temporary place to stay until an apartment becomes available. I'm really not familiar with bed and breakfasts.

MAGGIE

Well, we operate much like a hotel, but add a more personal touch. How long would you be staying, Miss Day?

NANCY

I'm not sure...days, I would think. I have my name in for an apartment which has just been vacated; however, there is a lot of work to be done in it before anyone can move in. I've just taken a new teaching job at the Seltzer Academy.

MAGGIE

I've just retired from the Seltzer Academy! What do you teach?

NANCY

Economics and mathematics.

MAGGIE

(Offering handshake) Art, music and drama...Maggie Hill.

NANCY

(Taking her hand) Pleased to meet you...Nancy Day.

LADY ANNE

(From sofa) Do I hear two teachers?

MAGGIE

Lady Anne, this is Nancy Day, the new economics and math teacher at the Seltzer Academy. Miss Day, this is the owner of *Windesmeer House*, Lady Anne Windesmeer.

LADY ANNE

Pleased to meet you. Do come in.

MAGGIE

Miss Day, this is Dr. Bonner who is also staying with us at *Windesmeer House*.

DR. BONNER

Top-o'-the-mornin' to you, Miss Day.

NANCY

And to you, Dr. Bonner.

LADY ANNE

So you need a room for a while? Well, you've come to the right place, we have several. Would you like to see one of them?

NANCY

Yes, ma'am I would, but (*looking around*) I'm afraid they may be out of my price range.

LADY ANNE

Nonsense. We'll work something out. Rather have someone in them, than have them empty. Come on, Miss Hill, let's show the young lady what a Victorian boudoir looks like.

NANCY

(*Embarrassed*) Oh, my!

(**Lady Anne** takes **Nancy** by the arm to the stairs and *EXITS*)

MAGGIE

(*Following*) Miss Day, you'll love the Academy. I worked there for forty years. (*EXITS*)

[**Dr. Bonner** moves from table to chair near fireplace and takes a book from the shelf]

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*ENTERS from kitchen with tray and coffee cups. Doesn't see Dr. Bonner*) Where'd everybody go, Blanche? I didn't see 'em. Well, now doesn't that beat all? (*Sees Dr. Bonner*) Where'd you come from Mister?

DR. BONNER

Oh, I've been here. Hope I didn't frighten you.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Not at all. Brought your coffee. Would you like some?

DR. BONNER

Yes, that would be nice, Mrs. Wiggums, thank you.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*She sets the tray on the coffee table and pours his coffee*) Now, you're the doctor aren't you? Are you here a lot?

DR. BONNER

You might say. I do the gardenin' and chauffeurin'.

MRS. WIGGUMS

So you're a hired hand, too? I'm the cook and housekeeper—been doing it here for years. Did I tell you this before? I do that sometimes. Say, how'd a gardener get to be a doctor...at your age?

DR. BONNER

Kind of came naturally; plants need doctorin' too.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(Slapping him on the arm holding the coffee, spilling some of it) Now, that makes sense. Say...do you remember when?...of course you don't...that wasn't you. Well, like I was saying the other day...no...that wasn't me. Pardon me, but...Blanche, you're losing it. I know it! Did I tell you this before?

DR. BONNER

(Takes handkerchief from back pocket and wipes himself off) No, Mrs. Wiggums, I don't believe you did.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Really? I do that sometimes. My mind gets a little foggy, you know, kinda like cobwebs in the head, if you know what I mean. Stop me if I've told you this:

MUSIC:**PLEASE PARDON ME**

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

If I've told this before, PLEASE PARDON ME
I've lived a lifetime making memories,
If I repeat my stories now and then,
It's just to share with you what makes me who I am.
For in the attic of my memories there are pictures,
Although they're faded and they hide in dusty frames.
They are the people and the places I remember.
I must admit, sometimes, I can't recall their names.

Did I tell you about?...Oh, yes, you're right.
But did I tell the part?...Just the other night.
Do you remember when?...That wasn't you.
PLEASE PARDON ME, I guess I've told you that one, too.
For in the attic of my memories there are pictures,
Although they're faded and they hide in dusty frames,

They are the people and the places I remember.
I must admit, sometimes, I can't recall their names.

When I was young I really didn't care
To hear the stories old folks like to share,
But now it's me who knows what might have been,
Oh, how I'd love to hear those stories just once more,
PLEASE PARDON ME, I guess I've told you this before.

(Pause after the song, then, without saying a word and as if Dr. Bonner wasn't there, she picks up the dishes, loads the tray and EXITS towards kitchen, SR) Nice man. Told you so!

LADY ANNE

[ENTERS from stairs] Well, those two hit it off very well.

DR. BONNER

Who, Blanche and Blanche?

LADY ANNE

What?

DR. BONNER

Just makin' a little joke. Will Miss Day be stayin' here?

LADY ANNE

I believe so. She appears to be a nice young lady. She just needs a helping hand, and there seems to be a lot of that going around, lately.

DR. BONNER

Just so you'll know, Mrs. Wiggums thinks she's worked here for years.

LADY ANNE

Perhaps she will, Dr. Bonner. Being needed and feeling special may be the medicine she needs the most.
(EXITS to kitchen)

[Maggie and Nancy ENTER down the stairs, laughing.]

MAGGIE

It's going to be nice having a fellow academic here. What time tomorrow do you think you can be here?

NANCY

I would think by ten. I'll just grab what I have and drive on over. This is really great. Thank you very much, Maggie. See you tomorrow.

MAGGIE

Lady Anne's the one to thank, but I'll pass it on. See you later.

DR. BONNER

Looks like you've found a new cohort. That's good. I just had a delightful little chat with Mrs. Wiggums. She's a dear soul...bit confused, but amusin' in a gentle way. (*Chuckle*) She's so worried she's tellin' you things too many times.

MAGGIE

I think we can thank Roxie and "Nasty Norman" for that.

DR. BONNER

I believe they really did abuse her, you know. She's spent so many years not havin' anyone to talk to, she's just started talkin' to herself.

MAGGIE

Believe me...she was in better company!

[BLACKOUT]

ACT II, SCENE 2

[SCENE: *In front of the curtain, on apron, MOLLY is standing SL*]

NANCY

(*ENTERS*) Molly, we've got a room, and for much less than I'm sure it's supposed to be. The place is beautiful, more than I could ever have dreamed! We have our own bathroom and everything. You'll be able to see the Pacific Ocean and the Golden Gate Bridge from the window.

MOLLY

That's great, mom. Will I have my own bed?

NANCY

No, honey, I'm sorry, but someday. There's something else, too. I don't like this at all, but...I'm afraid you're going to have to stay in the room out of sight—like the sign says, “Not a child-friendly accommodation.”

MOLLY

You mean all the time? This sounds worse than the last one.

NANCY

I know, honey, but it's only for a little while...until they get the apartment ready. I promise, it won't be too bad, I'll sneak you in and out. I know it's not being real honest, but it's the best I could do. Apartments are not cheap, and this will tide us over 'til I get the first paycheck.

MOLLY

How long will that be?

NANCY

Soon. (*Kneeling*) It may not be too bad. (*Selling her*) You can read a lot of your favorite books, and watch the boats and fishermen down at the wharf...and all the big ships coming and going. It will be like a special game...you can take imaginary trips...it'll be fun. But you can't let anyone know you're here. I'll sneak you in and out and we'll go places together. And we'll have plenty of food. It'll work out...you'll see. (*Not even buying it herself, she starts to cry*) It just has to work out...we can't go back to what was...I won't let that happen....not to you; not to me. He'll never find us...or hurt us again...never. I promise (*sobbing*)...I promise!

MOLLY

(*Putting her arms around her mother's neck*) It'll be okay, Mom. It'll be okay.

[BLACKOUT]

ACT II, SCENE 3

[**SCENE:** *A few weeks later. Late Morning. Mrs. Wiggums ENTERS from kitchen and is straightening and dusting with a feather duster.*]

MRS. WIGGUMS

(To self) Alright, don't push me. I'm not. That's the best meal you've fixed in years. Told you it was fine...just fine. That Nancy is fine, too—strange though. You think so? Yes, I do. I like her, wanted to clean her room...locked tighter than a drum...strange. I thought so. It's not like I was snooping. She don't mean anything by that. Blanche, you have no way of knowing.

LADY ANNE

Mrs. Wiggums, is there someone with you?

MRS. WIGGUMS

No. *(Nervous little laugh)* Just me.

LADY ANNE

I thought I heard voices. Anyway, I didn't want to disturb you, just wanted to tell you what a wonderful dinner you fixed last night. And your kitchen looks...new!

MRS. WIGGUMS

(Moving to coffee table) Oh, thanks, but that's my job. Personally, I'm thrilled to be back at work. It's what I do best, and happiest doing. Worked for the Fisher family all those years. Went there when the Mister died. Like family, they was, but...times change...they just didn't need me any more. That's when I moved in with Roxie and Nasty Norman, but I've told you this before...haven't I?

LADY ANNE

(Taking a seat at dining table, SR) I'm not so sure you have, Mrs. Wiggums. But things are sure to happen. Change is the only constant in life. Or so it seems.

MRS. WIGGUMS

I guess so. Say, I just brewed a pot of tea, would you like some?

LADY ANNE

I'd love some, and we can chat a while.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(EXITING to kitchen) I'd like that. One pot of tea coming up, and...your sugar.

LADY ANNE

(To self) What a blessing...for everyone.

[**Molly**, sneaks down the stairway and peers into the room. She sees Lady Anne and pulls her head back, then crouches down and crawls behind the sofa and peers around that.]

(Not sure whether she saw Molly or not) What was that? Am I seeing things? Hmm...Guess so!

MRS. WIGGUMS

(ENTERS with a tray with tea and sugar) Is there someone else?

LADY ANNE

No, not that I know of.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Thought I heard talking. *(Sitting)* Happens as we get older. First, it's hearing things, and lately, I've taken to seeing things as well.

LADY ANNE

(Not sure she wants to know) What kind of things?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Oh, I'm not sure. If I wasn't so founded in my faith, I'd say it was a ghost...you know, some sort of spook. Well, I guess it could be a spirit floatin' around somewheres. But then I figured it was one of the guests.

LADY ANNE

(Relieved) I'm sure that must have been it. How was breakfast this morning?

MRS. WIGGUMS

'Bout nine or ten, we had. Up and out, early.

LADY ANNE

We seem to be doing very well these days. Thanks to everyone's efforts!

[While the conversation is going on, Molly, after taking candy from the end table, growing tired of listening sneaks back to the stairway and goes up. Both Lady Anne and Mrs. Wiggums caught a glance, but say nothing.]

LADY ANNE

Have you seen Miss Hill this morning?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Yes, she was one of the first. Up and out, early. Said she had errands to run. Didn't say what.

LADY ANNE

No matter. She's a wonder. I wonder what she's up to?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Hard to say. But I'll tell you this, I think she's sweet on Dr. Bonner. If you ask me.

LADY ANNE

Think so? Doesn't surprise me. She's had eyes for him since they met. I don't think it's one-sided, either. *(Dreaming)* Wouldn't that be a lovely thing to happen? Anyway, I've got some things to do myself. Thank you for the tea...and the chat. *(Starts to exit towards the stairs)*

MRS. WIGGUMS

Don't mention it. *(Starting to clean up. Hesitantly)* Say, Lady Anne, you wouldn't happen to have a spare radio lying around, would you?

LADY ANNE

You know Mrs. Wiggums, I believe that I might have. Lord Windesmeer used to listen to it in the office. I think it's still there. Is there something special you wanted to listen to?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Well, yes there is. Reverend Willie.

LADY ANNE

Reverend Willie?

MRS. WIGGUMS

I've always liked to listen to "Reverend Willie" in the late mornings. I don't know whether he's still on...anymore.

LADY ANNE

(Somewhat in disbelief) Reverend Willie?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Oh, my yes, The Right Reverend, Reverend Doctor Willie Lincoln Watermaker, of *The New Truth Radio Hour*. Most folks just call him "Reverend Willie," He's on K-G-O-D out of Fresno. He's a mighty powerful speaker. I've listened to him for years and years. He's heard all over.

LADY ANNE

I haven't heard him, but that's not surprising. Anyway, let me check. I think Lord Windesmeer had one tucked away on one of his shelves...you're certainly welcome to it. *(Rising)* Let me check. *(EXITS up the stairs)*

MRS. WIGGUMS

(Rising and gathering the tea items) Now what do you suppose that was? Lady Anne didn't see it, but I saw it. It looked like a spook to me. I thought so, too. It's going to be nice to have a radio isn't it? I've always loved Rev. Willie. Yes, I know...you've told me that before. *(EXITS to kitchen)*.

[As **Mrs. Wiggums** exits, **Molly** sneaks down the stairway again, goes to the sideboard takes a napkin and fills it with a load of rolls, looks around and scampers up the stairs.]

[BLACKOUT]

ACT II, SCENE 4

[**SCENE:** *In front of curtain on apron. Bookstore coffee shop. Two small tables and four chairs. Mrs. Pendergas is seated at the SR table facing SR with a paper cup of coffee and several little packages. Maggie ENTERS, SL carrying her coffee and plastic bag. She sits at the SL table facing SR and opens the bag taking out a new book.*]

MRS. PENDERGAS

(Seeing someone calls out in a rather shrill voice) Yoo hoo, Mr. Strunk! Yoo hoo, Mr. Strunk! Mr. Strunk, over here!

MAGGIE

(Immediately raises her book to eye level and peers around the corners and top of book) Oops!

[During the following conversation, Maggie, listens and reacts to most of it from behind the book.]

STRUNK

(ENTERS, SR, feigning surprise and excitement—all charm) Why, Mrs. Pendergas, what a pleasant surprise! I didn't expect to find you in the bookstore. What brings you here?

MRS. PENDERGAS

Oh, Mr. Strunk, I'm afraid that you caught me in one of my little secrets. Please do sit down.

STRUNK

(Pulling the chair out he sits) And what little secret would that be, Mrs. Pendergas?

MRS. PENDERGAS

(Searching through her packages as if it were important to show him) Harlequin Romance novels, Mr. Strunk, *(Whispering as if she were wicked)* I can't read enough of them. I keep a list of my favorite authors and the volume numbers so I won't read one I've already read. I suppose you think that's silly?

STRUNK

(He grimaces) Not at all, Mrs. Pendergas, I think it's lovely that you have such a keen interest in literature.

MRS. PENDERGAS

(Tittering) You think so? Thank you. Alfred always said I was silly. Thank you, Mr. Strunk, you always make me feel so good about myself.

STRUNK

(Ingratiatingly) Mrs. Pendergas, that's an easy thing to do. You're such a wonderful and delightful person.

MRS. PENDERGAS

(Tittering) Oh, aren't you sweet. And do call me Emma. What brings you to...“the store?” That's what I call it...it's my...“Secret Outing.” *(Wicked titter)* I simply...*force* myself to get out. It's not easy with Alfred being gone and all.

STRUNK

(Bored) I'm sure it isn't...Emma.

MRS. PENDERGAS

No...and what brings you to *(like they have an intimate understanding)* “the store?”

STRUNK

(Caught off guard) Well...ah...actually, *you* did, Emma.

MRS. PENDERGAS

(Flattered) Honestly? Oh, come now, Mr. Strunk, you're kidding me.

STRUNK

No, honest, Emma, I came in to do some research for your investment accounts. You're my most important client, and I want to ensure that you get the best I have to offer.

MRS. PENDERGAS

(Buying in to the story) Why, Mr. Strunk, I had no idea that you were so thorough. You never cease to amaze me.

STRUNK

As you do me, Emma. Actually, I was fortunate to run into you, today. I was going to call you later to set up an appointment. I have several financial documents that require your signature. When would it be a good time for you?

MRS. PENDERGAS

Why...anytime this afternoon would be fine. (*Looking at her watch*) Oh my...I didn't realize that it was so late! It almost *is*, this afternoon! (*Rising*) If you'll excuse me, I'll take my leave...I have two more errands to do. (*Looking at him with a lingering eye*) I want to be ready when you get there. What time do you think...Mr. Strunk?

STRUNK

About four. Would that be alright? I have a couple of things to take care of before I leave for an extended weekend. And do call me...Elmer.

MRS. PENDERGAS

(*Tittering*) Okay, I'll see you later...Elmer. (*Giggling, she EXITS, SR*)

[**Strunk** turns to exit SL past Maggie]

MAGGIE

(*When seeing that Strunk is coming her way, she folds the book, places it on the edge of the table and nudges it off onto the floor*) Oh!

STRUNK

(*Leaning over picks it up and hands it to her*) I believe this is yours?

MAGGIE

(*Looking into his eyes with invitation*) Why, yes it is. Thank You, Mr...?

STRUNK

Strunk...Elmer Strunk...Mrs...?

MAGGIE

Hill. Margaret Hill...and it's "Miss."

STRUNK

It's a pleasure to meet you...Miss Hill.

MAGGIE

Mr. Strunk, I didn't mean to eavesdrop, but I couldn't help but overhear some of your conversation with your friend. Are you some kind of financial advisor?

STRUNK

Well, actually, I'm a lawyer, Miss Hill, but I do a lot of investment and financial counseling.

MAGGIE

(Seductively) My, Mr. Strunk, your clients surely are lucky. You have two talents—legal and financial. Are there more?

STRUNK

(Staring at her salaciously) Well...no. Those are about it!

MAGGIE

(The actress) Well, Mr. Strunk, today is my lucky day. I am in need of both some financial counseling... and a lawyer. You see, after all of these years, I find myself being...*(as if it is difficult to say)* single. I've also, recently, come into a bit of money and have a new residence on Knob Hill...you may know it. It's the *Windesmeer House*.

STRUNK

(Dumbstruck) The *Windesmeer House*?! *(Coughs)* You mean the large Victorian mansion overlooking the Bay?

MAGGIE

Oh, you do know it! That's wonderful! Mr. Strunk, are you interested in taking on a new client?

STRUNK

(Shamelessly) Oh, My...yes...yes, I am! *(Fumbling, he pulls out his card and hands it to her)* My card, Miss Hill.

MAGGIE

(Looking at his card) Elmer Strunk, Esquire. Imagine, a lawyer who knows about financial investments. I'm so fortunate to have run into you. *(Opening her purse, she pulls out her pink card)* My card.

STRUNK

(Impressed) Miracle Products?

MAGGIE

(Matter of factly) Yes...that's my company.

STRUNK

Wow! I think today's my lucky day! When would be a convenient time to discuss matters?

MAGGIE

(Opens her purse and pulls out a pink calendar book) Let me see. I've got quite a bit to do already. How about two weeks from today, if you can...say the cocktail hour...five-ish?

STRUNK

(A little disappointed) Oh...yes...that would be fine. I know where your house is. I'll see you then...you can count on it! Bye, Miss Hill *(He EXITS, SL, and does the "yes" sign with a clenched fist)*

MAGGIE

(Turns to watch him, then turns and looks at the audience and smiles, very proud of herself. She too, does a thumbs-up "yes" sign. She then goes into her purse and pulls out a cell phone, dials. Pause) Hi, Mrs. Wiggums...Maggie. Is Lady Anne there? Would you please? *(She hums "A Bag Full of Miracles")* Lady Anne, have I got news for you! Guess who I just ran into? Reverend...who? No. One Elmer Strunk, Esquire! *(Pulling the phone away from her ear)* But you will when you hear what I did...I've invited him to *Windesmeer House*. *(Pulling the phone away from her ear)* It's not social, believe me. *(Trying to convince)* Yes, you will...I have a plan...Well, some of the details are not worked out yet. That's why I gave us two weeks.

[BLACKOUT]

ACT II, SCENE 5

[**SCENE:** *Later that evening. Maggie is sitting in the wingback chair next to the fireplace. She is reading from her new book.*]

DR. BONNER

(*ENTERS from the garden and sits on the sofa SR end*) Maggie, I think your plan for a caper on Strunk is goin' to be a grand effort. (*Laughing*) I loved it when you told him he had two talents, and Lady Anne said it was actually three—Lyin', Cheatin' and Stealin'! He's a true rotter, that one...it'll serve him right! Remind me to take down the bed and breakfast sign before he gets here. Now we wait?

MAGGIE

Now we wait. It's going to take a few days for everyone to do what they need to, but it should all come together nicely. With all of us doing our part. It has to come together.

DR. BONNER

I don't know how you're able to stay so calm. This is excitin' and I don't know how you're able to read. What *are* you readin', Maggie?

MAGGIE

Poetry, John. It soothes my nerves and gives me gentle thoughts. This is a collection of Irish poetry.

DR. BONNER

Irish poetry?

MAGGIE

Yes. I grew up with my Grandmother reading much of it. She was Irish, or didn't I tell you. My grandfather was a Scot...sorry.

DR. BONNER

(*Jokingly*) Well now, there's nothin' wrong with some of 'em...not any I've met, but some of 'em, for sure.

MAGGIE

Do you like poetry?

DR. BONNER

(Tongue in cheek) Oh, I've read some, for sure, but never enough to learn its soothin' qualities.

MAGGIE

(Not aware of his sarcasm) Oh, this one is beautiful...it has to be my favorite! *My Heart With Love Doth Fill* by M. Andrew Sullivan. It's quite old: "My heart with love doth fill, E're as your face doth my dreams—Like rare blossoms the hill."

(She clutches the book to her breast and closes her eyes as in reverie) Dr. Bonner, isn't that just beautiful. *(She opens here eyes)* John? *(He sits and just looks at her with his mouth open.)* Dr. Bonner, are you alright?

DR. BONNER

Saints be praised. I don't believe it!

MAGGIE

What?

DR. BONNER

That poem!

MAGGIE

Yes?

DR. BONNER

My mother!

MAGGIE

Your mother?

DR. BONNER

Yes, my mother.

MAGGIE

Your mother, what?

DR. BONNER

(Almost as in a trance) That was her favorite, as well. She even had it on a little music box. I'd almost forgotten. I was savin' it for Erin, my daughter. It's the only thing I have of my mother's. I was waitin' 'til Erin was old enough.

MAGGIE

(Rises and sits on the sofa next to Dr. Bonner. She puts her hand on his cheek) I'm sorry, John, if I brought back sad memories.

DR. BONNER

(Putting his hand on top of hers) 'Tis not sad, Maggie, its glad you make me. I have someone to share it with...after all these years...it's nice I can share.

MAGGIE

(Aware that they are touching each other, she self-consciously pulls her hand away) I'm sorry.

DR. BONNER

Oh, don't be sorry, Maggie Hill, and don't you dare move. *(Rising to exit)* I'm going to get the music box. Don't you dare move from that spot, dear lassie.

MAGGIE

John...I...don't...

DR. BONNER

(Places his finger on her lips) Not a word from you, now. I'll be right back. *(EXITS to the garden).*

MAGGIE

(Watches him leave, stunned at what has just happened. She picks up the book, glances at it, gently closes it and holds it to her breast) *(Sings)*

MUSIC:**COULD THIS BE LOVE?**

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

Verse:

They say for everyone
 There is someone
 There's been no one for me.
 Love's always been a dream,
 Or so it seems,
 It's been a fantasy.

Chorus:

I think I've known you in a million dreams,
 How love might be.
 I've longed to know your touch; a fond embrace
 Meant just for me.
 And then you came along
 And filled my heart with song?
 Please take me
 In your arms and make me feel alive.
 And I'll survive.
 With you, I feel as though my life is new, it's just begun!
 I want to soar with you to heights above.
 I need to know,
 COULD THIS BE LOVE?

(Begins waltzing and turning during musical interlude. She touches things as if they are new)

Please take me
 In your arms and make me feel alive.
 And I'll survive.
 With you, I feel as though my life is new, it's just begun!
 I want to soar with you to heights above.
 I want to know, COULD THIS BE LOVE?
 I need to know, COULD THIS BE LOVE?

DR. BONNER

(ENTERS, almost breathless) Thank heavens, you're still here.

MAGGIE

(Dreamily) Yes.

DR. BONNER

(Taking her hand, he leads her to a dining chair) Here, have a seat. (She does. He kneels at her feet almost like a child and hands her a small, velvet bag) Open it, now.

MAGGIE

(Opens the bag and takes out a music box. She lifts the lid as the music begins)

MUSIC: MY HEART WITH LOVE DOTH FILL

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

My heart with love doth fill,
Even as your face doth my dreams
Like rare blossoms the hill.

(She closes the box and looks into Dr. Bonner's eyes.) Oh, John, its beautiful...truly beautiful.

DR. BONNER

(Holding her hands, he turns the music box over and points out the name of the tune)
“My Heart With Love Doth Fill” by M. Andrew Sullivan. “To my beloved wife.” It was from my father.

MAGGIE

How beautiful. *(She hands it to him)* Thank you for sharing it.

DR. BONNER

(Handing it back) No...you're welcome, Maggie Hill. It's yours.

MAGGIE

Oh, but I couldn't....

DR. BONNER

(Placing his finger once again on her lips) Shhh. Not a word like that. I want you to have it...it comes...with my heart.

MUSIC: COULD THIS BE LOVE? (Reprise)

[Maggie sits the music box on the table and puts both of her hands on top of the finger to her lips and spreads his whole hand on her cheek, then pulls herself up and into his arms] [Molly, who has come down the stairs, rolls her eyes, does the “yuk” thing, turns and sneaks back up the stairs]

[**BLACKOUT**]

ACT II, SCENE 6

[SCENE: Next day, Saturday. Nancy is sitting at the dining table finishing breakfast and doing homework. From the kitchen you can hear the radio music]

MRS. WIGGUMS

(ENTERS) Miss Day, is there anything else you'd like?

NANCY

Actually, there are two things. Please call me "Nancy," I get the "Miss Day" stuff all day at work, and do you have any more scrambled eggs and that sourdough toast? I'd like to have a little snack later on. They tasted so good.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Sure do. Glad you liked them. (EXITS)

MAGGIE

(ENTERS down the stairs humming Could This Be Love?) Good morning, Nancy. Doesn't a day off feel great?

NANCY

Sure does, but I still have a load of papers to grade. Does it get any easier?

MAGGIE

Not really, you just get better at going through it faster. Of course, with art, music and drama, all I really had to do was (*making a joke with hand jesters*) "stop, look and listen!"

NANCY

(*Chuckles*) Right! (*Rising*) Would you excuse me, I have a lot of things to take care of. You know the pressures of teaching.

MAGGIE

Nancy, I'm sure you do, and so do I, but I have something most important...to discuss with you.

NANCY

(Alarmed) Why, is there something wrong?

MAGGIE

Well, in a way.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(ENTERS) Here's the extra food you wanted, Nancy. Hope you don't mind, I made it into a sandwich.
(Hands her the sandwich in a plastic bag)

NANCY

(Not wanting Maggie to hear) Thank you, Mrs. Wiggums, that was really thoughtful.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Oh, you're welcome. *(To Maggie)* Morning Miss Hill...get you something?

MAGGIE

No, thank you, I'm going out to brunch with Dr. Bonner.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(Nodding knowingly) Hmm...something special?

MAGGIE

(Trying to hide her excitement) Oh...well...no, we just...we have some things to discuss, you know...business.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(Once again, knowingly) Uh-huh...well enjoy. *(EXITS)*

NANCY

Miss Hill, I mean Maggie, have I done something wrong?

MAGGIE

No, not at all. Why?

NANCY

(*Very relieved*) You said you had something important to discuss with me. What was it?

MAGGIE

Oh, yes, well, you weren't here last night, or I would have asked you then, but I...we...need your help.

NANCY

Sure...anything. What is it?

MAGGIE

(*Secretly*) This is very private, and for your ears only, but some time back, right after Lord Windesmeer passed on, Lady Anne entrusted her estate to a lawyer named Elmer Strunk. He literally swindled her out of all of her money. That's why we opened the bed and breakfast. Otherwise, she would have lost *Windesmeer House*.

NANCY

He took all of her money...how?

MAGGIE

It's a long story...I won't go into now...but the opportunity has come up to do something about it. I need your help.

NANCY

Sure, anything...I had no idea.

MAGGIE

I know you must have things planned today. So do I, but could we meet later on this afternoon?

NANCY

Sure. What time?

MAGGIE

Four-ish?

[**Lady Anne** *ENTERS* down stairway]

NANCY

Sure, see you then. (*Exiting upstairs*) Good Morning, Lady Anne.

LADY ANNE

Good morning, Nancy. Big day off for you.

NANCY

Yes, but lots to do. (*EXITS*)

LADY ANNE

Good Morning, Miss Hill. I hope you slept well. I had a helluva time! Hope Mrs. Wiggums didn't notice, but I even raided the refrigerator. Warm milk.

MAGGIE

I slept fairly...no I didn't. Lady Anne, I need your advice.

LADY ANNE

It's not about your plan is it?

MAGGIE

No. It's about me.

LADY ANNE

What's wrong?

MAGGIE

Dr. Bonner. I think I'm in love with him...whatever that is. I'm terrified!

LADY ANNE

Of Dr. Bonner...or of being in love?

MAGGIE

Oh, no, not Dr. Bonner...well...yes. Both!

LADY ANNE

I've been watching you, Miss Hill. You see, you're somewhere between being my best friend and a daughter, if I had one. So, I'm going to talk to you like you're both! I think mostly, you're afraid of love—of commitment. You've spent your entire life in a girl's school. It's time you got out of there and into the world...the *real* world. Dr. Bonner's a fine gentleman and I've seen the glint in his eye for you as well. Now I want you to listen to me: (Sings)

Music: OLD ENOUGH

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

He's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing
 He's OLD ENOUGH, this is so thrilling
 You both have a chance to start life anew,
 I know you want him, and know he wants you,
 You're both of an age; enough to be wise.
 You're ready for love and willing to try.
 You're long over due to love somebody,
 Who's wise to love you,
 Who's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing,
 Who's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing to love you.
 Who's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing, and able to love you.

MAGGIE

Oh, thank you, Lady Anne. What would I ever do without you? (*She hugs Lady Anne, then turns crying and running EXITS up the stairs*)

LADY ANNE

(*Looking after her*) Maggie Hill, what would I have done without you? (*Looks at the painting*) Winston? Are you involved with this? Something tells me you are, and if you are, I'm telling you right now, don't you get me tangled up with anyone...I don't want anyone... 'cause I'll be joining you one of these days...but not yet...I've got too much to do before then.

DR. BONNER

(*ENTERS from garden*) Top-o'-the-mornin', Lady Anne. And how are you this fine day?

LADY ANNE

Just fine, Dr. Bonner. And how are you?

DR. BONNER

Fit as a fiddle. Well...perhaps a wee bit less. Can I speak frankly with you?

LADY ANNE

Of course you may. Why do you ask?

DR. BONNER

Well, I don't like to burden you. You've had enough troubles.

LADY ANNE

Nonsense, Dr. Bonner, what are friends for?

DR. BONNER

It's Maggie Hill. Now, I'm a grown man, I've had a long life, and never thought I'd ever find myself in this...condition.

LADY ANNE

Condition?

DR. BONNER

Well, I don't know what *else* to call it. I've had the "love of my life" and lost her. Now, I'm wondering if she really *was* the love of my life? I don't know what to do.

LADY ANNE

I believe it's called "love," Dr. Bonner. You've shied away from it a very long time. You've tried to cling on to what *was*. Instead of what can be. You've been living in the past too long. You need to catch up with life. Listen to me: (Sings)

MUSIC:**OLD ENOUGH (REPRISE)**

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

She's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing
 She's OLD ENOUGH, this is so thrilling
 You both have a chance to start life anew,
 I know you want her, and know she wants you,
 You're both of an age; enough to be wise.
 You're ready for love and willing to try
 You're long over due to love somebody,
 Who's wise to love you
 Who's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing,
 Who's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing to love you.
 Who's OLD ENOUGH, ready and willing, and able to love you.

LADY ANNE

Now, listen to your heart. Get on with life. There's a lot left. Besides, we've got ourselves a crook to catch. Got to keep a clear head. (*EXITS up the stairs*)

DR. BONNER

(*To self*) You're a grand lady, Lady Anne...and I'm sure that's good advice. But, can I be lucky enough to have two loves in one lifetime? Listen to my heart, you say?(Sings)

MUSIC: HAS LOVE COME MY WAY AGAIN?

Lyrics and Music © 2003 by Tom Northam

Verse: Listen softly, you will hear my heart.
 Listen softly, for it speaks of her.
 Listen softly, could this be the start
 Of a feeling that is old and yet it seems so new?

Chorus: HAS LOVE COME MY WAY AGAIN?
 Who knows how it all began?
 Did it seek my empty heart;
 Has it found someone to start
 To fill my dreams and take my hand?
 HAS LOVE COME MY WAY AGAIN?
 Who knows how or even when?
 Has it come into my life,
 Can a man be lucky twice,
 Who knows if or who can say?
 Has love once more come my way?

Tag: Who knows if or who can say?
 Has love once more come my way?

[**Maggie** *ENTERS down the stairs and stands listening*]

Kathleen, I loved you with all my heart and soul...and then I lost you. My life's been so empty...so lonely. And now it's full....my heart is full. Is it somethin' you'd want me to do? This feelin' is an old one, yet, it seems so new. I do love Maggie Hill...but would she have me? Could I be lucky enough to win her love...would she be willin' to take my hand?

MAGGIE

(Walking to his back and slipping her arms around him, she leans her head on the back of his left shoulder)
(With an Irish lilt) You bet she would, John Bonner, you bet she would!

(Dr. Bonner, places his right hand over her hand on his left arm, smiles, looks up SR, and with a little nod, freezes)

END OF ACT II



ACT III, SCENE 1

[SCENE: Two weeks later. In front of curtain.]

STRUNK

(ENTERS from SL) (Wicked laugh) The Windesmeer House. I'll get it this time, and more money, too. (Laughs) I love it, love it! Women are so stupid. They see a handsome man and they lose their senses, what little they have. Strunk, this could be the one that sets you up in the most prestigious house in San Francisco. I'll become the top dog! Then I can have my pick of the litter, so to speak. The richer the better. They'll grovel at my feet!

MUSIC: I'M THE ROTTEN LAWYER, ELMER STRUNK

Lyrics and Music© 2003 by Tom Northam

Verse 1: I'm a royal Prince Charming of the Courts
I've studied all the legal "do's and don'ts."
I'm protected by my knowledge of the law.
I know each one that I can break,
I know each tiny flaw.
(Chorus)

(During the "tweet-tweet" interlude, he primps and preens himself—his hair, he straightens his tie, and smooths his eyebrows with his little finger) Strunk!...you handsome devil, you!

Chorus: I'm dishonest as a lawyer dares to be!
If you're looking for a break, don't turn to me!
For I'm absolutely rotten;
Every gain I've made's ill-gotten.
I'm a crook and I admit it, I'm a skunk!
FOR I'M THE ROTTEN LAWYER, ELMER STRUNK.

Verse 2: I love to prey on old folks who can't see.
Or read or write and really trust in me.
To unsuspecting widows—what's my fee?
I treat them nice and charge them twice.
They are my specialty!

Chorus: I'm dishonest as a lawyer dares to be!
If you're looking for a break, don't turn to me!
For I'm absolutely rotten;
Every gain I've made's ill-gotten.
I'm a crook and I admit it, I'm a skunk!
FOR I'M THE ROTTEN LAWYER, ELMER STRUNK.

Verse 3: I've never told the truth—until just now!
I cheat and steal and swindle, I've learned how!
To poor old souls, the truth? I'll never tell 'em
I'd steal their eyes, if they were glass;
I know where I can sell 'em!

Chorus: I'm dishonest as a lawyer dares to be!
If you're looking for a break, don't turn to me!
For I'm absolutely rotten;
Every gain I've made's ill-gotten.
I'm a crook and I admit it, I'm a skunk!
For I'M THE ROTTEN LAWYER,
Oh, I'M THE ROTTEN LAWYER,
Yes, I'M THE ROTTEN LAWYER, ELMER STRUNK.*(EXITS SL)*

[**BLACKOUT**]

ACT III, SCENE 2

[SCENE: *Later that day at 5:00 PM*]

MRS. WIGGUMS

[DOORBELL] (*ENTERS in black dress and white apron maid's uniform, and goes to door*)

(*Coldly*) Good evening, may I help you?

STRUNK

Good afternoon, I believe I'm expected. I'm Elmer Strunk, Esquire. My card.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*Officiously inspects both the card and Strunk*) Yes, I believe that Miss Hill is expecting you. Do come in. (*She leads him to the wingback chair next to the fireplace SL*) Please be seated. I'll inform Miss Hill that you've arrived. (*EXITS SR through the French doors into the garden*)

STRUNK

(*Still standing and looking around.*) (*To self*) Looks vaguely familiar. Guess she got it...as is. Well, we can change all of that.

[*While Strunk has his back to the French doors, Mrs. Wiggums ENTERS in from the garden and sneaks USR to the back sideboard and turns on the radio, then EXITS into kitchen. Low seductive music begins to play. Nancy ENTERS and stops at the head of the stairway. She strikes a pose with her right arm extended and resting on the wall. She is very full figured and wearing a form-fitting low-cut black gown. Hair and make-up are perfection. She is a vision of loveliness.*]

STRUNK

(*Turns and sees her. Dumbstruck, he sits*) Oh!

NANCY

(*Descending the stairway she seductively approaches him*) Good Afternoon, (*She walks towards him with extended hand as if expecting him to kiss it*) I'm Nancy, Aunt Margaret's niece. How kind of you to come, for I'm sure you have a very busy schedule.

STRUNK

(*All agog, rises from the chair*) G-good Afternoon. M-my pleasure.

NANCY

(Gently pushing him back into the chair) Oh, do keep your seat. *(Walking upstage of his chair she turns and approaches him)* Aunt Margaret didn't say how attractive you were. And a lawyer, too. Some men just have it all. It's not fair. *(Leaning over him with her breasts directly in his line of vision.)*

STRUNK

M-Miss Hill didn't say she had a niece...and very lovely ones, too. If you don't mind my saying so.

NANCY

(Backing away to give him full view) Oh, I don't mind at all. Would you care to...share...a sherry?

STRUNK

(Not knowing what she meant) *(Hesitantly)* If...you'll...have one with me.

NANCY

Of course. We might have a long evening. I do hope so, don't you.

STRUNK

Oh...well...yes, that would be nice.

MAGGIE

(Regally sweeping into the room through the French doors, SR) Mr. Strunk, how kind of you to come. Has Nancy made you comfortable? *(To Nancy)* Did you offer Mr. Strunk something to drink?

STRUNK

(Totally mesmerized) Oh, yes...she's fine.

NANCY

We're going to share a...sherry. Would you care to join us, Aunt Margaret?

MAGGIE

Yes, that would be nice, dear. I would like mine with a little club...soda.

[*Nancy pulls a tapestry cord 3 times, and Mrs. Wiggums ENTERS*]

NANCY

Mrs. Wiggums, bring us three sherries, one with club soda.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Yes, Mum. (*EXITS*)

MAGGIE

Now that you're here, Mr. Strunk, I truly need for you to advise me. You see, my company, *Miracle Products*, isn't paying off too well. I need you to advise me on the finer points of investments, and really...what I can do. You see I'm rather new to all of this. You do...do that...don't you?

STRUNK

(*Trying to keep his eyes off of Nancy and not certain of the situation*) Y-Yes. Yes I do.

MAGGIE

(*Somewhat seductively*) How good are you?

STRUNK

(*Taken back*) I...ah....what do you mean?

MAGGIE

I mean, how good are you? The Board of Directors, really don't want me to get my hands on the operations...if you know what I mean...I need to better my position.

STRUNK

(*Biting the bait*) Miss Hill, I know ways to take care of that situation.

MAGGIE

Good. And please, do call me...Margaret. If we're really going to work together, I must be on first name terms...Elmer.

NANCY

Aunt Margaret, you didn't tell me that...Elmer...was so attractive.

DR. BONNER

(*ENTERS from garden*) Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt. Should I come back?

MAGGIE

Oh, no, do stay and meet Mr. Elmer Strunk...Esquire. *(To Strunk)* Elmer, I'd like you to meet my personal physician, Dr. John Bonner.

DR. BONNER

Glad to meet you, sir.

STRUNK

(A little confused) Yes. I'm glad to make your acquaintance, as well. You're a neighbor?

DR. BONNER

Yes, you could say that. I'm very happy to say we've been...close...for quite some time, now.

NANCY

Mr. Strunk...Elmer...would you please excuse me? I have a little something I want you...to look at!

STRUNK

(Totally bewitched) Oh yeah...I'd love to.

(Nancy EXITS up the stairs)

MAGGIE

Dr. Bonner, I've been explaining that I need some special assistance with *Miracle Products*. I believe he understands my needs. He was just about to tell me what I could do. Weren't you...Elmer?

DR. BONNER

That's good. You're a barrister.

STRUNK

I did? I thought she just went upstairs...*(Realizing that he misunderstood)* Oh, yes, *(laughs)* I am. *(Making himself sound important)* Yes. Yes I am, and I've acquired a rather vast knowledge of the law. I know each law, and it's short comings, if you know what I mean?

MAGGIE

Yes...Elmer...I believe that I do. Go on.

STRUNK

I've been very successful in "bending" a few to my benefit. Knowledge is power, Margaret. Knowledge is power. (*Gaining confidence and making a joke*) In my profession, scruples are just that...a strange sounding word. (*Thinking he's really clever, he chuckles*)

MAGGIE

Oh, Elmer...you're so clever. Dr. Bonner, I believe we have the man we want.

STRUNK

In other words, you're wanting to get healthy?

MAGGIE

Yes, I think *Miracle Products* would be the best one for that.

STRUNK

(*Really getting cocky*) You're wanting to really clean-up—in a healthy way, right?

MAGGIE

Yes, I think there's plenty in the company to do that...and Elmer...I'll see that you're taken care of.

STRUNK

Well, you've come to the right man! I've cleaned out more people than any lawyer I know. And legally, I can get around most anything. Actually, you should probably thank me for this house. Without me, you might not be living here. I did a little cleaning up of my own.

MAGGIE

Oh?

STRUNK

Yeah, the old lady that lived here was easy to clean up after...she made me real healthy, too. (*Laughs*)

MAGGIE

I'm glad to hear you say that. Now I know he's the one...don't you think, Dr. Bonner?

DR. BONNER

Yes. Yes, I'm sure that he is. Margaret, you've found yourself...*The Man*.

STRUNK

(Sitting on sofa) You know, Margaret, I had a feeling about you the first time I saw you.

MAGGIE

(Walking towards him) Me, too.

NANCY

(ENTERS down stairs) Mr. Strunk...Elmer...I've got what I wanted you to look at. *(Hands papers to him)*
(Music Stops.)

[Dr. Bonner has moved back of the sofa directly behind Strunk]

STRUNK

Good. *(Looks at papers)* What is this a joke? Why...these are Summons!

MAGGIE

Very astute...Elmer! You're smarter than I thought! You've also been...served!

STRUNK

Let me the hell out of here! You can't get away with any of this! I can get around all of this! *(Attempting to rise)*

DR. BONNER

(Pulling him back into the sofa) I think you'd better stay right where you are, laddie! *(Strunk's legs fly up in the air)*

MAGGIE

I don't think so...Elmer. Oh, how forgetful of me. Did I tell you my niece's name. It's Nancy...Day! Her other aunt is on the Supreme Court of the United States...of America. In case you didn't know, that's about as high in the legal system as you can go.

STRUNK

You'll never get away with this!

MAGGIE

Oh, but we will. You see, we've recorded all of this, quite legally, I might add. And if you'll look at the rest of the papers, I think you'll find we really will have your proverbial butt swinging from the yardarm. Now, you sign these documents, or off to prison you go. Your choice. Oh, here I go being forgetful again. (*Calling off to SR*) Lady Anne, would you come in here, please?

LADY ANNE

(*ENTERS from garden, SR, with great charm wearing a set of earphones around her neck*) I surely will. Good Afternoon, Mr. Strunk. I'm glad to hear that you haven't forgotten me. (*Lowered voice, firm and determined*) You low-down, (*Walking towards him shaking her finger*) good-for-nothing, son-of-a-sea-cook, lying, cheating, (*walking past him towards her wing-chair SL*) stealing..(*unable to think of any more*)...ah...ah...(Pause)...(*As if she's finally found the right nasty word*)...LAWYER! (*Sits on the word "lawyer"*)

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*ENTERS with a rolling pin to SR end of sofa*) This time I brought the club instead of club soda. Thought you might need it...Mum.

[*All are surrounding Strunk*]

MAGGIE

In case you're wondering what's in the rest of the papers. In summary, they simply say you confess to everything. You pay back the money you embezzled from Lady Anne, with interest. You'll *try* to find an *honest* lawyer to handle our legal matters and investments and oversee his activities. Should he fail, you'll take full responsibility and go strait to jail. No passing "go" and no collecting two hundred dollars. You really have no choice...Elmer! Either way I look at it, you'll do exactly what we say, or you'll be looking through bars for a very long time. All nice and legal like. What say...Elmer?

[As music plays, **Strunk** looks at one person, then another, then another with each tweet in the music]

STRUNK

(After a long pause) Get me the damned pen!

MAGGIE

[Dramatically hands him a pen with a flourish.]

[BLACKOUT]

ACT III, SCENE 3

[**SCENE:** Six weeks later. The celebratory wedding bells are sounding As the lights come up, **Pruitt** is standing CS directing the efforts of the **caterers** who are the stage hands with white coats and baker hats. They are moving furniture back, arranging the dining table to the back, carrying in a very large, four-tiered hot pink wedding cake with white icing and flowers with a bride and groom on the top. They place it SR. They bring in flowers, etc.]

PRUITT

(*Mostly ad lib*) There. No...over there...(Pointing)...there! Move the table towards the sideboard. The flowers go on the stand next to the column. Closer towards the fireplace. Move the sofa back towards the wall. Oh, God, must I tell them everything? I must admit, it does take a fairy to make things pretty.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*ENTERS from kitchen with two plates of hors 'd oeuvres. She's not pleased with his directing the efforts of "her" house*) Where do you want me to put these?

PRUITT

Wherever you'd like, Mrs. Wiggums.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*Doing a double take and smiles*) No, Blanche, they were too much work! (*She sits them on the sideboard and exiting to the kitchen*) Tempting, wasn't it? Uh-huh...Yes, I thought so, too. (*EXITS*)

PRUITT

Ugh! Addled old woman. (*Works on the flowers and decorations*) Yes. Yes...yes...yes. I love weddings...and this one's going to be the talk-of-the-town. Miss Hill wants a simple wedding. Well, Percival Pruitt never does anything...simple. I love my idea to use her company's pink colors. Brilliant! It's like being in one big giant rose. (*Gesturing with his hands like petals opening*) I love it! Windesmeer House will be gorgeous, simply gorgeous!

NANCY

(*ENTERS down stairs as Pruitt is speaking. She is dressed in jeans and a sweatshirt with her hair in curlers and big, pink, fuzzy house slippers*) Why thank you, Mr. Pruitt. What a kind thing to say.

PRUITT

I was speaking about the wedding.

NANCY

And here...I thought you were trying to hit on me!

PRUITT

Not hardly, dearie. Not even your stunning attire can fool me.

NANCY

What gave me away...the curlers? **[DOORBELL - *Here Comes The Bride*]** What's...that?

PRUITT

(Proudly) I had the doorbell changed. You like it?

NANCY

(Insincerely) It's awesome, Mr. Pruitt, simply awesome. *(Calling to Mrs. Wiggums)* I'll get it, Mrs. Wiggums.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(ENTERS rushing from the kitchen) That should be the radio crew.

PRUITT

(Aghast) Radio crew? What radio crew?

MRS. WIGGUMS

My little secret. It's my wedding gift to Miss Hill and Dr. Bonner. I told them I'd get a preacher...and I have.

NANCY

But radio? What preacher?

MRS. WIGGUMS

(With great pride and awe) Reverend Willie!

NANCY & PRUITT

Reverend Willie?

MRS. WIGGUMS

Yes, I was so lucky. (*With secrecy*) Told them it was the Hill-Bonner Wedding at the Windesmeer House. The social event of the year, and that it will have all of the press coverage of San Francisco begging to get in. (*She see's Nancy's disapproving look*) **[DOORBELL]** Well, it will be with Reverend Willie here! So, get the door!

NANCY

(*Goes to the door*) Hello.

[*She can hardly say "Hello" when the one, two or three technicians push in past her with black boxes, microphones, signs, cables, etc., and start dropping them noisily on the floor SR and commence setting things up*]

PRUITT

(*Frozen in horror*) Oh, my God! They're ruining my decorations; the decor—everything! I can't bear to watch this. (*Biting his knuckles, he runs and EXITS to the garden*)

[*The crew is followed by Nancy who is walking in backwards facing Reverend Willie.*]

[*Reverend Willie, is forgetful, hard of hearing, and confused*]

REVEREND WILLIE

(*To Nancy*) Are you the bride, little lady?

[*Sheepishly hidden behind him is Roxie, who sees Mrs. Wiggums and backs up*]

NANCY

Oh, heavens, no! She's upstairs getting ready. (*She EXITS up the stairs*)

REVEREND WILLIE

Well, no matter. (*Looks to where Nancy had been*) Where'd you go?

MRS. WIGGUMS

(*Going to him*) Reverend Willie? I'm so happy to at long last meet you. I'm Blanche Wiggums and I've been a follower for years and years. (*Seeing Roxie*) YOU!

REVEREND WILLIE

Well, happy to meet *you*, too. Like you to meet my current wife, Roxie.

ROXIE

(Sheepish and weakly) Hi, Aunt Blanche.

MRS. WIGGUMS

What are *you* doing here?!

REVEREND WILLIE

You two know each other? That's wonderful.

MRS. WIGGUMS

We've met!

ROXIE

Willie, dear, this is my long lost Aunt. *(Edging her way past Mrs. Wiggums, she goes to Rev. Willie)*

MRS. WIGGUMS

Not lost long enough! How'd you weasel your way into this one.

ROXIE

(Hugging Rev. Willie) I'm married to Reverend Willie. He's helped me to see the light.

REVEREND WILLIE

*(Hugging **Roxie**)* Roxie, here, is my beloved and current...and cherished wife, she's a true believer. She's been "born again," and my guiding light. We serve the Lord together hand-in-hand. She didn't want to come, but I told her I needed her. She's always there when I need her. *(Makes little kissie sounds and looks longingly at her)*

MRS. WIGGUMS

(To Roxie) And whatever happened to "Nasty Norman?"

ROXIE

Oh, he was just part of my sinful past. He made too many mistakes, including some not so well thought-out investments.

MRS. WIGGUMS

So, he went broke, did he?

ROXIE

Well, you know...no *Kibbels*...no bits! Aunt Blanche, I wasn't going to come today, but the Reverend needs me. I placed His needs over my own personal shame and embarrassment. I am so regretfully sorry for how I treated you. Can you ever forgive me? The Lord has.

MRS. WIGGUMS

Well, the Lord's bigger than I am. But, for the sake of the wedding, I'll just ignore you.

REVEREND WILLIE

(Not really following the conversation) Didn't I tell you everything would work out?

DR. BONNER

(ENTERS from garden) Top-o'-the-mornin'.

REVEREND WILLIE

Well, same to you. *(Grabbing and shaking his hand)* You're the father of the bride?

DR. BONNER

No, I'm the groom.

REVEREND WILLIE

You are? Somehow, I expected a younger man. So, I guess you must be rich?

DR. BONNER

(Chuckling) Only in love, sir. *(Seeing Roxie)* Say, don't I know you? You look familiar.

ROXIE

(Sitting on the arm of the sofa) We met in a previous life. I've been born again.

MRS. WIGGUMS

(Shoving her off the sofa arm towards Dr. Bonner) It's my "drug-dealing" niece, Roxie!

DR. BONNER

Oh, yes, I do remember you.

TECHNICIAN #1

Reverend Willie, we've got the mic's hooked-up, you want to test them?

REVEREND WILLIE

Sure. *(He walks over to the mic's and thumps them. Then he loudly blows into them)* In the beginning...one-two-three-four. Sounds fine to me.

TECHNICIAN #1

Thank you, sir.

[DOORBELL - *Here Comes The Bride*]

TECHNICIAN #2

(Walks towards door) Mind if I get that? We're expecting the announcer.

DR. BONNER

Go ahead.

TECHNICIAN #2

(Off stage) It's about time, Floyd! *(ENTERING room with Floyd)* We're almost ready.

REVEREND WILLIE

Folks, I'd like you to meet Floyd St. Patrick. He's been my faithful announcer for many years. Floyd, meet Roxie's grandmother and the happy father-of-the-bride.

FLOYD

Howdy, folks. Who can I get some detailed information from?

DR. BONNER

(Jumping in) I think I might be the best one for that. *(Taking him by the arm)* Walk with me in the garden, it's a beautiful day, sure enough. *(They EXIT through French doors, SR)*

MRS. WIGGUMS

Reverend Willie, I'm sure that you would like to freshen up and prepare. Why don't I take you, and what's-her-name, to a more quiet location. *(They EXIT, SR through the French doors to garden)*

[The Caterers ENTER once again, arranging the folding chairs with covers and pink bows, and prepare the set for the wedding. Pruitt (Showing attitude towards the technicians) ENTERS from the garden with a handful of pink bows and starts placing them on the microphones, and other equipment. Content that he has made everything pretty, he stands back to admire. As the caterers complete and leave, Lady Anne ENTERS down the stairs]

LADY ANNE

Good heavens, what a mess!

PRUITT

(Clearly upset) It's the radio people.

LADY ANNE

What radio people?

PRUITT

Mrs. Wiggums said it was her wedding gift to Miss Hill and Dr. Bonner. She got the preacher...

LADY ANNE

(Cutting him off by holding up her hand) Let me guess...Reverend Willie!

TECHNICIAN #3

Are you folks about ready. We're set!

LADY ANNE

(A little sarcastically) Don't you think we should wait for the guests?

TECHNICIAN #3

I 'spose so.

LADY ANNE

(Tolerantly) Yes, I think that would be nice.

PRUITT

This will certainly be a day to remember, don't you think?

LADY ANNE

I have a feeling I'm going to remember it. Miss Hill's...*"simple wedding."*

[BLACK OUT]

**End of FreeRead
You can tell that the show is quite wonderful! Order
your copy to read the complete script.**