

Rugburns by Jason Pyette

Characters:

Henry Portman	Tim Barsumi	Phil Phillips	A Strange Man
Susan Portman	Bitsy Barsumi	Phyllis Phillips	

All characters are anywhere from early 30's to mid 50's.

Scene: The living room area of the Portman's house.

Run time: One hour and forty minutes.

The Story:

Henry and Susan Portman have planned an evening with friends. They've invited two couples, one that she likes, the Barsumis, and one that he likes, the Phillips. Inevitably, as the time for arrival approaches, an argument begins, and quickly escalates. Needing to defuse the situation before the arrival of others, Henry presents a plan he has to improve communication - ***the argument rug*** - a small piece of orange carpet from their first apartment. He calls the rug symbolic; she thinks it moronic. But the rules of the rug are simple: the person standing on it has the floor, so to speak. The other person must listen until their own time on the rug - much like a visual "turn." Susan refuses to participate, but Henry stubbornly refuses to give up on the idea. As the doorbell rings, Henry stands resolutely on his rug, waiting for Susan to listen. Susan, though, decides he can stay on his rug as long as he damn-well likes; she's having a party!

Susan opens the door and Tim and Bitsy enter as Henry stands his ground. At first, the Barsumis are slightly shocked, and a bit amused. Tim, however, becomes interested, and wants a turn. What he has to say when he gets on the rug, though, makes the argument explode. Soon, what started as a simple disagreement between a couple, becomes an all-out war. Everyone is forced onto the rug. New rules are created. Liars are punished. Accusations and condemnations fly while boundaries crumble. By the end of the first act, Tim has stomped out to walk home; Susan is upstairs packing her suitcase; Henry is looking for a gun, and Bitsy has exited with a bottle. The rug sits alone in the living room. Enter the Phillips - intoxicated, coarse and crude, and ready to party. Finding the room empty, they set off to find the others. Moments later, a strange man arrives. He also disappears into the house looking for anyone, yet, as the other couples re-enter from various doors, and the strange man gets drawn into the action, we learn there may be more than coincidence to his arrival.

The premise of *Rugburns* is simple, yet the actions of the characters and the results of those actions, are hilarious. Events spin increasingly out of control until the outrageous humor climaxes in a totally unexpected final twist.

RUGBURNS
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ACT I

Scene 1

SETTING: The scene opens on a middle-class, contemporary living room.

AT RISE: Henry enters from an upstairs bedroom. He wears boxer shorts, dress socks and a dress shirt. An undone tie hangs around his neck. He surveys the living room and, seeing no-one, returns to the bedroom. A few seconds later, he re-enters carrying two somewhat ugly lamps. He quickly comes down the stairs. He set down the lamps and then quickly removes two already present lamps and puts them in the coat closet. As he places his lamps on the tables, he picks up a framed picture of an older couple. He looks around for a suitable hiding spot, and then, with evil satisfaction, opens the front door and tosses it outside. He quickly retreats to the upstairs bedroom.

Susan enters from the kitchen with some chips. She sets the bowl on the coffee table and begins to return to the kitchen when she suddenly spins, realizing what Henry has done. Angry, she grabs the lamps from the tables. Not quite knowing what to do with them, she goes to the front door, opens it, and carries them out. She returns a few minutes later and looks around for the original lamps. Finding them in the closet, she returns them to the tables. She then begins to look for the picture. Finally, angry, she yells at the bedroom.

SUSAN

Henry!

(Pause.)

Henry!

HENRY

(From the bedroom.)

What?

SUSAN

Where the hell are my parents?

HENRY

Pittsburgh I would presume. At least let's hope so.

SUSAN

You know what I mean. Where are they?

HENRY

(Entering. Still no pants, but his tie is done.)

What do you mean, my love?

SUSAN

Don't "my love" me, you shit. What did you do with the picture of my parents?

HENRY

I don't know what you're . . .

(Noticing that his lamps are gone.)

Hey, where are my lamps?

SUSAN

Gone! Hopefully forever!

HENRY

Those lamps are antiques. Of course, so are your parents.

SUSAN

I told you, I don't want them in our living room. Especially tonight.

HENRY

And I don't want your parents in our living room. Any night.

SUSAN

Henry!

HENRY

Where are my lamps?

SUSAN

Where are my parents?

HENRY

I won't tell you unless you put back my lamps. My mother gave me those lamps.

SUSAN

Fine, Henry. You know what? I can get another picture. Maybe even a bigger one. But you can't get more lamps like those. Nope, they only make something that ugly once and then realize what a phenomenal screw-up it was. Much like your mother.

HENRY

Oh, that's right. Start in on my mother. That's good. You know what? Keep the lamps. I gladly sacrifice them to get rid of your parents.

SUSAN

A picture, Henry. It's just a picture. My parents will still be around.

HENRY

Oh joy! Oh lucky, lucky us.

SUSAN

Go get dressed. Tim and Bitsy will be here any minute. And the Kleepmans.

HENRY

The Kleepmans? Good God, why?

SUSAN

Because I work in the same profession as they do. They're the competing agency in town and it's important to appear like we like them! That's why. Besides, what's wrong with the Kleepmans?

HENRY

Nothing, if you're into watching mold grow. The mold has more personality. Let's invite it instead!

SUSAN

The Kleepmans happen to be very nice people. And you know I need to keep these professional contacts. Now go get ready before Tim and Bitsy get here.

HENRY

Well by all means. We must be prepared for King Bitsy. Would that make him Queen Tim? Somehow quite appropriate.

SUSAN

Don't start insulting them next. She's my boss for God's sake. And my friend.

HENRY

She is not your friend. She just acts like she is.

(He imitates Bitsy.)

"Oh Susan. Let me bless you with my presence. Let me share all my wisdom with you. Let me act gracious while I lead you to the gas chamber."

SUSAN

She's just determined. Like all good business women.

HENRY

Determined? If grinding the skulls of your competitors into the pavement while laughing is determined, then yes, she is determined.

SUSAN

She happens to be one of the most successful realtors in this town.

HENRY

Of course she is. She's ruthless. She wipes out the competition. I heard she punched a girl scout in the mouth who was selling cookies in her territory without permission. She is the nastiest person on earth.

SUSAN

She is not. She's just a little moody sometimes.

HENRY

Moody? Moody! No. Not moody. Compared to her, Hitler was moody. Stalin was moody. Moody comes nowhere near describing Bitsy Barsumi.

SUSAN

Whatever, she's my boss, so I need tonight to go well.

HENRY

Why? What does it matter. You make good money. I make good money. We're fine. You don't need to suck up to Adolph to get ahead.

SUSAN

If you haven't noticed, Henry, you haven't exactly been bringing in the big bucks lately. Sorry Mr. Hunter/Gatherer, but someone in this house needs to up their income!

HENRY

Oh! So that's it! I'm not making enough money. I'm not "providing." So you have to join the Nazi Youth! Sorry if I can't meet your expectations, but the agency has just been a little slow lately.

SUSAN

Slow? Business is at a standstill. You have no new accounts. Not after the airline ad.

HENRY

Don't bring that up.

SUSAN

You screwed up! You blew it.

HENRY

I did not. The ad just didn't appeal to the client like I thought it would.

SUSAN

You let Phil write the music. You let Phil write music for an airline ad! Phil! Who were you trying to kid? One, he's never been sober on a plane, so his concept of flight might be a bit off. Second, his kind of music doesn't exactly promote the image airlines look for!

HENRY

Okay. Granted. Phil might not have been the right one for the ad. But I wanted to give him a chance at some new work. A chance to expand.

SUSAN

What? Why? Why would you do that?

HENRY

He writes music, Susan. Music. It takes talent!

SUSAN

Do you really call that music? I mean, please. I think we all know the truth.

HENRY

At least he's likeable. Unlike Bitchy Bitsy Barsumi. And her name. Bitsy! Who in the hell would name their child Bitsy?

SUSAN

I think it's kind of endearing.

HENRY

It's the kind of name you give to a poodle. A small, rabid, vicious poodle.

SUSAN

She's not a poodle . . .

HENRY

True. I'd probably like her better if she were. Instead, she's just a bitch. And then there's Tim. The man has the backbone of a worm. Of course, when you're married to Mussolini . . .

SUSAN

Quit being such an ass. We invited your friends as well. Even if they are drunks.

HENRY

Phil and Phyllis are not drunks.

SUSAN

They're pickled! They're turning green they're so pickled! I only agreed to let them come tonight because you assured me they would behave!

HENRY

If I have to deal with Tim, I need Phil as a buffer.

SUSAN

A buffer? How can he be a buffer if he's passed out on the floor in a small pool of his own vomit? And if you really want to bring up names, let's talk about theirs. Phil and Phyllis. Phil and Phyllis. Phil and Phyllis Phillips. How can that be possible? How could God allow that to happen?

HENRY

They are very respectable people. I mean, My God, he's a composer, for Christ's sake. You can't get much more respectable than the fine arts!

SUSAN

The fine arts! You call what he does the fine arts?

HENRY

I am so tired of you insulting them.

SUSAN

Well, I'm tired of you hating Tim and Bitsy. And my parents. And the Kleepmans. I'm tired of you hating everyone I like.

HENRY

And I'm tired of you hating Phil!

SUSAN

I don't hate him, Henry. How can I hate him? That would be like hating a small, ugly child. You can pity them. Feel sorry for them. Even be made feel a bit uncomfortable by them. But you don't hate them. They simply are what they are, and you deal with it. So, I'm going to deal with Phil, as he slowly drinks himself into oblivion. And I'm going to act like it's okay. Because everything has to be perfect. I'm not going to have my boss walk in here and find me unprepared. She's tough enough to deal with as is and I don't need to piss her off. So . . . GO GET READY.

(She stomps out of the room.)

HENRY

(Pauses, and then calls to the other room.)

Susan, listen. I know we're pressed for time and everything, but I think we ought to take a few minutes and, well . . . work this out. I really don't mean to be so nasty about them and I don't like fighting with you. Especially over something as insignificant as Tim and Bitsy. Oh. Sorry. Didn't mean that. That was petty. I should've said the Kleepmans. Ow. Sorry again. Really. Sorry. Susan? Can you hear me? I mean, we've been arguing about these people for years. We fight every time we deal with them. We need to find a way to work this out. Some way other than fighting. We really need, or at least I need, a better way of communicating. Talking it through and actually listening. If tonight isn't going to be a complete wreck, then, well . . . I think it's time for... a solution. And you know I have one. I know you don't want to hear about it, but you know it's the best one. There's certainly still time before they get here, it only takes a minute or so. Just give it a chance. We just need to get out . . .

SUSAN

(Barges into the room.)

No! Don't say it. Don't you dare say it!

HENRY

I think it really is . . .

SUSAN

(Covers her ears.)

No!!

HENRY

The rug. It's time for the argument rug.

SUSAN

You said it. I told you not to say it. I hate it when you say it.

HENRY

It's a good idea.

SUSAN

No, Henry. It's not a good idea; it's a stupid idea. Not only is it a stupid idea; it's an extremely stupid idea.

HENRY

Just think of all the problems it would solve.

SUSAN

You're unbelievable. We've got company arriving any minute and you want to try some psychological experiment on a scrap of ugly carpet. Go get dressed.

HENRY

Carpet? It's not carpet. It's a rug. It used to be carpet, but now it's smaller, and it means something. Besides, that's not what's important here. It's what the rug stands for.

SUSAN

Stupidity. That's what it stands for. Plain old stupidity. Now shut up and get dressed. I have to check on dinner.

(SUSAN exits to the kitchen and leaves HENRY standing in the living room, obviously angry. SUSAN returns a few minutes later and HENRY is still in the same spot.)

SUSAN

Henry, go get dressed.

HENRY

I don't think so! We need to use the rug. Or tonight will be a disaster.

SUSAN

The only way your rug will keep tonight from being a disaster is if you use it to suffocate Phil.

(She again exits to the kitchen. Determined, HENRY stomps up the stairs)

to the bedroom, returning a few moments later with a piece of orange carpet. He places the remnant on the floor and stands on it resolutely, arms crossed in defiance. SUSAN enters carrying a bowl of mints.)

SUSAN

(Seeing HENRY.)

Oh, for God's sake. What are you doing?

HENRY

Follow the rules.

SUSAN

Get off of that. Get it out of the living room. Have you lost your mind?

HENRY

Follow the rules!

SUSAN

There are no rules, Henry. I never agreed to any rules. Will you please quit acting like a child and get ready. Bitsy will be here any moment. You're in your underwear, for God's sake!

HENRY

I'm standing on the argument rug.

SUSAN

Henry. No. You can't do this.

HENRY

The rules state that you have to listen to me until I get off the rug.

SUSAN

Do you want our guests to arrive and find you standing, half dressed, in the middle of the living room, on an ugly rug?

HENRY

I'm not moving until you abide by the rules.

SUSAN

Really? Okay! Fine, Henry fine! You stand there until I abide by the rules. Oh, wait! What is that cold draft I feel coming up from the floor? Oh, I know. It must be hell freezing over.

(SUSAN stomps back into the kitchen. HENRY continues to stand on the rug. The doorbell rings. HENRY looks to the door, a momentary panic crosses his face, and then, determined, he stands his ground. The doorbell rings again.)

SUSAN

(From the kitchen.)

Henry? Please get that!

(HENRY does not move. The doorbell rings again.)

SUSAN

(Entering from the kitchen.)

Are you going to.....Henry! Get off that stupid rug and put some pants on. This is ridiculous. Our guests are here. I'm serious, Henry.

(He does not move, but only crosses his arms in defiance.)

Alright! Alright! Tonight, I promise, you can stand on your stupid rug and rant and rave for as long as you like. And I'll listen to every word. Every single word. I promise. I'll even take a turn. I'll stand on the rug as long as you want me to. But not now! We have guests. So please, go put on your pants.

HENRY

No.

SUSAN

No?

HENRY

No. You don't want to follow the rules, you suffer the consequences.

(The doorbell rings twice more. Susan is panicked, and then resolute.)

SUSAN

Are you insane? Fine. You stand there, like an idiot, in your underwear. I don't care. Stand there all night if you want. I'm having a party! We'll put a bowl of dip in your hand and you can be a goddam centerpiece for all I care.

(She stomps to the door.)

Don't open that door!

HENRY

I'm opening it!

SUSAN

You won't do it.

HENRY

Watch me.

SUSAN

You said it yourself. Everything has to be perfect for your boss.

HENRY

But this is perfect, Henry. She'll see how strong I am. How domineering. I can make my husband stand in the middle of the room looking like a jackass. This actually works out better than I could've planned.

SUSAN

Don't you dare let them in.

HENRY

Are you going to put the carpet away?

SUSAN

Not a chance.

HENRY

Then here goes.

SUSAN

DON'T.....

HENRY

Hello.

SUSAN

(Opening the door. Her greeting is extremely cordial.)

(Standing at the door is BITSY. She enters immediately. TIM is unseen.)

Susan, dear. We were beginning to wonder. We rang five times. I thought maybe you had forgotten we were coming. Tim hurry, the door is simply gaping open.

BITSY

SUSAN

Oh, Bitsy. How could we have forgotten you?

TIM (OS)

I'm coming dear.

SUSAN

So, how are you tonight?

BITSY

We're just splendid. Aren't we, Tim, dear? Just splendid. Here, I brought you this bottle of wine. You probably haven't had this before, but it's very good. One of the up and coming vintners. Washington state.

SUSAN

(Takes the bottle.)

Thank-you.

TIM

(Entering awkwardly.)

Yes, we're . . . uh. . . splendid.

BITSY

Tim has been just so busy at...

(Noticing HENRY.)

Good God, just what is he doing?

SUSAN

Standing in the middle of the living room, in his underwear, looking like a complete ass.

BITSY

Well, I can see that. Why?

SUSAN

It's a new party game. We call it "Let's make Henry look stupid."

BITSY

Oh. How fun. But couldn't we play something challenging instead? That one seems so easy. Given the circumstances, that is.

HENRY

(With extreme sarcasm.)

Bitsy. Lovely to see you.

BITSY

And good evening to you too, Henry. You're looking lovely this evening. Where do you find boxers to match your ties so well?

HENRY
You're not funny, Bitsy.

SUSAN
I thought she was.

BITSY
Yes, I am. Aren't I, Tim?

TIM
Yes, dear. Very Funny.
(Tim laughs - a bit too loud.)

HENRY
Wouldn't you just say so, Tim. Would you dare not? You or Susan.

TIM
What do you mean by that?

SUSAN
Nothing. He thinks he's making a point.

BITSY
Oh, my! Call the newspapers.

TIM
What point?

HENRY
I'm on the argument rug.

TIM
He's on what?

BITSY
Drugs, I think.

SUSAN
He thinks if he stands on that rug we have to listen to what he has to say.

BITSY
Tell him he'd be more convincing if he were wearing pants.

TIM
It's not even a rug. Just an old piece of carpet.

SUSAN
It's from our first apartment.

HENRY

It's symbolic of our relationship. The beginning of our life together.

BITSY

It's moronic.

TIM

It's orange.

HENRY

Shut up, Tim. Susan knows the rules of the argument rug and if she doesn't want to play by them, then I'm going to stay here until she does.

BITSY

Exactly when did he lose his mind?

SUSAN

Years ago.

BITSY

Just what I thought. Come dear. I'll help you finish dinner. I'm quite a master in the kitchen, you know. I'm sure I could give some pointers.

(As they exit to the kitchen.)

An argument rug. Really, just amusing.

(They exit.)

TIM

(An awkward silence as they are left alone. Finally . . .)

So. How long you been standing there?

HENRY

Shut-up Tim.

TIM

It was just a question.

(Long pause. HENRY stands on his rug and TIM wanders about the living room doing anything to not actually look at Henry standing in his underwear.)

TIM

Where do you get boxers that match your ties?

(HENRY glares at him. After a few minutes.)

TIM (Cont.)

Really, Henry, what is this all about? This rug thing.

(HENRY says nothing.)

I'm interested, really.

HENRY

Oh, alright. When you're having a fight, you bring out the argument rug and whoever stands on it gets to say what they want to without interruption. Like a visual "turn." Then you switch. That's the rule. Both people get to speak. It's a great way to communicate without yelling. Not that you and Bitsy would ever need it.

TIM

Huh? What do you mean by that?

HENRY

Nothing.

TIM

Oh no! You're on the stupid argument rug. You have to tell the truth.

HENRY

I never said that was a rule.

TIM

Who said you made all the rules? I say it is. Now tell the truth.

HENRY

Fine. You want the truth. I'll tell you the truth. You would never need the rug because you always do exactly what Bitsy orders. What's there to fight about? She's got you trained well.

TIM

I am not trained. I.....

BITSY

(From the kitchen.)

Tim!

TIM

Yes?

BITSY

Would you bring me my purse? It's on the couch.

TIM

Alright.

(TIM takes the purse and exits into the kitchen. He returns a

few moments later to find
HENRY beaming with
satisfaction.)

That doesn't prove a thing. I was merely being polite.

HENRY

Whatever you say, Tim.

TIM

Okay. Fine. Now it's my turn. Get off that rug.

HENRY

Why should I?

TIM

That's the rules. You made them! You've had your say, now I get mine. Or are you afraid to play by your own rules?

HENRY

Fine, Tim.

(He steps off the carpet.)

It's all yours.

(TIM quickly steps onto the carpet.)

TIM

First, I want you to know....

(HENRY begins to walk off
towards the stairs.)

Where are you going?

HENRY

To put on some pants.

TIM

You have to listen to me.

HENRY

No, I don't. Actually, I don't give a damn what you have to say.

(He continues up the stairs.)

TIM

Come back here! You have to follow the rules. I'm not leaving until you do.

HENRY

Believe me, that tactic works out really well.

(He exits into the bedroom.
TIM stares after him, angry,
but resolute. He crosses his
arms and stays put on the
carpet. BITSY and SUSAN
enter.)

BITSY

Oh, for Christ's sake. Now he's lost his mind, too. It must be contagious.

SUSAN

At least he has his pants on. Tim, what are you doing?

TIM

Waiting for Henry to play by the rules.

BITSY

I told you; his mind is gone.

TIM

It is not. Henry won't play by the rules.

BITSY

Then don't "play" with him. Quit being such a child and come join us.

TIM

No. I'm staying here until Henry listens to what I have to say about him.

BITSY

Tim, I asked you to come join us.

TIM

No!

BITSY

What?

HENRY

(Entering at that moment.)

What? Tim? Aren't you doing what you're told?

TIM

Get down here, Henry. I've got a few things to say to you.

(HENRY approaches TIM.)

HENRY

Get off my carpet.

SUSAN

Uh, Henry? Don't you remember? It's a rug and it stands for something.

TIM

It's not a rug. It's a crappy piece of orange carpet. And I'm not getting off until you listen to what I have to say.

HENRY

It's still my turn. Get off the carpet Tim. Or should I ask Bitsy to make you? Sit, boy! Sit.

TIM

I'm not stepping off until you listen to me. I listened to you.

HENRY

Bitsy, will you please get a rolled-up newspaper? Tim is being a bad boy.

BITSY

You're not funny, Henry.

HENRY

I'm not trying to be. Tim, get off the carpet.

TIM

No!

HENRY

I said get off!

SUSAN

Quit being such an ass. Let's just forget this and have fun.

(To BITSY.)

I'm having fun. Are you having fun?

BITSY

Loads.

HENRY

Get off the rug.

(He moves threateningly on TIM.)

TIM

No. First, you have been a real.....

HENRY

Get off!

(Pushes TIM off the rug.)

HENRY (Cont.)

It's still my turn.

(The two scuffle over the rug with TIM trying to keep his spot while HENRY struggles to get on as well.)

BITSY

Oh my God! Now they're fighting over it!

SUSAN

Children! Quit it.

TIM

(Pushes HENRY back.)

Give it back, Henry!

HENRY

Forget it!

(He pushes TIM off again.)

It's still my turn.

SUSAN

For God's sake, Henry, let Tim have his turn.

BITSY

Yes, Henry. Play nice.

HENRY

His turn? What the hell happened to my turn? I never had my say.

TIM

That's because nobody wants to hear what you have to say.

HENRY

Is that so?

BITSY

I'd say so.

HENRY

Shut-up, Bitsy.

SUSAN

Henry, will you please quit telling our guests to shut-up.

BITSY

Yes, Henry. You really shouldn't tell your wife's boss to shut up.

HENRY

Or it's off to the gas chamber, eh, Adolph? Besides, Susan, they're your guests, not mine.

SUSAN

Oh, yes, I keep forgetting. Your guests are the oh-so-respectable Phillip Pickle twins.

BITSY

Oh my God, the Phillips? They're coming? Oh, joy.

SUSAN

But I also invited the Kleepmans.

BITSY

The Kleepmans? I don't think they're coming.

SUSAN

What? Why?

BITSY

There's a party at their house tonight.

SUSAN

But I invited them here. They accepted.

BITSY

Well, I just don't know about that. All I know is they invited us to their house, but we came here instead. Imagine that.

HENRY

Oh, lucky us.

BITSY

Of course, we didn't know the Phillips were coming.

TIM

Apparently the Kleepmans did.

HENRY

The Phillips happen to be very nice people.

BITSY

Yes, in a drunken, moronic sort of way.

SUSAN

This is stupid. Henry, let Tim have his turn so we can get on to dinner.

HENRY

No way. Not a chance. Not until I get my turn first.

BITSY

Oh, Henry, quit being such a moron.

TIM

He's just afraid to let me have my turn.

HENRY

What?

TIM

You're afraid.

HENRY

Afraid? Why would I be afraid?

TIM

Because you know what I'll say.

BITSY

Be quiet, Tim.

HENRY

What will you say?

BITSY

Be quiet Tim!!

TIM

(To BITSY)

Why? You're the one who told me. Why should I stay quiet?

SUSAN

What's he talking about?

HENRY

Told you what?

TIM

As if you don't know.

BITSY

Timothy!!

HENRY

Know what?

TIM
Not until you get off the rug!!

HENRY
Fine! Get on the damn rug.
(He steps off the rug.)

TIM
(Stepping on smugly.)
Thank you.

HENRY
Now, know what?

BITSY
Tim, I'm warning you...

TIM
Oh shut-up, Bitsy. Quit telling me what to do.

BITSY
What?!!!!

SUSAN
Great, now he's telling her to shut-up.

HENRY
Spill it, Tim.

TIM
Fine. You think you're so smart, but you can't even see what everyone else already knows.

HENRY
What are you talking about?

BITSY
Good God, Tim, will you please be quiet.

TIM
Sorry, hon, but I'm on the argument rug. I have to tell the truth. Don't I, Susan?

SUSAN
What? Why ask me?

TIM

Gee, I wonder why?

HENRY

What are you getting at Tim?

TIM

You simpleton. You're so damn smug. But you can't even see that your wife is cheating on you and everyone knows it but you.

HENRY and SUSAN

What?!!!!

BITSY

Oh, God.

HENRY

You lying piece of shit.

TIM

I can't be lying. I'm standing on the argument rug.

SUSAN

He's lying. He's just needling you Henry. Isn't he Bitsy?

TIM

She'd be the one to ask. After all, she's the one who told me.

SUSAN

What! Bitsy!

BITSY

Well I....

HENRY

(Turning on SUSAN.)

What's he talking about?

SUSAN

I don't know. What the hell is he talking about Bitsy?

BITSY

Now, Susan. I didn't exactly say you were....

TIM

Having an affair? Yes, you did. In fact, I believe your exact words were "the little tramp is running around on Henry with . . ."

With who? HENRY

Tramp!!! SUSAN

WHO!!! HENRY

Bitsy. I can't believe you'd say such a thing . . . SUSAN

Well, it just came out. You know, in a thoughtless moment as . . . BITSY

Just came out?! It didn't just come out. TIM

Tim. For the last time, be quiet. BITSY

What does he mean, Bitsy? What do you mean, Tim? SUSAN

Hmmmm. Let's see. As we were getting ready, Bitsy said "You won't believe what I heard about Susan." I said, "What?" She said "I'll tell you in the car, we don't have time right now. We need to get over to the Portman's." Of course, she followed that with "As thrilling as that will be. A night with Henry, who has the personality of broccoli, and Susan, who will spend all night sucking up because I'm her boss." TIM

Broccoli!!! HENRY

I do not suck up. SUSAN

Yes, you do. HENRY

Absolutely. TIM

Like a Hoover. BITSY

TIM

So, anyway, in the car. She says, apparently in a thoughtless moment, “I’ve been wanting to tell you this since I heard it down at Dr. Fredrickson’s office”

HENRY

Who the hell is Dr. Fredrickson?

TIM

That’s what I asked! And she says, “He’s the new doctor in town. I’m going to start seeing him. I was at his office making an appointment when”

SUSAN

We don’t need the entire conversation. What did she say in the car?

TIM

Right. She says, she heard, in Dr. Fredrickson’s waiting room, that you were having an affair. I told her that I’d already heard the same thing at the club, but didn’t hear with who, which, at that point, she looks at me and says, “Well, for your information, the little tramp is running around on Henry with”

SUSAN

Tramp! How could you, Bitsy? You are supposed to be my friend.

BITSY

You’re friend? Who are you kidding. I’m your boss. I’m not your friend. And, yes, tramp is the word I used. Appropriately.

SUSAN

(Turning on BITSY.)

You bitch! You call me a tramp. With your history.

TIM

What? What does that mean?

HENRY

(To TIM)

Ha! Take that, you shit.

(Turns on SUSAN.)

Is it true?

SUSAN

No. Of course not.

TIM

Yes, it is. Everyone knows so.

BITSY

You didn’t know until I told you, so shut-up.

TIM

What does she mean your history?

BITSY

Nothing!

HENRY

Nothing? What do you mean nothing? Even I know about that guy you've been taking golf lessons from.

TIM

Your golf coach!

BITSY

There is no truth to those old rumors, Tim. I never had an affair with Miles.

TIM

Miles? Suddenly he's not just your golf instructor; he's Miles?

SUSAN

Seems to me the rumors aren't so old.

TIM

What?

SUSAN

As of yesterday, I believe. Didn't she have lessons yesterday? Didn't you have a lesson yesterday, Bitsy? You know. When you left the office and I did all the work. Remember that? No? Oh. Well, it probably doesn't stand out in your memory since that's what happens every day at work. You leave, for lessons, and I do all the work.

TIM

(To BITSY.)

Yes, Bitsy. You did have a lesson yesterday.

BITSY

It was just a lesson, honey!

TIM

And the day before. Oh my God, and the day before that, too.

BITSY

Tim! Baby! She's just trying to turn the attention from herself to me. She's lying. And yes, Susan. I did leave the work to you, and I'm still cleaning up the mess. As always.

HENRY

Are you lying, Susan?

SUSAN

No. Everyone knows about her affair.

HENRY

I thought everyone knew about your affair?

SUSAN

I'm not having an affair.

TIM

That's not what Bitsy said.

SUSAN

Get on the rug, Bitsy!

BITSY

What?

SUSAN

I said, get on the Goddamn rug.

TIM

But I'm not done.

SUSAN

Tim, get off the rug before I come before I come over there and throw you off.

TIM

Fine! Take the stupid thing.

(He steps off in disgust.)

But only because I want to hear what Bitsy has to say.

BITSY

I'm not saying anything.

SUSAN

Get on the rug, Bitsy.

TIM

Bitsy, on the rug.

HENRY

Yes, dearest, Bitsy, get on the fucking rug.

BITSY

Alright. Alright. Fine. I'll get on the rug. But only because I choose to. You cretins need to hear from someone who knows a bit more than you. I get so tired of having to educate the lower classes!

BITSY (Cont.)

(She steps on the rug.)

There. I'm on the rug. Although I have to admit this is the stupidest thing I've ever done. No wait. The second stupidest. The first was hiring Susan. That was certainly the stupidest.

TIM

Bitsy, are you having an affair?

SUSAN

Go to hell, Tim. I'm first with the questions. Alright, Bitsy, you vicious, rabid poodle. What affair am I supposedly having?

BITSY

Come now, Susan. You can quit playing innocent. It's not like everyone doesn't know.

HENRY

I know.

SUSAN

(Spins to face him.)

What?

HENRY

What do you think I am, stupid? I've suspected for some time now. I just don't know who with.

(Turns to BITSY.)

Who is it Bitsy?

BITSY

As if I'd tell you.

SUSAN

There is no who! I'm not having an affair.

TIM

Bitsy, are you? Remember, you're on the rug.

BITSY

Of course, I'm not.

HENRY

Yes, she is. Just how many lessons does she have every week, Tim?

TIM

Every week? I don't know. How many does she have? I don't know these things.

Take a guess! SUSAN

Uh . . . two? Two a week? Usually. TIM

Ha! SUSAN

Three? TIM

You wish! SUSAN

More than three? She has more than three lessons a week? How many does she have? TIM

Try five. One every day. Every day! Every day of the week! SUSAN

Five?! Five lessons a week? TIM

(TIM turns on BITSY)
You have five lessons a week? And your game still sucks. How can anybody have five lessons a week and still not be able to even hit the ball?

I'm just not very adept at the game, Tim. That's all. That's why I need so many lessons. But I'm learning! BITSY

Six feet! Last weekend you hit it six feet on your opening drive! How could you? With Miles. I can't believe you. TIM

Tim, honey, they were just lessons. BITSY

Yes, but lessons at what? HENRY

Go to hell, Henry. TIM

(Turns to BITSY.)
I'll deal with you at home. Henry is obviously enjoying this too much to continue here.
(He stomps to the door.)

Come on, Bitsy.

BITSY

No. We'll deal with this here. I'm on the rug. I have to tell the truth. Ask me.

SUSAN

I will. Why did you tell Tim I was having an affair?

BITSY

Shut-up, Susan. This is about my affair not yours.

TIM

A-ha! So you are having an affair.

BITSY

No. It was just a figure of speech.

TIM

I'm leaving. Are you coming?

HENRY

What about your affair, Susan?

SUSAN

I'm not having one.

TIM

I'm leaving.

HENRY and SUSAN

Good!

BITSY

Tim, I'm on the rug, ask me whatever you want.

HENRY

Gee, Bitsy. I thought the rug was for morons?

TIM

Bitsy, I'll leave without you.

BITSY

You can't, you dope. I have the keys.

TIM

Fine. I'll walk.

(He stomps out the door.)

BITSY

Tim!

(She starts out after him but is stopped by HENRY.)

HENRY

Oh no you don't. I have a few questions for you. Get back on the rug.

BITSY

Henry, get the hell out of my way.

HENRY

No way! I want to know a few things.

SUSAN

So do I. Get on the rug, Bitsy, or I'll break your legs.

BITSY

Like you could. You just try!

SUSAN

Okay. Get on the rug or I tell everyone how you lost the Dr. Fredrickson account to the Kleepman Agency!

BITSY

I did not lose that account! It was a business move.

SUSAN

You lost it! They ran to the competition.

BITSY

They did not! It was a conflict of interest.

SUSAN

That's not what I heard in Dr. Fredrickson's office.

BITSY

What? How would you know?

HENRY

You know Dr. Fredrickson?

SUSAN

Can we please get back to the subject at hand. Bitsy, get on the damn rug.

BITSY

Fine. Fine. Like it matters to me. There. I'm back on the rug. Now what?

HENRY

Why did you say Susan is having an affair?

BITSY

That's just what I heard.

SUSAN

That's what you heard. You announce at my party that I'm having an affair simply because that's what you heard?

BITSY

One: this is hardly a party. We should've gone to the Kleepman's. Two: I didn't announce it. Tim did.

SUSAN

Well, he got it from you. He isn't smart enough to come up with that on his own.

HENRY

Who is she having an affair with, Bitsy?

BITSY

I'm sure I don't know.

SUSAN

I'm not having an affair. And I'm not going to stand here and listen to this. If you believe her Henry, then the hell with you!

(She stomps out of the room.
BITSY and HENRY stand
quietly for a few moments,
staring in the directions that
their spouses left.)

BITSY

Well, this has been quite a pleasant evening so far.

HENRY

Blow it out your ass, Bitsy.

(He leaves the room, following
SUSAN. BITSY is left standing all
alone on the rug.)

BITSY

Yes, quite the party. For God's sake. I'm standing in an empty room on a Goddam piece of ugly carpet.

BITSY (Cont.)

(She crosses over to the bar, grabs a bottle of vodka and “toasts” the empty room.)

Cheers. And screw you all.

(She exits through the kitchen. The room remains empty for a few moments and then we hear a fumbling at the door. Suddenly PHIL and PHYLLIS burst through, obviously already “partying.” Their dress is in style and good taste, but disheveled and rumpled. Each holds a drink. As they enter, PHIL drops his glass and it smashes to pieces on the floor.)

PHIL

Hey, everyone!

(He is very loud.)

Hey, sorry we’re late. Where the hell is everyone?

PHYLLIS

Shit, Phil. You spilled all over the floor. And you broke your glass.

PHIL

Damn. Now, that’s truly alcohol abuse! Here let me clean it up.

(He starts to pick up pieces of glass, looks around for a minute, and then, finding nowhere to deposit them, tosses them out the front door.)

PHYLLIS

Phil! What the hell did ya do that for?

PHIL

What else was I supposed to do with them?

PHYLLIS

Well . . . shit . . . I don’t know.

(She takes another drink.)

Damn! I’m dry.

PHIL

Get me something to wipe this up with.

PHYLLIS

(Looking around.)

There isn't anything.

(She crosses to the drinks table. On the way, she spots the rug.)

Here. Use this.

(She takes the rug to PHIL.)

PHIL

This won't work. It won't soak anything up.

PHYLLIS

Just cover the mess up with it.

PHIL

Oh. Okay.

(He places the rug over the spill,
stomps on it a bit.)

There.

(They both laugh.)

PHYLLIS

Henry? Henry, where are you? Where are they?

PHIL

I don't know. Check the kitchen.

PHYLLIS

(She crosses to the kitchen while
PHIL gets himself another drink.)

Nope. No-one in there. But the back door is open.

PHIL

Huh.

PHYLLIS

Let's check upstairs. Maybe they're all up there.

PHIL

Why in God's name would they be upstairs?

PHYLLIS

I don't know. Some kinky party game, knowing that bitch Susan. Let's go.

(PHIL starts to follow her up the
stairs and then thinks again and
returns for another drink.)

Hey, grab me one.

(PHIL grabs an entire bottle and then follows her up the steps. They exit into a different door than that of HENRY and SUSAN. A moment later, SUSAN stomps out of the bedroom followed by HENRY.)

HENRY

And where the hell do you think you're going?

SUSAN

To the basement for a suitcase. As if it's any of your business.

HENRY

Oh no! You're not going anywhere until you answer me.

SUSAN

The hell I'm not.

(She exits through the basement door, followed by HENRY. As soon as they exit, the PHILLIPS reappear.)

PHIL

Check that room.

PHYLLIS

(Opens the bedroom door.)

Henry? Nope! No-one.

PHIL

Hey. Maybe they're all in the hot-tub. That's why the door to the backyard is open.

PHYLLIS

Could be.

(They both go down the stairs and exit through the kitchen. A few moments pass and then a new MAN appears in the doorway.)

MAN

Hello? Hello? Anyone home? Hello? Hello?

MAN (Cont.)

(He steps into the room.)

My . . . uh . . . I was just . . . uh . . . ? Hello? Anyone here?

(He waits a moment - no answer.)

MAN (Cont.)

Damn.

(He takes a few more steps in, looking around. Suddenly he realizes that he has tracked mud in and it's all over the floor.)

Oh, shit. Mud everywhere.

(He steps back on the rug that PHIL placed and wipes his shoes off, covering the rug with mud. Seeing that he's not going to be able to remove all of the mud, he decides to simply remove his shoes. Then, holding up both the rug and the shoes, he doesn't know what to do with them, so he decides to set them outside the door. He steps out and moments later we hear his voice outside in the dark.)

Ouch! Damn!

(A pause.)

Damn! Ouch! What the hell?

(Another pause.)

Christ, glass everywhere.

(He appears in the doorway, limping. Both feet are cut by the glass.)

Shit. My feet! Crap. I need a bandage.

(He looks down.)

I need a lot of bandages. Hello? Hello? I've cut myself and I think I need some help.

(No answer.)

I'm . . . uh . . . just going to look for something for my feet. Hello? I really need something for them. Anyone?

(Looking desperate, he makes his way to the kitchen, trying to walk on the sides of his feet. He exits, but then appears again a moment later.)

Hello? I couldn't find anything . . . could I . . . oh, shit. This hurts. Hello?

(He moves to the stairs in the same fashion and then begins crawling up them. As he exits into the bedroom, the PHILLIPS appear.)

PHIL

(Back at the bar pouring more drinks.)

Well, I don't know where the hell everyone is.

PHYLLIS

We could wait for them in the hot-tub. It looked awfully nice. I'm sure Henry wouldn't mind.

PHIL

What about Susan?

PHYLLIS

Screw her.

PHIL

I don't know. She's really not all that appealing . . .

PHYLLIS

C'mon.

PHIL

Wait. We don't have any suits.

PHYLLIS

So. Who needs suits?!

(She exits back into the kitchen.)

PHIL

(With a smile.)

Hot damn!

(He exits. A moment later, the MAN crawls out of the bedroom and makes his way to the next door, still looking. He stops part way there, kneels in front of the railing, and calls out.)

MAN

Hello? Anyone there?

(He still gets no answer. He crawls through the bathroom door. The basement door opens and SUSAN comes storming out with a suitcase in hand. HENRY is right behind her.)

HENRY

Don't even think about leaving until you tell me the truth.

SUSAN

I told you the truth, you idiot. And I'll leave if I want.

(She stomps up the stairs and into the bedroom.)

HENRY

We'll just see about that.

(He exits out the front door. The MAN enters from the bathroom, and crawls to the railing, calling out.)

MAN

I couldn't find any band-aids. Is it okay if I use a towel?

(He waits for an answer, but there isn't one. He is somewhat desperate.)

Okay . . .

(He exits painfully back into the bathroom. SUSAN enters from the main bedroom. She comes down the stairs with a suitcase in her hand. She sets it by the couch and goes to the coat closet. BITSY enters from the kitchen.)

BITSY

Well, if it isn't our hostess. The little tramp.

SUSAN

Go get another "golf" tip, Bitsy.

BITSY

I can't believe we even came to your lousy party. We should have gone to the Kleepman's. And I even brought a good bottle of wine. What a waste on someone with your tastes.

SUSAN

(She grabs the bottle of wine.)

Good wine? You call that shit good wine? It has a screw-top lid for God's sake. If you actually bought it instead of stealing it from a passed-out bum, you got ripped off. Here's what I think of your good wine.

(SUSAN stomps to the front door, throws it open, and hurls the bottle of wine through it violently. As she does, there is a muffled grunt and crash.)

SUSAN

Timothy! Oh my God!

(She rushes through the door.)

BITSY

Timothy?!

(She also rushes through the door. A moment later they reemerge carrying TIM. He has been knocked unconscious. He clutches an armful of clothing. They carry him in and dump him on the floor.)

BITSY

Good job, Susan. Really nice. You knocked him out.

SUSAN

I didn't mean to. It was an accident. You drove me to it.

BITSY

My poor baby.

(She takes notice of the clothes.)

What the hell are these?

SUSAN

They look like clothes to me. Crumpled and discarded clothing. You should recognize something like that Bitsy.

BITSY

Help me put him on the couch.

SUSAN

On the couch? No. I'm not putting him on the couch. I have more guests arriving. I don't want them to walk in and find Tim passed out on the couch.

BITSY

Other guests?! It's the Phillips. They won't even be sober enough to see Tim, much less realize he's knocked out on the couch.

SUSAN

For your information, I also invited the Fredricksons. They said they might stop by to meet everyone.

BITSY

The Fredricksons? Really? Don't kid yourself. I don't think they'll be stopping by. I can assure you there's no way in hell a doctor would ever be caught dead in a crappy little place like this.

SUSAN

Don't be so sure about that.

BITSY

Help me get Tim on the couch.

SUSAN

Why should I?

BITSY

Do you really want the rest of your guests, which would consist solely of the Phillips, to walk in and find him lying on the floor?

SUSAN

It's Tim. They'll think he's dust. Or mold. Or dog shit someone tracked in.

BITSY

Susan!

SUSAN

Okay. Fine. But only because I feel sorry for Tim. Living with you. What a nightmare he endures! But he's not going on the couch. We'll put him on the bed upstairs. Out of sight, out of mind!

BITSY

Upstairs? Are you kidding. How are we going to get him upstairs?

SUSAN

Jesus, Bitsy. Look at him. He's not exactly a sumo wrestler. Besides, judging by the mustache you've got going, you have enough testosterone to carry him like a man.

BITSY (Horrified.)

I do not have a mustache!

SUSAN

Really?

(She squints a look at Bitsy's upper lip.)

Huh? Must be a trick of the light. Because from here you look remarkably like Joseph Stalin! I'll bet that's where the nickname comes from!

BITSY

What nickname?

SUSAN

Oh. Nothing . . . Joey. Come on, you lumberjack, grab his head.

(BITSY takes the clothing out of
TIM's arms and throws it on the

couch. She and SUSAN each then take one end of TIM and awkwardly carry him up the stairs and into the bedroom. A second later, the strange MAN reappears from the bathroom door. His feet are now wrapped in two old towels and he limps out to the railing. He looks around and still sees no-one.)

MAN

Hello? Anyone? Where are they? I've cut my . . . My God, I've entered the Twilight Zone. Voices, and then nobody. Hello?

(The MAN exits into the main bedroom just as HENRY enters through the front door. He is holding his rug.)

HENRY

Those assholes! Throw my rug outside will they? Trample it in the mud, huh? I'll show them. Bastards! Every man has his breaking point. Every man can only take so much.

(He goes into the kitchen and returns a moment later without the rug. He looks around the room for a moment and then yells.)

Susan! Susan? Hello? Where the hell is everybody?

(He then notices the pile of clothing on the floor.)

Clothes?

(Picks up a pair of panties.)

Panties! That slut! I knew it. I leave for one minute and they turn the party into a Bangkok hump fest! This is too much! I'll kill her! I'll kill them all.

(He scoops up the clothing and, after a moment of indecision, marches over to the basement door, opens it, and flings it down the stairs. He then starts to cross over to the front door, leaving the basement door open. Suddenly – a realization!)

I need a gun!

(He disappears out the front door just as the strange MAN limps back into the living room. He heard HENRY yelling but couldn't limp back in fast enough to catch him.)

MAN

Wait! Wait. Hello? Shit!

(He notices the basement door is now open. He decides to go look and exits through that door. The PHILLIPS enter. They are naked and each holds one of HENRY'S lamps in front of them. They look around frantically.)

PHYLLIS

I can't believe you lost our clothes.

PHIL

I didn't lose them. They were hanging on the fence when I chased you to the hot-tub.

PHYLLIS

Sure, Phil. You're so damn drunk you don't even know what you did with them. Let's get out of here.

PHIL

We can't. The car keys are in my pants pocket.

(Suddenly they hear HENRY reentering. They dive behind the couch. HENRY enters from the front door. He has a gun in his hand. He mutters to himself in a frenzy.)

HENRY

Now I'll show them. Now they'll see they can't just destroy a man's rug and then have an orgy in his home. No, they can't! There are limits!

(At this, Phyllis' head pops up, eyes wide. Phil's hand reaches up and pulls her back down.)

Okay. So . . . where is the little slut? The little rug destroyer.

(He heads up the stairs as the PHILLIPS pop up in a panic. They

don't know what to do until they
hear a scream from upstairs.)

PHYLLIS

Back out the kitchen!

PHIL

Right! Wait! I've got an idea!

(PHIL has a sudden inspiration and
grabs SUSAN's suitcase. He then
runs back through the kitchen door
right as SUSAN and BITSY come out
of the bedroom with HENRY
following with the gun.)

HENRY

Get down there.

SUSAN

Henry, have you gone mad?

HENRY

Get downstairs.

SUSAN

A gun! Where did you get a gun?

HENRY

It's Simon's.

SUSAN

Simon? From next door? Simon? Simon who's as gay as all the Village People put
together? Simon has a gun?

HENRY

He sure does. And I borrowed it.

SUSAN

Wait. He isn't even there. He went to the opera tonight. He told me he was going.

BITSY

The opera? Boy, he is gay.

SUSAN

How did you get his gun?

HENRY

I borrowed it. He showed it to me once.

BITSY

Do you and this Simon show each other things often? What kind of things? Do you have little “get-togethers” in the clubhouse? You might worry, Susan.

HENRY

Shut-up, Bitsy. We’ll get to you in a minute.

BITSY

Of course, looking at Susan, you might be better off with Simon.

SUSAN

At least I don’t have a mustache!

BITSY

I don’t have a mustache!

SUSAN

Whatever you say, Fu Man Chu.

(She makes a “mustache” on her face
with her fingers.)

BITSY

(To HENRY)

Do I have a mustache?

HENRY

Put it this way. In a few minutes, you’re not going to have to worry about your five o’clock shadow anymore!

SUSAN

Henry! You can’t just go into someone’s house and take things. It’s against the law.

HENRY

I think that pales in comparison to killing someone with the item you took!

SUSAN

You don’t even know how to use a gun! You wet yourself with a water pistol.

HENRY

You think so? Want to find out?

SUSAN

No! Quit pointing that thing at me.

HENRY

(Turns to BITSY)

Okay. How about you, Tom Selleck? You want to find out?

BITSY

You know, Henry, in light of this whole Simon thing, I realize something. I always suspected you were gay. I just couldn't understand how you could bear to touch Susan with any part of your body. Even *that* part.

HENRY

I am not gay!

BITSY

Whatever you say, Liberace. It would, however, explain Susan's need to have an affair.

SUSAN

I'm not having an affair! That's you! But we do, of course, know why.

BITSY

What? Why?

SUSAN

Because you're a man! Obviously. And men do those kinds of things!

BITSY

I am not a man!

SUSAN

Well, more of a man than Tim that is.

HENRY

Micheal Jackson was more of a man than Tim.

SUSAN

But then again, judging by your upper lip, you're more of man than half the male population.

(BITSY gasps and covers her lip with her hand.)

HENRY

All right. That's enough. Both of you.

SUSAN

Henry. What the hell is your problem? You're really beginning to annoy me.

HENRY

Annoy you? I'm annoying you? Would a bullet annoy you?

SUSAN

Okay! Okay! Sorry. Wrong word. Just tell me why you've got a gun.

HENRY

Why do I have a gun? Gee. Let me think. Possibly to shoot you with.

BITSY

(Hand still over lip.)

Why, Henry? Why now? If you've suspected her for so long.

HENRY

Why now? Maybe I just reached my breaking point! I've had enough. Too many things pushing me over the edge!

SUSAN

What things?

HENRY

Maybe because I just realized Bitsy over there can grow a better mustache than I can! She has more facial hair than a goddam ape. I used to wonder why she didn't talk about her leading role on Planet of the Apes, but then I realized it was just an astonishing resemblance!

(BITSY, again, gasps in shock and covers her lower face with both hands.)

HENRY

However, the real reason is bit more compelling than Bitsy's facial hair, extensive as it is. Susan, I can't believe your deception.

SUSAN

What deception?

HENRY

I suspected an affair. Sure. For quite some time. But this. This is simply too much.

SUSAN

What are you talking about?

HENRY

Oh, you think you're so smart. So clever. But I'm on to you now. All of you. You, Tim, ape-woman over there. You think you had me fooled.

BITSY

(From behind her hands.)

I am not ape-woman.

SUSAN

Fooled? With what?

HENRY

Oh, you're clever. This whole set-up. The fighting over affairs. The yelling names at each other. Just to get me out of the house. To drive me away. So you could get rid of me and then defile my rug.

SUSAN

Your rug? You think this is about your rug?!

BITSY

If you're so upset about your rug, Henry, why don't you just flee into the arms of your lover Simon and tell him all your troubles?

(Henry turns on Bitsy with the gun.)

HENRY

No more out of you, you wooly mammoth. I'll deal with you in a minute.

(He turns back to Susan.)

It's not just the rug. That is just a symbol of your contempt for me.

SUSAN

I thought it was a symbol of our relationship.

HENRY

It is! The end of it. Because you think you can fool me. Ridicule me. Put on this elaborate show with the Barsumis? Bushy Bitsy there and Tiny Tim upstairs. Or maybe he's not so tiny, as your ripping his clothes off would indicate.

SUSAN

For God's sake, Henry. I have no idea what you're talking about.

HENRY

Oh, come on, Susan. Fess up. I've figured it out. You all act like you hate each other. You talk about affairs and lovers. You drive me from the house. And then . . . then the real fun starts. You put filth all over my rug and throw it out the door. You laugh at me. You ridicule me. And then the orgy starts!

BITSY

An orgy? I think I missed that.

HENRY

Yes, an orgy. Didn't I just find you two ripping at Tim's clothes, undressing him in a frenzy?

SUSAN

We weren't undressing him. We were loosening his tie and unbuttoning his shirt so he could breathe easier. Hardly a frenzy.

BITSY

Your mind works in really sick ways, Henry.

SUSAN

Henry, there's a perfectly reasonable explanation for this.

HENRY

How come I found a pile of clothes in the living room a few minutes ago? Where are all the others of your little sex games? Or is it just you three all along? Perhaps there are some golf instructors lurking about the house?

SUSAN

Henry! How could you have found our clothes? If you'll notice, you stupid shit, we still have ours on!

HENRY

I don't know who they belong to. And I don't care. Some perverted sex stallion I would assume.

(Suddenly PHIL enters from the kitchen. He is wearing one of SUSAN's dresses. He is as surprised to find others in the room as they are at his appearance.)

PHIL

Woah!

(Then, cheerfully.)

Hey, Henry! Great party so far. I was just gonna get another drink.

(He starts for the bar when HENRY points the gun at him.)

HENRY

Oh, this is sick. Very sick.

(He looks back at SUSAN.)

You are really something. Act like you can't stand him and the whole time he's been a part of your little sex club! My God, Susan, he's wearing the dress I gave you. This is really sick.

BITSY

You're absolutely right, Henry. He looks better in that dress than Susan. Very sick.

SUSAN

You bitch. I've had it with you.

(She grabs BITSY and throws her to the floor. They fight.)

HENRY

Stop it! Both of you.

(PHIL crosses over to the bar and starts to get his drink. HENRY yells at him.)

Don't even think of going anywhere, Phil.

(PHIL looks at HENRY, then at the women wrestling, now on the floor, and starts laughing, calling out for PHYLLIS.)

Shut up, Phil!

(TIM then enters from the bedroom, his tie off and shirt unbuttoned, and holding one hand over his eye. He is still daze and disoriented. He notices HENRY with the gun and, with a yell, tries to rush down the stairs to stop him. He dives for the gun, misses, hits the floor, and is out again. At this moment, the strange MAN enters from the basement. He carries the clothing HENRY threw with the panties clearly visible on top of the pile.)

MAN

Hello? Oh, thank God! Finally, people. I was just . . .
(He stops in amazement at the sight of the room. HENRY aims the gun at him.)

HENRY

Don't move!

(The women continue to fight while PHIL drinks at the bar laughing and calling for PHYLLIS.)

Who the hell are you?

MAN

Me? Well, I was just . . .

HENRY

Are you part of this whole deviant thing? Those your panties? Gonna get dressed up like Phil the pervert?

MAN

Huh? What? No. I was just . . . I mean . . .

HENRY

Shut up. Get over there.

(PHYLLIS enters from the kitchen at that precise moment. She is wearing only a blouse and covers the rest of herself with Henry's rug.)

PHYLLIS

Phil! I can't fit into that skinny bitch's skirt . . .

(She stops as she notices all the people. Everyone freezes.)

Uh-oh.

HENRY (Appalled.)

That's my rug! This just keeps getting sicker and sicker. That's my rug! Put it down this instant.

PHYLLIS

Over my dead body!

BITSY

Really, Henry. Don't make her uncover. Shoot us first, please!

SUSAN

Really, Henry . . . I don't know . . . this is ridiculous.

MAN

All I wanted . . .

HENRY

Shut up, everyone. So, Susan. The minute I'm gone you turn the party into one big sex festival?

SUSAN

Are you insane? Sex? With them?

(She indicates the PHILLIPS.)

Now that's sick!

HENRY

What about him, Susan? The man with the panties?

(SUSAN has had it with HENRY.)

SUSAN

You're right, Henry. You're right about this man!

MAN

Huh? I was just . . .

SUSAN

Yep, Henry. You're so smart. But you have it all wrong. It's not an orgy. It's just me and my lover.

HENRY

What?

SUSAN

Nope. Not an orgy with Tim and Bitsy. Nothing to do with the pickle twins. Just this man.

HENRY

Susan . . .

SUSAN

You guessed it. This man . . . this stud . . .

(She puts her arms around the
strange MAN.)

This stallion is my real lover.

MAN

What?!!

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT I

ACT II

Scene 1

SETTING: The same living room, several hours later.

AT RISE: The PHILLIPS, still wearing SUSAN'S clothing except that PHYLLIS has replaced the rug with her own skirt, are seated glumly by the bar, but not drinking. TIM, still unconscious, lies on the couch. BITSY is seated on the stairs, looking angry while SUSAN is nowhere to be seen. The MAN is center, tied into one of the dining room chairs and his mouth has been taped shut. HENRY is pacing the room. He has the gun in one hand and his rug in the other. Everyone watches him warily. Finally, PHIL speaks.

PHIL

Good Lord, Henry. How long are you going to keep us like this?

HENRY

Alright. Fine. Time to straighten this out.

(He places the rug on the floor in front of the couch and then crosses over to the bathroom door. Opening it, he calls out.)

Susan. Get in here!

(SUSAN appears after a few moments. She crosses into the room and moves over to the strange MAN, who looks at her frantically. She deliberately looks over at HENRY, and then, very seductively, speaks to the MAN.)

SUSAN

Hello, lover.

(She leans over and kisses him on the duct tape, passionately. The MAN tries to squirm away from her the whole time.)

HENRY

Susan, get on the rug.

SUSAN

Fine, Henry. I'll play your silly little game. But you already know the truth.

(She looks back to the strange MAN.)

I'll be back soon, my little sex-poodle.

HENRY

Susan, you know the rules. You must tell the truth when you're on the argument rug.

SUSAN

Screw you, Henry. And screw your rules and screw your rug.

(She steps off the rug.)

I'm not playing by your rules. And it's not the argument rug. It's the idiot rug, Henry. Made for idiots.

(She picks up the rug, starts to advance on HENRY.)

So why don't you stand on it, you idiot! Wait! I know why. Because it's the idiot rug, not the fucking moron rug. If it were the fucking moron rug, then you'd be on it.

(She hits him with the rug.)

You'd have a place of honor.

(Hits him again.)

The Goddam thing would be glued to your feet.

(She hits him a final time as she yells the last of her line. HENRY falls backward over the MAN in the chair and lands on TIM, waking him. The gun flies from HENRY's hand and skids across the floor. Immediately, SUSAN, BITSY, and PHIL dive for it. PHYLLIS grabs a bottle from the bar for a weapon and joins the fray. SUSAN breaks free from the group with the gun in her hand but is immediately tackled by BITSY and the gun again goes sliding across the floor. PHIL jumps over the two struggling women and makes for the gun. HENRY tries to get up to stop him and PHYLLIS, seeing this, swings the bottle at him. HENRY ducks, and TIM, who is dazed and confused, but trying to sit up, gets hit by the bottle, knocking him out cold. PHIL is almost to the gun when he trips over the dress he wears. Both HENRY and BITSY dive for the gun, but BITSY reaches it first, swinging up it at the rapidly approaching HENRY.)

BITSY

Ah-ha! Don't move you bastard!

BITSY (Cont.)

(Everyone freezes.)

Well, isn't this just a nice little turn of events. This is just perfect! What to do first? Hmmmm. So many options. Shoot Henry? That has appeal! Perhaps Susan? Yes . . . that's good, too. But wait. First . . .

(She looks over the room.)

Phyllis. Get on the rug, you drunk bitch.

PHYLLIS

Fine, fine. Like I have anything to hide.

(She steps onto the rug.)

Go ahead. Ask.

BITSY

Okay. Let's start with something easy. Uh . . . let's see. Is Henry gay?

PHYLLIS

Gay? No! Those are just nasty rumors. Although there's the Simon thing . . .

BITSY

Enough! Moving on. Second question. Does anyone in the room have a mustache?

PHYLLIS

Do I have to answer that one?

(Bitsy aims the gun at her.)

No! No mustaches here. None at all. This is like one big Bic convention!

BITSY

Good. Good answer. Next question. Have you heard anything about Susan having an affair?

PHYLLIS

Well . . . yes.

BITSY

Good. Now we're getting somewhere. Who's she screwing?

PHYLLIS

I just heard she was screwing some doctor.

SUSAN

What?

HENRY

A doctor? What doctor? Doctor Fredrickson?

SUSAN

He's not . . .

PHIL

This guy is Doctor Fredrickson? Doesn't look like a doctor to me. I mean, look at his feet, what kind of doctor can't even put on some bandages?

(BITSY and SUSAN together)

BITSY

He isn't Doctor Fredrickson!

SUSAN

I'm not screwing Doctor Fredrickson!

HENRY

Then who is this guy?

SUSAN

I told you. He's really my lover! Not some stuffy, old doctor.

BITSY

Bullshit! You don't even know who this guy is.

PHIL

Uh . . . hello! None of knows who he is!

PHYLLIS

He's probably just some guy off the street.

BITSY

That is the stupidest thing I've ever heard. Just some guy off the street! He came in here for a reason. He could be a burglar or something.

SUSAN

Now that's stupid. Is this the face of a burglar? A burglar named . . . Bruno, or something. How moronic.

PHYLLIS

This is so childish. I'm getting a drink.

BITSY

Stay there, Phyllis. I'm not done with you. What else do you know about Susan's affair?

PHYLLIS

What, you want me to draw you some pictures? I don't think there's a whole lot I really need to explain here. Phil, darling, will you get me another drink?

PHIL

Sure, hon.

BITSY

Phil, stay where you are.

PHYLLIS

Don't pay any attention to her, Phil. She won't shoot you.

PHIL

How can you be so sure?

PHYLLIS

Because I'm on the rug, aren't I? Everything I say is true. Now get me a drink.

HENRY

That's not the way it works!

PHYLLIS

Be quiet, Henry. I'm on the rug, so I make the rules.

HENRY

The rules are that you have to tell the truth. The rug doesn't make you God.

BITSY

He's absolutely correct. I've got the gun, so I'm God.

(PHIL, who has been to the bar getting drinks, passes by BITSY. With sudden inspiration, he throws the drink into her face and grabs for the gun.)

PHIL

Have a drink, God.

(PHIL misses the gun but does knock it from her hand. It slides across the floor to SUSAN'S feet. She grabs it.)

SUSAN

Well, God, it seems as if things really went to hell for you now.

BITSY

Now, Susan

SUSAN

Shut your big, mustachioed mouth, Bitsy.

HENRY

Susan, what are you going to do?

SUSAN

What am I going to do? Lots of things, Henry. First, I'm going to burn that stupid rug of yours. After that, I'm going to break those revolting, ugly lamps, and then I'm going to shoot you. Finally, my lover . . . Bruno over there, and I are going to have wild, prison sex.

PHIL

(To PHYLLIS.)

Wow, sounds pretty good to me. Hope we get to watch everything. And you thought we should go to the Kleepman party instead!

SUSAN

But first, Phyllis, get off the rug. Go soak yourself. I like you better when you're passed out.

PHYLLIS

Hey, sounds good to me.

SUSAN

Now, Bitsy. On the rug.

BITSY

What? I already was.

SUSAN

Get on the rug.

BITSY

Fine. I'm on the damn rug. Play your stupid game.

SUSAN

First, who said I was having an affair?

BITSY

Everyone. Everyone did. Everyone knows that you're just a cheap tramp.

SUSAN

Well, everyone laughs about you. They make jokes about you.

BITSY

They do not.

PHIL

Well, actually, that's true. I read one of those jokes on the bathroom wall at the course.

PHYLLIS

Was that the one that starts: What do Bitsy and a golf bag have in common?

PHIL

Yeah! That's the one!

PHYLLIS (Laughing)

That one was funny. And golf balls don't even have mustaches!

SUSAN

Pickles! I'm warning you. You speak once more and I shoot you.

PHYLLIS

Yeah. Right. Whatever.

SUSAN

Okay. You speak and I shoot every bottle on that bar.

PHYLLIS

Not another word.

PHIL

Don't hear a sound from me.

BITSY

Fine. So they make jokes. There's no truth to them. I can hit the ball just fine. I'm not sleeping with Miles.

SUSAN

Then what do you do at all those lessons? After two years, even a four-year-old could at least hit the ball further than six feet.

PHIL

A four-year-old? That doesn't really seem plausible.

PHYLLIS

I guess. They would have had to have started when they were, like, let's see, two.

SUSAN

It was just an expression.

PHIL

Not a very good one. Everyone knows that two-year-olds can't golf.

PHYLLIS

They're just too short.

SUSAN

(She aims.)

That's it. There goes the vodka.

PHIL

Whoa! Don't do it. Locking the lips.

(He mimes locking the lips.)

PHYLLIS

And throwing away the key.

(She throws away the key.)

SUSAN

All right, everyone up. We're going down into the basement.

HENRY

What? What for?

SUSAN

To get a driver and balls. So we can test out Tiger there.

BITSY

This is ridiculous.

SUSAN

Shut-up and get going.

(Everyone starts to move to the
basement door.)

PHIL

Golf, anyone?

PHYLLIS

Fore!

(Everyone except TIM and the
strange MAN exit into the basement.
There is a moment of silence and
then TIM begins to stir. He moans
and groans, and then finally, slowly,
sits up, rubbing his head.)

TIM

Shit. What happened?

(Dazed and disoriented.)

Where the hell am I?

TIM (Cont.)

(He notices the strange MAN.)

Whoa. Who are you?

(Notices the tape.)

Oh, just a minute.

(He reaches over and rips the tape
from the MAN's mouth.)

MAN

Ouch! Holy shit, that hurt.

TIM

Sorry. Wait a minute. Who are you?

MAN

Me? You don't know who I am?

TIM

No. Should I?

MAN

Well . . . I'm . . . I mean . . . no. No. Not at all. You shouldn't know me.

TIM

I shouldn't?

MAN

No.

TIM

I didn't think so.

(Sudden realization.)

Wait a minute. Who am I?

MAN

Who are you? You don't know who you are?

TIM

No. My God, my head hurts. What in Christ's name hit me?

MAN

Which time?

TIM

What?

MAN

Listen. Why don't you untie me and let's get outta here.

TIM
Okay. Wait. Why are you tied up?

MAN
It's a long story. I'll tell you later. Just get me out of this, Tim.

TIM
Okay. Wait.
(He stops and looks at the man.)
Tim?

MAN
Uh. Yeah. That's your name.

TIM
How do you know that?

MAN
You told me.

TIM
I did?

MAN
Yeah.

TIM
When?

MAN
Right before they hit you.

TIM
Hit me? Who?

MAN
The women.

TIM
What women?

MAN
The ones who were undressing you upstairs.

TIM
They were what? Me? Upstairs?

MAN

Yeah. They said something about you and rugs and then that other guy went off about orgies and perverts.

TIM

Orgies? Perverts? What guy?

MAN

The one with the gun.

TIM

A gun! Why?

MAN

Listen. We gotta get out of here! Now! Before they get back! I'm telling you, they're all crazy!

TIM

Wait a minute! What happened to your feet?

MAN

It's a long story! Just get me untied. I'll tell you all about it in the car!

TIM

Wait a minute. Wait just a minute! I do know you!

MAN

You know me? You don't even know you and you know me!

TIM

I'm sure I do! It's . . . you're

(The MAN hears noise coming from the basement.)

MAN

Shit. Here they come. Let's just get outta here.

TIM

You're hiding something! Who are you?

MAN

There's no time. Hurry! Untie me!

TIM

I don't think so. I think we'll just wait here and get this all straightened out!

MAN

I wouldn't do that if I were you!

TIM

Why not?

MAN

'Cause the guy with the gun swore he was going to shoot you when you woke up!

TIM

What? Why?

MAN

Because his wife was one of the ones undressing you!

TIM

Oh my God! Oh my God! Okay. Here's the deal. I'm gonna hide and see what this is all about. I'll be back.

(And he starts to leave the room.)

MAN

No. Wait! Don't leave . . .

(TIM rushes back, slaps the tape back on the MAN's mouth.)

TIM

Just hang tight!

(TIM exits out the front door.
Moments later, HENRY, BITSY, and the PHILLIPS re-emerge from the basement followed by SUSAN and the gun. BITSY holds a golf club in one hand, and a ball in the other.)

BITSY

I don't know what you think you're going to prove here, Susan.

SUSAN

I'm going to prove that you can't golf.

BITSY

And what in God's name would that prove? That I'm screwing my instructor? That makes no sense. No sense at all. Just because someone can't paint does it mean that they're screwing an artist.

PHYLLIS

That's some screwed-up logic, she's got. Kind of like a two-year-old playing golf.

PHIL

You know, the two-year-old would never be able to rent a cart.

PHYLLIS

Nope. Their legs are just too short. They couldn't reach the peddles.

SUSAN

Phil, Phyllis, I'm not going to warn you again. You talk, booze dies.

PHYLLIS

You know, I can't practice medicine worth a shit. Does that mean I'm screwing Dr. Fredrickson?

BITSY

You know Dr. Fredrickson?

PHYLLIS

Well, no. Not yet. I have an appointment with him on Thursday.

SUSAN

Okay, Bitsy. Get your ass over here. By the door.

(SUSAN opens the front door wide and then moves back by BITSY and the others. All watch BITSY with interest. She looks about and sees she has no choice but to try and hit the ball out the open door. She places the ball on the floor, takes a couple of practice swings, and then, with Herculean effort, hits the ball out the door. There is a muffled thud offstage.)

BITSY

Oh my God, Timothy!

SUSAN

Timothy?

HENRY

Timothy?

PHYLLIS

Timothy!!!

PHIL

Nice shot!

(The group rushes out the door and, a few moments later, re-enters carrying the again unconscious TIM.)

PHYLLIS

Sure didn't look a thing like a two-year-old to me.

PHIL

Not a bit.

BITSY

I didn't mean to hit him.

SUSAN

Put him on the couch.

HENRY

You know, it really was a hell of a hit, Bitsy. Where ever did you find the time to learn how to do that amidst all your other lessons?

BITSY

Shut the hell up, Henry. From what I've heard you could use some instruction in those areas.

PHYLLIS

I've heard you would know firsthand, Bitsy.

HENRY and BITSY and SUSAN

What!!!

PHYLLIS

Whoops! Nothing! Slipsies. Pay no attention to me.

SUSAN

Alright. That's enough. Henry! Back on the rug!

HENRY

Fine. Whatever. What a stupid fucking game.

SUSAN

One, it's not a game. Not anymore. Two, it's your stupid fucking game. New rule time.

HENRY

What? You can't make up rules.

SUSAN

Of course I can. I've got the gun.

BITSY

So what's your new brilliant rule?

SUSAN

The rule is, you must always tell the truth when on the rug.

BITSY

That's already a rule.

SUSAN

I wasn't finished.

BITSY

Well go on. By all means.

SUSAN

You must tell the truth, and if you're caught in a lie, then you get punished.

HENRY

What do you mean punished? How are we punished?

SUSAN

Well let's just find out, Henry, dear. Just lie. Once. Just once. And we'll find out. Let's start with an easy one. Hm. Let's see. Oh, I've got it. Here goes. Is this absolutely the most moronic game ever invented?

HENRY

No!

SUSAN

A lie!

HENRY

No it's not!

BITSY

She's right. You lied. It is.

SUSAN

Now, punishment.

(SUSAN walks deliberately around behind HENRY. He starts to move

off the rug, but she stops him with the gun. She moves directly behind him and then, with all the force she can muster, “jacks” his shorts.)

HENRY

Ow! Shit!

SUSAN

Must tell the truth. Question number two. Are you, Henry, an idiot?

BITSY

Oh sure. Ask him easy questions. Everyone knows the answer to that one.

HENRY

Well . . . shit

(To avoid punishment.)

. . . yes.

SUSAN

Wrong. Wrong answer. A lie. You’re not an idiot. That’s too good for you. You’re a fucking moron. Don’t you remember anything? So, punishment time. Phil.

PHIL

Oh, shit. Not me.

SUSAN

Go to the bar.

PHIL

Oh, yes. Me. Me.

SUSAN

Don’t drink anything.

PHIL

Oh, God. I’m being punished.

SUSAN

Bring me the ice bucket

(PHIL does so.)

Now, pour the ice down his pants.

(PHIL does so.)

Now, sit.

(PHIL does so.)

Question number three.

HENRY

Great. Can’t wait.

SUSAN

Are you screwing Bitsy?

HENRY

Of course I'm not.

SUSAN

I don't know. What do you think, Bitsy? Is he lying?

BITSY

No. God, no.

HENRY

For God's sake, Susan. Think about it. Me? Bitsy? I'd rather sleep with Phil over there.

PHIL

Oooh. I don't think I'd like that.

SUSAN

Phil. You were warned. One more word and I pour the vodka on the floor in front of you.

BITSY

Susan, why in God's name would you think . . . ?

SUSAN

(Swings the gun on her.)

Why? Because all this bashing of each other is just a cover. You both spend way too much time at the club. But who's to say you're really there?

PHIL

I'd say Miles could tell. Or Simon.

PHYLLIS

Unless they're all involved together!

PHIL

Oooh. This just gets sicker and sicker. You are really twisted people.

SUSAN

That's it. I warned you.

(SUSAN walks over and grabs a bottle of vodka and starts to pour it on the floor. PHIL can't take it.)

PHIL

Nooooooo!

(He lunges at SUSAN and the bottle, but instead of the vodka, he somehow gets the gun. Suddenly, he realizes what has happened. He points the gun at SUSAN.)

PHIL

Whoa! Wow.

(He looks around for a minute, and then approaches HENRY. He reaches down into HENRY'S pants and retrieves a few ice cubes – popping them in the glass he still carries. PHIL turns back to SUSAN.)

Actually, I think I'd like you to pour me a bit of that in a glass. Pour me a drink and then onto the rug, you twit. Henry, sit. We're going to play with this new rule thing.

SUSAN

Now, Phil

PHIL

Uh . . .uh . . . uh! You're out of order.

SUSAN

What?

PHIL

First a drink. Then a rule. Now! Susie-Q, onto the rug. Rule time.

SUSAN

What rule?

PHIL

From this point on, you call me nothing but "Mr. Maestro."

HENRY

Mr. Maestro? Maestro? Who are you trying to kid? You're not a composer!

PHYLLIS

He most certainly is!

HENRY

He writes music for porn movies!!!

PHYLLIS

But it's beautiful music.

HENRY

I'm sure you'd think so since he met you "on location."

PHYLLIS

That's not true.

PHIL

No, it's not.

PHYLLIS

It was in the coffee room between takes.

PHIL

Right. Get your facts straight, Henry.

BITSY

Porn music? And you hired him for an airline ad? Jesus. What was next? Fisher Price?

HENRY

It was an advertising gamble that obviously didn't work out.

BITSY

No? Really? Such a surprise! Not only are they vulgar, ignorant drunks, but she's a porn star.

PHYLLIS

Well, never really a star.

PHIL

But you tried real hard, lovey.

PHYLLIS

Thank you, my love.

BITSY

I think I'm going to vomit.

PHIL

Enough reminiscing. Onto business. Susan, question one.

SUSAN

What?

PHIL

What, who?

(He indicates the gun.)

SUSAN

What, Mr. Maestro?

PHIL

Do you really think Henry and Bitsy . . . are . . . well, you know?

SUSAN

What? You can't say it? You're married to a porn actress and you can't say what? Screwing? Humping? Doing the nasty? The horizontal mambo? What are you? Suddenly shy? Honestly, at this point, nothing would surprise me. Even Henry and Bitsy.

PHYLLIS

Phil, honey?

PHIL

Yes.

PHYLLIS

Would you like to change now? Now that you're God?

PHIL

Well, no, actually. This is pretty nice. Free and unrestricting. I could get used to this. Actually, I have a wonderful idea.

PHYLLIS

What's that, pookens?

PHIL

We're going upstairs. We're going to find Henry something nicer to wear.

HENRY

What?

PHIL

Well, you've done such a favor by allowing me to dress like this, I'm gonna return it. Let's go.

HENRY

Now, Phil

PHIL

Let's go.

(He herds the group out of the living room and up the stairs, leaving TIM unconscious on the couch and the MAN tied up. They go up the stairs and into the second bedroom. They are only gone a few moments, when TIM begins to stir again.)

TIM

Ohhh. My God. What hit me?

(He again notices the MAN tied up and taped.)

Oh. Wow. Here. Just a minute.

(He again rips the tape off.)

MAN

Shit. Ouch. You didn't have to do that again.

TIM

Well, you know what they say, do it fast or . . . again? What are you talking about?

MAN

What?

TIM

What?

MAN

What do you mean, again?

TIM

Again. Again! You know, again? You said "again." What do you mean "again?"

MAN

But . . .

TIM

Who the hell are you?

MAN

What?

TIM

Do you have some sort of hearing problem?

MAN

What???

Oh. You do. TIM
(He shouts.)
SORRY! MAN

No. I mean, I don't. TIM

Who the hell are you? MAN

You don't remember me? TIM

Should I? MAN

Should you? Should you? TIM

You have a real problem with repetition, don't you? MAN

You really don't remember me? TIM

No! Alright? TIM
(He hears some noise from upstairs.)
Hey. There's someone else here.

(He starts for the stairs.) MAN

No! Don't go up there! TIM

Why not? MAN

Uh . . . you just shouldn't. Get me untied. TIM

I'm not sure . . . maybe I should just . . . MAN
(He indicates the stairs.)

No. You can't! MAN

I think maybe I should
(He starts to go.)

Bruno! You can't!

Bruno?

Yea. Bruno. It's your name.

Bruno?

Yes!

That doesn't feel right.

Well neither does this, you schmuck.
(He indicates the ropes.)
Get me untied.

Why are you tied up?

You really don't remember any of this?

Of what?

Good God, Bruno. We're gonna get it. They caught us.

Who did?

Man! The owners. They're gonna kill us.

Why?

TIM

MAN

TIM

MAN

TIM

MAN

TIM

MAN

TIM

MAN

TIM

MAN

TIM

MAN

TIM

MAN

We were robbing the place, you moron. But they showed up. Now get me untied and let's get the hell out of here.

TIM

Right. Sorry.

(He starts to untie the MAN.)

What are we going to do?

MAN

Get me untied and I'll go out and get the car while you stay in here and gather up a few things. Whatever you can grab. But hurry and don't get caught.

TIM

(Hears the others upstairs.)

Shit! They're coming. I can't get this. There isn't time! Okay. I'll be back. I won't leave you stranded.

MAN

No! Don't leave me here!

(TIM starts to leave, but then turns back.)

TIM

Here.

(He slaps the tape back on.)

Maybe they won't notice right away that I'm gone. Don't worry, Bruno. I'll be back for you.

(And he runs into the kitchen.
Moments later, the group from upstairs enters from the bedroom. PHIL still has the gun and HENRY carries something, though we can't see what it is.)

PHIL

Go on. Get down there.

HENRY

Where are we going, Phil?

PHIL

Into the basement.

HENRY

Why?

PHIL

We gotta get you some shoes.

HENRY

In the basement?

PHIL

That's where Susan said they were. Now go.

(The group marches across the living room and into the basement, paying no attention to either the MAN or the empty couch. They are only gone a moment when TIM peers through the kitchen door. He looks around and then quickly darts in and to the MAN.)

TIM

Okay. We're doing okay. Guess what? I found some antiques. They gotta be worth something.

(The MAN looks at him with wonder.)

TIM

Stay here. I'll grab them and then you. Right back.

(He darts out of the room only to return a moment later with one of HENRY's lamps.)

See. Gotta be antiques. Antiques are always ugly!

(He sets the lamp down and then crosses to the MAN and starts to untie him when he hears the group coming up from the basement.)

Oh shit. Here they come. I can't . . . uh, the antiques . . . shit . . . I'll be back for you. I promise.

(He runs out the front door.)

PHIL (OS)

There. See now Henry. Isn't that free and unrestricting!?

(A beat later, the group from the basement re-enters, but this time, HENRY is wearing a tight, black negligee and spike heels. PHYLLIS carries another in her hands.)

HENRY

In your golf bag, Susan! Spike heels in your golf bag. Why the hell would you have spike heels in your Goddam golf bag?

SUSAN

I don't know, Henry. They were just there.

HENRY

Just there? Just there! Nobody has a pair of black, spike heels "just there" in their golf bag. A sweat band, yes. An old pair of shoes, yes! But not a pair of black spikes!

BITSY

I'm surprised we didn't find the handcuffs and whip as well. Must have left those in your locker at the club, eh, Susan?

SUSAN

Wait a minute. I know why they were there. You asked to borrow them.

HENRY

Me?

SUSAN

Not you, you moron.

PHYLLIS

Though you might have wanted them for one of your Boy Scout sessions with Simon!

SUSAN

You, Bitsy. You asked. About a month ago. I forgot I put them in there to bring to you at the club.

BITSY

Nice try, Susan. Nice try indeed. But that is a lie.

HENRY

Stop it, both of you. I don't believe either of you. For all I know you're both involved in this.

BITSY

Now that is totally ridiculous.

SUSAN

And disgusting.

PHYLLIS

Of course, on the bathroom wall it did say . . .

PHIL

I wrote that.

PHYLLIS

Oh. Okay.

BITSY

Besides, Henry, any comment on behavior coming from someone dressed like you doesn't hold much weight.

HENRY

I'm only dressed liked this because Phil the pervert over there has a gun!

SUSAN

Technically that's not true.

HENRY

What?

BITSY

What!

SUSAN

Now, I don't really want to give up your secrets, Henry, but under the circumstances . . .

HENRY

What are you talking about?

SUSAN

Oh come on, Henry darling. Let's not play games. We all know what you prefer, you know, in private. When you're with me, that is. Not with Simon.

PHIL

I don't know.

PHYLLIS

Me either.

BITSY

I don't want to.

PHIL

Okay, here we go then. Susan. On the rug!

PHYLLIS

Uh? Phil, darling?

PHIL

Yes?

PHYLLIS

Why am I carrying another piece of lingerie?

PHIL

Why for Tim, of course. Wouldn't want him to feel left out.

PHYLLIS

Of course not.

(They both turn and discover TIM gone.)

PHIL

Wait a minute . . . Tim's gone!

BITSY

Gosh, nothing gets by you.

PHIL

Whatever, it doesn't matter. Susan, on the rug. Henry, Bitsy, on the couch.

SUSAN

Henry. Bitsy. He said, "On the couch." That shouldn't be too hard for you since you apparently you spend quite a bit of time on couches with each other.

HENRY

If I were going to have an affair, it certainly wouldn't be with Bitsy. Her mustache would tickle.

PHIL

First question.

SUSAN

I can hardly wait.

PHIL

What exactly did you mean about Henry a few moments ago?

SUSAN

Well, since I'm on the rug and must tell the truth: he likes to dress up as Taylor Swift. But only on Saturdays. That's his pop star day. Wednesdays he prefers to dress as his favorite actress. Mondays it's random famous historical women, like Eleanor Roosevelt. And on Thursdays, he likes to be his mom or sister. It's very sick.

HENRY

She's making that up.

PHYLLIS

She can't be. She's on the rug.

HENRY

That doesn't mean anything!

PHIL

I, for one, believe her. So, Susan, question number two.

SUSAN

What?

PHIL

An opinion question. What did you think of the music in my last film?

SUSAN

What? How would I know? I don't watch that trash!

PHIL

Oops! A lie. A terrible, terrible lie.

SUSAN

I don't!

PHIL

Now, Susan. We know you do. In fact, you have your own copy upstairs, in the dresser beside your bed.

SUSAN

What? How did you . . . Henry, you son-of-a-bitch.

HENRY

We were just talking. You know. Idle conversation.

SUSAN

Idle conversation? Idle conversation! About our sex life?

HENRY

It wasn't exactly about our sex life. It was more about . . . films.

PHYLLIS

He's right. We were talking about films right then. Rest assured. When we were talking about your sex life, he didn't have much to say at all.

PHIL

In fact, next to nothing. He just looked bored.

PHYLLIS

Yeah. The only thing he really mentioned was that Susan preferred . . .

SUSAN

Enough!

PHIL

She's right, honey. That's enough. Besides, we need to move on to her punishment.

PHYLLIS

Okay. I'll stop. I won't even mention the vacuum cleaner or the stuffed monkey.

PHIL

Good. Because we certainly don't want to embarrass her. Alright, Susan, you were caught in a lie. Punishment. Let's see.

SUSAN

Bring it on, Phil!

PHIL

Oh, sex puppy!

PHYLLIS

Yes, my stallion?

PHIL

Would you perhaps take out those pictures we took last night and show them to Susan?

SUSAN

No! Oh God. No! Please . . .

(PHYLLIS crosses over to the table where she left her purse and takes a stack of pictures out. She then crosses to SUSAN and begins showing them to her.)

PHYLLIS

Ohhhh. Here's a good one. Look how good Phil looks. It's his good side!

SUSAN

Ohhhhhh.

PHYLLIS

And here's one of my favorites. I can't believe this was just last night!

PHIL

Show her the next one! Show her the next one! See how flexible I am!

(PHIL is goofy with excitement and moves in close to enjoy the moment)

as PHYLLIS pushes another photo in front of SUSAN.)

SUSAN

Nooooooo!

(She snaps and can take no more. She violently throws her hands up to shield her eyes, and in the process, accidentally knocks the gun out of PHIL's hands. Pictures fly everywhere as SUSAN flails about.)

PHYLLIS

Oh my God! My art! Save them!

PHIL

(Dives to the floor after the pictures.)

I've got 'em!

(The gun clatters across the floor close to where HENRY stands. He tries to grab it but can't move fast enough in his high heels. BITSY, sees the gun, goes for it, but SUSAN arrives first. She ends up sitting on the floor with BITSY kneeling in front of her, the gun pointed straight between her eyes.)

SUSAN

Freeze!

(Everyone freezes, including PHIL and PHYLLIS, who were both on the floor frantically trying to gather the photos. They freeze into a pseudo "doggie-style" position, though unintentional. SUSAN points the gun at them.)

SUSAN

Except you two. I've already seen enough of you two. Henry, darling, please step on the rug.

HENRY

This is getting carried away. Can't we just forget this nonsense?

SUSAN

Not on your life, Henry. Get on the rug.

(He reluctantly does.)

Now, my dearest husband, when you were telling Paul and Paula Pervert there . . .

PHIL

(Whispers to PHYLLIS.)

Is that us?

PHYLLIS

(Whispering back.)

I think so.

SUSAN

. . . all about our sex life, which incidentally is now officially over, did you happen to mention what you liked to do with the dog collar and coosh ball whip?

HENRY

Uh . . . yes . . . of course I did.

(PHIL and PHYLLIS shake their heads, "no.")

SUSAN

Oh, dear. A lie.

HENRY

Shit.

SUSAN

Punishment then.

BITSY

She's probably going to reinstate the sex life. That'll teach him.

SUSAN

Henry

(She aims the gun at his lamp.)

HENRY

Oh, God. No. Not my lamp. Don't hurt it.

SUSAN

Oh, Henry. I would never do that. I would never harm your precious lamp.

(He looks at her with great suspicion.)

HENRY

You wouldn't?

SUSAN

No. I won't. You will.

HENRY

What? No. No I won't.

SUSAN

You will. Or I'll shoot you, you pompous ass.

(She takes aim. He stands resolute.
She lowers the aim of the gun to his
crotch. Realizing, he panics.)

HENRY

Okay! Okay! Fine!

SUSAN

Good. Now pick it up.

(He does.)

Go to the front door and open it.

(He does.)

And throw that ugly, hideous thing out it.

HENRY

Ohhhh.

(He feebly raises the lamp. SUSAN
takes better aim.)

SUSAN

And Henry. Hard! Throw it hard!

(HENRY appears as if in physical
pain as he hoists the lamp. He takes a
moment, and then, with all his
strength, he flings it out the door. At
that very moment, we hear the voice
of TIM yell out.)

TIM

I'm comin' Bruno! Hold . . . ughhhhh!

(Everybody rushes to and looks out the door.)

HENRY

Oh shit. Tim.

BITSY

Tim!

PHIL

Great throw!

(The group leaves through the front door and then reappears a moment later with PHIL, PHYLLIS, and BITSY carrying the unconscious TIM to the couch. HENRY follows them in carrying the broken bits of his lamp. They lay TIM on the couch again.)

SUSAN

Bitsy, your turn on the rug.

BITSY

Isn't this getting a bit old, Susan? I mean, haven't we just about worn the rug thing out?

SUSAN

Get on it.

BITSY

Fine. Fine. I have absolutely nothing to hide.

SUSAN

Question number one.

BITSY

I can hardly contain my excitement.

SUSAN

Are you having an affair?

BITSY

Yes.

HENRY

What?

SUSAN

What?

PHIL

Wow.

PHYLLIS

Cool.

SUSAN
With who?

BITSY
You should know the answer to that, Susan.

SUSAN
Why should I know?

BITSY
Because we share him, silly.

SUSAN
What?

BITSY
Him, you silly goose.
(She points to the strange MAN, who looks horrified. He shakes his head and says something unintelligible.)

We share him.

SUSAN
You lie.

BITSY
Nope. I'm on the rug. Gotta tell the truth.

SUSAN
We do not share him!

BITSY
You mean he's all mine? You were lying earlier? Oh goody!

SUSAN
No. I wasn't . . . I mean, yes . . . no . . . you lie.

BITSY
Make up your mind. Who's the liar, you or me?

SUSAN
You. And it's time for punishment.

BITSY
You can't punish me. I didn't lie.

SUSAN

I say you did, and since I have the gun, I'm the judge. Phil! Phyllis! Front and center.

PHIL

Uh-oh.

PHYLLIS

I don't like the sounds of this!

BITSY

My God. What are you going to do?

SUSAN

Okay Perverts, one on each side of her. We're gonna make a Bitsy sandwich.

BITSY (Horrified.)

Please, Susan. Just kill me. Shoot me. In the stomach. I'll die slowly and painfully. I promise. Anything but this.

PHIL

Or put some tape on her upper lip and pull. That'd hurt.

SUSAN

Oh no, Phil. You've got it all wrong. We're going to have fun. It's going to be fun. And physical.

HENRY

I think I'm going to vomit.

SUSAN

You just wait your turn, Henry. I'm puttin' you in there next. Then, my lover and I are going to tie you all up and up and go have wild stallion sex. Aren't we pookiekins?

(The MAN in the chair is wildly shaking his hid "no.")

SUSAN

Okay, Phil, time to get down to action. Phyllis, you too.

(She follows, full of fear.)

Okay, now, one on each side of her. C'mon. All three of you on the rug! You can fit, despite Bitsy's fat ass. Squeeze on in there. Okay, Phillips. Get your arms around her. Good. Now: Grope!

PHIL, PHYLLIS, and BITSY

What?!

SUSAN

You heard me. Grope. Pet. Feel her up! Get to it.

I can't. I really can't.

PHIL

Me neither.

PHYLLIS

God no, please no

BITSY

Molest her! Now!!!!

SUSAN

(She moves in to push them together.)

Noooooooooo!

BITSY

(Bitsy erupts from the rug, knocking the gun from SUSAN'S hand. Everyone dives for the gun as it skids across the floor and ends up at the feet of HAROLD. He steps on the gun.)

HENRY

(As he picks up the gun.)

Oh yes! Yes! Now this is more like it.

PHIL

Thank God.

PHYLLIS

Yes, congratulations, Henry. You saved us.

HENRY

Shut up you perverts.

PHIL

Great. Now he's calling us perverts.

PHYLLIS

Like he should talk.

PHIL

(To HENRY.)

Hello kettle, this is the pot, you're black.

HENRY

On the rug, Susan.

SUSAN

I'm not setting foot on that rug.

HENRY

Alright, Susan. Have it your way. We don't really care what you have to say anyway. We'll just jump right to the punishment.

SUSAN

Fine. Go right ahead.

HENRY

Get outside. In fact, all of you. Outside.

BITSY

What in God's name for?

HENRY

You all are going to gather up all the pieces of my broken lamp.

BITSY

Again, what in God's name for?

HENRY

Because Susan is going to glue it all back together.

SUSAN

What do you think you could possibly do to force me into that? I would rather you shoot me than have to glue something that hideous back together. I will mold myself physically to Phil there before I would touch that lamp with my bare hands.

PHIL

Oooh, I don't think that would be such a good idea.

PHYLLIS

You bet your sweet, chippy ass it isn't.

SUSAN

So in short, Henry, go screw yourself.

PHIL

I don't think that's such a good idea either.

PHYLLIS

Might be interesting to watch him try. Ya know he could . . . you know like . . .

HENRY

Let's put it another way, Susan. If you don't do as I say, I will proceed to tell everyone here what you did on tape last year. You know, that tape I have upstairs in my dresser. Need I remind you more? Or should I just go get the tape and demonstrate it? Then Phyllis Scott Fitzgerald over there can spend the rest of her life writing it in novel form on the walls of every bathroom in the world! So what do you think?

SUSAN

Let's get the damn lamp.

HENRY

I thought you'd see it my way. Let's go.

PHIL

Novel form? That's a pretty good idea.

HENRY

Let's go! You too, Bitsy.

(The group leaves the room out the front door to retrieve what is left of the lamp. The room is silent for a moment, and then, as expected, TIM stirs. He wakes and looks around. The MAN doesn't even look startled this time.)

TIM

Oh. Oh my God. Ouch. My head feels like shit.

(He looks over and sees the MAN. He looks confused. The MAN just looks at him. TIM reaches over and pulls the tape off.)

MAN

Don't say it.

TIM

Don't say what?

MAN

Don't ask me who I am.

TIM

How did you know I was going to ask that?

MAN
Call it a lucky guess.

TIM
(The realization.)
Oh shit!

MAN
I know. I know. You don't know who you are either, right?

TIM
Jesus! How did you know that?

(The MAN's voice adopts a "sensual"
tone. Very deliberate.)

MAN
Do you really have to do this every time we have a gig?

TIM
Do what? What gig?

MAN
Listen Julio

TIM
Julio?

MAN
It's your name, silly.

TIM
Julio?

MAN
Of course. Julio the Lustful Latin Lover.

TIM
But I'm not Latin.
(Pause.)
Am I?

MAN
No. And I'm not Italian, but I play Antonio the Awesome Ass-man.

TIM
What in God's name are you talking about?

MAN

You, you silly lush of a man, you drink too much bubbly, pass out, and forget everything.

TIM

I do?

MAN

Oh, you do. And then we take advantage of you and violate you in so many ways.

TIM

(Looks horrified.)

You do?

MAN

Oh, yes. Oh yes, sweet meat!

TIM

Uh . . . where are we?

MAN

You don't know?

TIM

No.

MAN

You certainly overdid it this time, now didn't you?

TIM

Yeah. I guess.

MAN

You and I, my friend, are Julio and Antonio, the exotic strip team.

TIM

We are?

MAN

Oh yes.

TIM

And what are we doing here?

MAN

I think our title says it all!

Oh my God. TIM

Now will you go get ready? MAN

Ready? TIM

Yes, you precious little pickle. There's your costume. Run up and put it on. MAN

(TIM looks at the negligee that was
left on the couch earlier.)

This? TIM

It's what you like. MAN

I do? TIM

You do! MAN

Well . . . okay . . . I guess. TIM
(He starts to go.)

Are you sure I do?

Oh, Julio! Haven't we been working together for over a year now? I think I would know by now, sweet thing, what you like and what you don't. MAN

Yeah. Okay. Right. Right! I think I remember. Yes! Yes, I do! I'm Julio! I'm Latin! You're Antonio! TIM

(He looks down and sees the
negligee on the couch.)

Hey. My costume! I'll go change. Be right back.

No! Wait! MAN

What? TIM

MAN

Untie me first.

TIM

And ruin our act? Just hang tight. I'll be right back.

(He starts to leave.)

Oops. Gotta make sure everything is set.

(He replaces the tape.)

Right back.

(He takes the negligee and exits up the stairs. Moments later, the group from outside returns. They don't notice that TIM is gone as HENRY marches them across the room and to the basement.)

HENRY

Okay. Now, we're gonna do some gluing.

BITSY

Great!

SUSAN

Henry, can we just quit this?

HENRY

Let's see . . . I think the story would start something like, "Once there was a woman with an electric pink shock collar and"

SUSAN

Okay! Okay! Let's get the glue.

(The group exits into the basement. Moments later, TIM reappears. He is very uncomfortably dressed in the negligee and he even has some spikes on. He can't walk very well. He comes down the stairs to the MAN.)

TIM

This is good! Very good! But I think . . . I seem to remember . . .

(A realization!)

Whipped cream! I need whipped cream. Be right back.

(He exits to the kitchen. Moments later, the group from the basement re-emerges.)

HENRY

Okay. Start gluing.

SUSAN

Henry. We can't glue this together. In fact, we shouldn't glue this together. It's better this way. To put it back the way it was would be like a sin against nature. It would be like using Hitler's DNA to make a new man.

HENRY

That's it. Punishment time.

SUSAN

What? We haven't even been on the rug.

HENRY

Right you are. We must follow the rules. Phil! On the rug.

BITSY

What could he possibly have to tell us that we don't already know? This has been a rather revealing evening.

HENRY

I don't think we've covered ol' Phil's sex life nearly enough.

SUSAN

What? Have you seen their films? Everyone in the country has seen their sex life.

PHYLLIS

Everyone in the country? Oh, Susan! You make me sound like such a star.

PHIL

You are, baby. You are!

HENRY

Not their sex life. His.

PHIL and PHYLLIS

What?

HENRY

Are you, Phil, screwing Dr. Fredrickson's wife?

SUSAN

That's what I heard!

PHIL

No. I'm not. I mean, I read that too. Pizza Palace. Fourth stall. Right above the toilet paper dispenser. But I'm not. I don't even know Dr. Fredrickson's wife. Or Dr. Fredrickson for that matter.

BITSY

I heard it was true as well. From a very reliable source.

PHYLLIS

You are sick, sick people!

HENRY

I think we have a lie. Now we can have punishment. Phil . . .

PHIL

Yes?

HENRY

Pull up your dress.

SUSAN, BITSY, and PHYLLIS

What?!

HENRY

You heard me. Lift it.

SUSAN

Henry, I'm not sure where you're going with this, but don't

HENRY

UPSY-DAISY!

PHIL

Okay.

(He lifts his dress.)

There.

HENRY

Bitsy, give me the glue.

BITSY

Oh my god.

(She does.)

HENRY

Susan. Your hand, please.

HENRY (Cont.)

(She looks at him with horror but holds out her hand. HENRY puts a bunch of glue into the palm of her hand, then takes her by the wrist, moves her over to PHIL, and slaps her hand to his butt.)

There now. Isn't that nice? Insta-glue. Sticks instantly! Great stuff!!! Did a great ad for this stuff. With *good* music! Can't believe how well it works. Doesn't it just amaze you!

PHIL

I don't think I like this.

(A low, feral growl starts to escape from PHYLLIS.)

SUSAN

Oh my God. I think I'm going to be sick.

HENRY

Bitsy! Bring me your hand.

BITSY

I will not!

HENRY

It's your hand or your lips. You choose.

BITSY

You son-of-a-bitch. Fine.

(She starts to go to HENRY when PHYLLIS explodes.)

PHYLLIS

Noooooooooo!

(She attacks HENRY before he can react and tackles him on the floor. HENRY screams. PHYLLIS howls like a wild banshee.)

I'll kill you. I'll gut you with a spoon and eat your corpse. You . . .

(PHIL grabs her and pulls her off HENRY. SUSAN comes along since her hand is glued to his butt.

PHYLLIS somehow got the gun when she attached HENRY.)

PHIL

Baby! Little Sweet Pickle! Stop!

(PHYLLIS pauses. She looks about almost in wonder, surprised by her own ferocity.)

PHYLLIS

I'm sorry, Phil. I'm sorry. I couldn't take it. He was trying to defile you!

PHIL

I know. I know. It's okay, baby. Let's just go in the kitchen and get something to remove the glue. Okay.

PHYLLIS

Okay. Yes. We'll do that. Into the kitchen. All of you. Into the kitchen.

BITSY

Why do I have to go? My hand isn't glued to his butt.

PHYLLIS

Because maybe whatever we use to remove the glue from her hand can also remove that hamster that's glued to your upper lip.

BITSY

I do not . . .

PHYLLIS

Get in there! NOW!

(We hear TIM's voice from the kitchen.)

TIM

Now? Okay, I'm coming . . .

BITSY

Tim?

PHYLLIS

GO!

(HENRY pushes the door open into the kitchen just as TIM is apparently on the other side of it preparing to enter. We hear the thud of the door

hitting TIM. He falls back through the door, spurting whip cream everywhere and falls over the back of the couch out cold.)

HENRY

Oops.

PHIL

Wow.

PHYLLIS

Leave him! Into the kitchen.

(The group exits into the kitchen, leaving TIM and the MAN alone again. Everything stays still a moment, and then TIM groans and stirs. He wakes. He sits up, looks around. He looks at the MAN, wondering. He looks down at what he is wearing. He reaches over and rips off the tape.)

MAN (Frantic)

Don't say anything!

TIM

What? Who . . .

MAN

They'll kill you.

TIM

What are you

MAN

They want to kill me!

TIM

Who?

MAN

Those women. They've found out about us. They've gone crazy.

TIM

What women?

Henry's wife and some other lunatic. MAN

Henry? Who's Henry? TIM

Your lover. MAN

My . . . ? TIM

They found out about us. Our love triangle. They want to kill us all. MAN

I have a lover named Henry? TIM

Oh, don't play stupid. Don't act like our sessions of love meant nothing! MAN

Our . . . you mean you . . . and me . . . and . . . ? TIM

Henry. Yes. And they were beautiful. MAN

And now some women want to kill me? TIM

Yes. And me. MAN

Why? TIM

They're jealous. What do you think? They discover their men in a three-way love triangle and they what, want to join in? MAN

This doesn't seem TIM

There's no more time! Hurry! Save us! Just hurry! MAN

TIM

Okay. Okay. I'll get a knife.
(He starts for the kitchen.)

MAN

No! They're in there!

(We hear noise from the kitchen.)

TIM

They're coming! I'll hide and come back for you.

MAN

No. Wait. This is getting ridiculous. Get me untied . . .

(But it is too late, TIM slaps the tape back on his face and runs up the stairs. Moments later, enter the group, with SUSAN'S hand off of PHIL'S butt.)

PHYLLIS

Okay. Now enough of this. We are finally going to get everything cleared up. Susan. Bitsy. On the rug.

(Phil notices the empty couch.)

PHIL

Wait a minute! Tim's gone again.

BITSY (Sarcastic)

Your genius never ceases to amaze me!

PHYLLIS

Susan. Bitsy. On the rug!

BITSY

Susan and Bitsy? How much room do you think there is on that rug?

SUSAN

She's right. Her ass will take up most of the available space. Whatever isn't filled up by her Sasquatch mustache.

BITSY

Yeah, well there actually should be plenty of room as your tits certainly won't take up much.

SUSAN

Fine.

(She steps on to half of the rug.)

I have nothing to hide.

BITSY

Neither do I.

(She steps onto the other half.)

PHYLLIS

To begin with, just for research purposes so that I know what I write is indeed the truth, are you having an affair?

SUSAN and BITSY

Yes.

PHYLLIS

With who?

SUSAN and BITSY

Him.

(They both point at the MAN.)

PHYLLIS

Alright. Good. Now that we've covered that beautiful little part of your sex life, let's find out more. Have you heard of anyone else having an affair?

BITSY

Yes. I have.

PHYLLIS

Great. You see, now we're getting some place. All this truth and goodness. And who is Henry screwing?

BITSY

I'm not talking about Henry.

PHYLLIS

Okay. Tim then.

BITSY

Nope. Good guess, but nope. Not Tim.

PHYLLIS

Then who are we talking about?

BITSY

Phil.

(There is a brief pause.)

PHYLLIS

What did you say?

BITSY

I said Phil. He's the other one. He's having an affair.

SUSAN

She's right. I heard that, too.

BITSY

You heard it? I read it. On the women's bathroom wall. Must be true since that seems to be the benchmark of truth around here.

SUSAN

I read that too!

PHYLLIS

No. No way. Not my Phillikins. He would never cheat on me.

PHIL

Never my little gerbil. Never.

HENRY

I don't know. I read it, too.

(They all look at him.)

In a different place. I read it in a different place.

PHYLLIS

It isn't possible. You're all lying. And you know what that means.

SUSAN

We aren't lying. We're on the rug!

PHYLLIS

You are. And that means punishment. And proof. I'll prove to you that Phil isn't cheating on me.

BITSY

Proof? How are you going to provide proof?

PHYLLIS

Everyone upstairs.

HENRY

Why?

PHYLLIS
To the bedroom.

SUSAN
Oh my God, what are you going to do?

PHYLLIS
Phil, muffin?

PHIL
Yes Sweet Pickle?

PHYLLIS
We're going to show them how much you love me. We're going to demonstrate our love for them.

PHIL
Incredible idea!

PHYLLIS
It won't be possible for them to doubt afterwards.

PHIL
To the love nest!

SUSAN
Please, no. No! We were lying.

BITSY
Right through our teeth!

SUSAN
Just gut shoot us instead?

PHYLLIS
Let's go!

(She starts to force them up the stairs
and into the same bedroom TIM
exited into. PHIL hangs back a
moment with the MAN.)

PHIL
Do you want to come and experience our love?
(The MAN quickly shakes his head
no; his eyes open wide!)
Okay, you don't know what you're missing.

(He takes off after the others. The stage remains empty for a few moments except for the MAN. He struggles a bit, trying to get loose, but still can't. Tries to get the chair to move, but also to no avail. He sits for a moment, and then we hear the scream. TIM comes running from the bedroom in horror.)

TIM

No! Oh God. I'm blind! I'm blind! It's horrible. Help me. Crazy women! Crazy men! Help!

(He screams his way through the room and into the basement. Moments later the others come screaming out. HENRY leads, screaming in horror. He runs down the stairs and into the kitchen. Next, come BITSY and SUSAN. They run down the stairs and out the front door, leaving it open. PHIL and PHYLLIS follow wrapped in sheets. PHIL exits to the kitchen and PHYLLIS out the front door, still with the gun.)

PHIL

Come back! Come back!

PHYLLIS

We haven't even gotten to the good stuff yet!

PHIL

We were just getting warmed up!

PHYLLIS

The main events are so much better!

(HENRY re-enters from the kitchen. He runs to the front door and out.)

HENRY

Too much Phil! Too much Phil! Too much Phil!

(PHIL enters from the kitchen and chases after HENRY. He exits the

front door. The basement door opens,
TIM rushes out and to the MAN.)

TIM

Are they gone?

(The MAN shakes his head “no.” He
indicates the front door with his
head.)

I’m not leaving you. I can’t. I love you too much. I’ll get something to get you loose
with.

(TIM rushes into the kitchen.
HENRY comes running back in the
front door, heading to the basement.
More screams are heard from outside.
BITSY and SUSAN come rushing
back in, their horror even greater
now. They are pursued by PHIL and
PHYLLIS. PHYLLIS has a battery
powered weed whacker. PHIL brings
up the rear with a video camera. He
now has the gun.)

PHYLLIS

Wait! Wait, it gets better! We have accessories!

(SUSAN runs for the basement,
pursued by PHIL with the camera
and the gun.)

PHIL

Don’t go. You’re very photogenic. We could make you a star!

(BITSY makes for kitchen with
PHYLLIS right behind. Moments
later, TIM comes screaming out.)

TIM

They’re in there! The crazy women are in there. She’s got a weed whacker!

(At the same moment, HENRY
comes screaming out of the basement.
Neither MAN is looking forward,
only behind at what they are fleeing,
and they collide at center stage,
falling to the floor. A beat later,
PHIL and PHYLLIS enter from their
respective rooms. They see the men,

both still in lingerie, lying on the floor. Phil videos them for a moment.)

PHIL

Whoa! Cool.

PHYLLIS

Where's Susan?

PHIL

She's locked herself in the storage room. She won't come out. I thought about trying to shoot the lock off, like in the movies, but decided against it.

PHYLLIS

Good choice. That whole shooting the lock off thing doesn't work. It's just camera tricks. They don't make serious, realistic movies like you do.

PHIL

True. Very true. What has happened to cinema these days?

(He shakes his head in sadness.)

Besides. It wouldn't have worked anyway.

PHYLLIS

Why's that?

PHIL

This is just a pellet gun. Not even loaded. Just an empty pellet gun.

PHYLLIS

Really?! A pellet gun. Do you think Henry knew that?

PHIL

Nah. You know those gay guys. Don't know a thing about firearms.

PHYLLIS

True enough.

PHIL

Where'd Bitsy go?

PHYLLIS

She ran into the backyard. She's up in a tree.

PHIL

Won't she come down?

PHYLLIS

No. I even tried throwing rocks at her. She's a tough one.

PHIL

You know, this party is getting pretty dull. Maybe we should go somewhere else.

PHYLLIS

How about the Kleepmans?

PHIL

Yeah! Their parties are always so much better.

(They start to go.)

Wait. What about the gun?

PHYLLIS

Bring it with. Makes for great party games!

(Phyllis turns back.)

Hey. What about him?

(She indicates the MAN.)

Should we bring him with us?

PHIL

No. I don't think so.

PHYLLIS

Why not?

PHIL

Phyllis. We don't even know him. He could be some kind of crazy sicko, you know. We do have a reputation to uphold.

PHYLLIS

Right. You're right.

(She looks at the man.)

Sorry. Have a great time with the others. Gotta go.

(They rush out the door, not bothering to change. Moments later TIM groans and sits up. HENRY groans as well.)

TIM

Hey. Hey there. You okay?

(Slowly, TIM and HENRY both sit up, both rubbing their heads.)

My God, what hit me? HENRY

I think I did. I was running . . . TIM

So was I. I was running, and screaming . . . HENRY

Why? TIM

Why? HENRY

Yeah. Why were you screaming? TIM

Because . . . well . . . I was scared . . . I think . . . HENRY

Me too . . . I was . . . I . . . TIM

Who's that guy? HENRY
(Pointing to the MAN.)

That guy? He's . . . wait . . . TIM

Wait! Who am I? Who are you guys? HENRY

You? You're . . . TIM

My God, I don't know who I am! HENRY

Wait! Wait! Wait! TIM

What? HENRY

It's all coming back to me! TIM

It is?

HENRY

Yes! Yes! It's all coming back! I remember everything! Everything!

TIM

You do?

HENRY

Yes! I'm . . . Tim!

TIM

You are? Good. Who am I?

HENRY

You're Henry!

TIM

Oh good! Henry! I like that. Who's he?

HENRY

Him. Well, he's . . .

TIM

He's what?

HENRY

He's our lover! Bruno!

TIM

He is? Bruno?

HENRY

Yes. He is. Oh God, I'm glad I can remember. I remember everything! He's Bruno. We're lovers! Oh my God!

TIM

What?

HENRY

There's more. I remember more. We're lovers, but we're also . . . oh my!

TIM

What?!

HENRY

TIM

We're also robbers. We're gay robbers. We're robbing this house!

HENRY

We are? Why?

TIM

It's all coming back to me. We're . . . we're an exotic strip team and we're looking for antiques, and . . . oh my God . . . there are crazy women in the house with guns! We gotta get outta here!

HENRY

We do?

TIM

They want to kill us. They want to kill our lover. They want to kill our love!

HENRY

We can't let them!

TIM

No. We can't.

(He goes to the MAN.)

Sit tight. We'll get clothes and then be right back with something to get you loose.

HENRY

Yes. Wait here. We'll be right back.

(As HENRY follows TIM to the bedroom, he looks back at the man.)

You know, he's pretty cute.

(They rush upstairs to the bedroom. Seconds later, BITSY peers in the front door. She looks around to make sure there is no-one else in the room. She quickly sneaks over to the MAN and pulls the tape off his mouth.)

BITSY

Oh, my love. Oh my. What are you even doing here?

MAN

I was looking for you.

BITSY

Here? You were looking for me here? Are you crazy?

MAN

Get me out of here.

BITSY

I will. I will, my big stallion of love.

(She tries to untie him but can't get it.)

I have a knife in the car. I'll be right back. Don't move.

MAN

If I could move I would have been gone long ago!

BITSY

Right. Sorry. Here, let me put the tape back in case someone else shows up.

MAN

No, don't

(BITSY slaps the tape on, then kisses it.)

BITSY

I'll be right back.

(She quickly exits out the front door.
A beat later, SUSAN'S head pops
out the basement door. She glances
about. She comes quickly into the
room.)

SUSAN

All night. All night I try to get in here alone.

(She removes the tape.)

Are you crazy, coming here? Without your wife! What were you thinking, Freddie?

MAN

Don't call me Freddy. I told you I hate that.

SUSAN

But it's so cute. And so much better than stuffy, old Dr. Fredrickson.

MAN

This really isn't the time!

SUSAN

Right. Oh, you romantic fool. What if they caught you? Henry would kill me if he knew you were my lover.

MAN

They did catch me!!! And you told Henry! You told everyone!

SUSAN

Right. But they didn't believe me. Okay. Let me get you out of this.

(SUSAN starts to untie the MAN.)

I can't get this. At least they didn't believe that bitch, Bitsy, either. What a slut! Can you believe her? Trying to say she was your lover. Can you imagine?!

MAN

No! No, of course not. How revolting!

SUSAN

I'll say.

(The ropes come loose.)

I think I've got it.

MAN

Go get the car. I'll finish this.

SUSAN

Okay. Hurry. Wait. My keys. My keys are upstairs. I'll be right back.

MAN

No! Don't go up there. They're up there.

SUSAN

Oh. Okay. There's an extra set in my golf bag. I'll be right back.

(SUSAN exits to the basement. The MAN finishes getting himself out of the ropes and stands.)

MAN

Ow. Shit.

(His feet still hurt.)

Don't get involved with both them I tell myself. Don't mess with either of them. Do I listen? No. What an idiot! I gotta get outta here.

(He starts for the front door when he hears BITSY call out.)

BITSY (OS)

I'm coming, my stallion!

MAN

Oh, shit.

(He turns and runs through the kitchen door and then we hear a yelp and a thud. At that moment, HENRY and TIM come out of the bedroom. They see the empty chair.)

HENRY

Oh my God! They got him!

TIM

No. Oh no. Don't let it be! Bruno!

(They rush downstairs, frantic. They hear a groan from the kitchen and so they go in. Moments later they reappear carrying the MAN who is covered in whipped cream. They take him to the couch.)

TIM

Oh my cupcake! Wake up!

HENRY

I think he's going to be okay. He just slipped in the whipped cream.

TIM

Don't leave us, baby. Don't leave me!

(He falls to his knees to pray - loudly.)

Save him, dear God. Don't let him die. Please. I beg you.

(The MAN groans.)

HENRY

He's okay! He's okay!

TIM

Thank you, God! Thank you!

(The MAN slowly comes to.)

MAN

Oh, shit. My head. Damn.

HENRY

It's okay. You're okay.

TIM

Thank God!

MAN

God. That hurt.

(He looks around.)

Who are you?

HENRY

Who am I? You don't know who I am?

MAN

No. Who's he?

TIM

Me? You don't remember me? Oh God, don't let this be!

HENRY

It's okay. We're here with you now.

MAN

What hit me?

TIM

Whipped cream!

MAN

Whipped cream?

TIM

Yes.

MAN

Wait. It's coming back to me. I think I remember. I'm . . .

HENRY

What?

MAN

I'm

TIM

Yes?

MAN

Bruno! My name is Bruno!

HENRY

Yes! And we're going to save you, Bruno!

MAN

Save me? From what?

HENRY

Those crazy women.

MAN
What women?

TIM
The ones jealous of our love!

MAN
Our love?

HENRY
Yes, our love. Now let's get out of here.

TIM
We'll explain it all in the car, you master of passion.

HENRY
Yes. We love you.

TIM
And we'll take you home and nurse your wounds!

MAN
Well, if you say so . . .

TIM
Let's go, my little cookie!
(TIM grabs the MAN around the waist and helps him walk. They exit out the kitchen, to escape. HENRY is following when he stops, looking at the rug, still lying on the floor.)

HENRY
Hey. You know. I have a great idea.
(He picks up the rug, admiring it.)
This could really be used to solve a lot of problems.
(He tucks the rug under his arm and exits, following TIM and the MAN. A moment passes. Suddenly BITSY appears in the front door at the same time that SUSAN comes out of the basement, dangling the keys.)

I'm here for you, my lover!

BITSY

I've got them, Freddie!

SUSAN

(They stop and look at each other in amazement.)

BLACKOUT.

END OF PLAY