

Cabbage To Caviar
By Lindsay Price

Lindsay Price (c) 2004

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CHARACTERS

Hugh Chapman - Has just won 20 million dollars

Aggie Chapman - Hugh's sister

Doug Malamy - Real estate agent. Hugh's "best" friend

Lucy Chapman - Hugh and Aggie's younger cousin

Carter Orton - Dating Lucy

Wynter Basso - Toronto socialite

The Tailor

The Arts Advisor

The Yogi

The Tailor, Arts Advisor and Yogi can be easily doubled by Lucy, Carter and Wynter.

SETTING

The setting is a room in Hugh Chapman's new fancy home. The furniture can be flexible but should reflect someone who has no taste: Hugh buys things because they are expensive, not because they necessarily look good.

All you really need is: a lamp with removable shade, a sideboard that can hold a notebook, and place for artwork (particularly one sculpture and one painting)

This play is based on *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (The Would-Be Gentleman) by Moliere.

ACT ONE

The setting is a room in HUGH Chapman's fancy new home. The YOGI enters carrying a bag and a yoga mat. She looks around to make sure she is alone.

YOGI:

Hello? Mr. Chapman? Anybody home?

Convinced no one is there, she pulls out a book.

YOGI:

(reading)

In this hustle and bustle, crazy stressed out world, many are turning to the peace and tranquility of yoga. This book will provide easy instruction and step by step pictures of the various poses. Ooooh pictures!

Off stage a door slams, causing the YOGI to toss the book in the air behind her with a scream. The TAILOR comes running in.

TAILOR:

Has he come down yet? Is he here? Is he here?

YOGI:

(in a soothing tone)

No need to hustle and bustle my friend. Mr. Chapman has not appeared.

TAILOR:

This backwards village has no seven-ply thread. How can I soutache the cuffs without seven-ply? I need more ply!

The TAILOR rushes off. The YOGI scrambles behind her to find the book. Offstage on the opposite side of the stage, another door slam is heard. The YOGI runs centre stage and sits on the book. The ARTS Advisor runs on stage.

ARTS:

Has he come down yet? Is he here? Is he here?

YOGI:

No need to hustle and bustle my friend -

ARTS:

I need more time!

ARTS runs off. YOGI throws the book in her bag and puts it off to the side. During the following the YOGI unrolls her mat and begins to move through various Yoga positions.

The TAILOR enters pushing a mannequin.

YOGI:

Ommmmmmmmmm.

TAILOR:

Did you see that mud puddle out back? So rural. Ugh! I hate being here. Racing back and forth to Toronto is extremely unhealthy for the fabric.

YOGI:

Ommmmmmmmmm.

The TAILOR rushes out and ARTS rushes on holding a couple of paintings.

ARTS:

Did you see that mud puddle? I hate working here. So un-urban. It is so traumatic for the art to be carted back and forth like this.

YOGI:

Ommmmmmmmmm.

ARTS rushes out as TAILOR walks slowly on holding a suit jacket bag. He is carrying the bag as if it could break at any moment.

TAILOR:

Steady....steady....move very slowly.

YOGI:

Is that the suit my friend?

TAILOR:

Quiet! You'll bruise the fabric. I was sure that traveling would have adjusted the seams. My heart would have broken into a thousand teeny tiny pieces of the seams had adjusted.

YOGI:

Ommmmmmmmmm.

ARTS enters very slowly carrying the ugliest sculpture ever. It looks like a giant ashtray with fuzzy pom poms sticking out of it.

ARTS:

Steady.... Steady....move very slowly.

YOGI:

Oh my - ommmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

ARTS:

Thank goodness. I thought it had cracked for sure.

YOGI:

My body is clean.

ARTS:

I hate, hate being here! It's so rural. I wish we could work in Toronto.

YOGI:

My mind is open.

TAILOR:

If you don't want to be here, why don't you leave? Back to the metropolis with you. Don't let the mud puddle splash you on the way out.

YOGI:

Hee hee - Ommmmmmmmmm.

ARTS:

Are you kidding? A man with twenty million dollars and he wants to spend some on me? I'll swim in the mud puddle if he asks me too.

TAILOR:

He might understand that better than he would your art.

ARTS:

Is there something wrong with my art?

TAILOR:

No. Of course not.

ARTS:

Besides, he's getting better.

YOGI:

I breathe in the happiness of the universe.

ARTS:

Yesterday he only mistook Picasso for Monet seventeen times.

YOGI:

Ommmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

ARTS:

In a row.

YOGI:

I let go all my tension and conflict. (*she lets out a noisy breath*)

TAILOR:

Do you have to let go so loudly? This fabric is extremely fragile. Oh! I just might weep with inexpressible joy. It's a masterpiece to behold. (*to the others*) Behold! Well? What do you think?

The TAILOR now has the suit out of the suit jacket and on the mannequin.

YOGI:

Wow - ommmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

ARTS:

That suit is...well it's.....I would have to say that it's.....bright.

TAILOR:

It's the latest design from Paris.

ARTS:

It looks like a chicken threw up flowers all over the front.

TAILOR:

Are you insulting my suit?

ARTS:

What?

TAILOR:

Are you, insulting, my suit.

ARTS:

No. Of course not.

TAILOR:

Are you?

ARTS:

No.

TAILOR:

(accusingly)

Yes!

ARTS:

It's ugly. It's beyond ugly. Not even a mother would love it.

TAILOR:

You have no concept of haute couture.

ARTS:

Are the flowers supposed to be upside down?

TAILOR:

Wha - They are done exactly the way they are supposed to be done. It's floscular furbelow. Surely you've heard of the technique.

ARTS:

If you look up ugly in the dictionary, that suit is there.

TAILOR:

And what is that?

ARTS:

What?

TAILOR:

That! That thing which you think is called art?

ARTS:

This is culture. This is enlightenment.

TAILOR:

That is a giant ashtray with fuzzy pom poms sticking out of it.

ARTS:

It's very expensive.

TAILOR:

Who said ugly was cheap?

ARTS:

Now you listen here you little snot-

YOGI:

My friends, my friends. Remember why we are here. There is no need to fight. We are all one with the universe.

TAILOR & ARTS:

Uh huh.

YOGI:

What?

TAILOR:

You are one with Mr. Chapman's money.

ARTS:

There is a universe in his wallet.

YOGI:

I completely support Mr. Chapman's wishes to become more sophisticated. And I am here to provide spiritual sophistication. I am here to assist in his spiritual enlightenment.

TAILOR & ARTS:

Uh huh.

YOGI:

If it is your desire to use this opportunity to further your own careers or to take his money for pure monetary gain, that is your business. I am here for a purpose of another plane.

During the above ARTS has found the YOGI's bag and pulls out the top book.

ARTS:

What's this?

YOGI:

Hey!

ARTS:

Yoga for Dummies?

YOGI:

Give that back!

TAILOR:

What?

YOGI:

Gimme, gimme, gimme!

TAILOR:

I thought you were one with the universe.

ARTS:

I think she's one with the fraud squad.

YOGI:

You have no idea what you're talking about.

ARTS:

At least you're reading the right book.

YOGI:

At least I know how to read!

The YOGI and ARTS fall to arguing.

TAILOR:

Stop shouting around the fabric! The fabric cannot take any shouting!

HUGH enters. He's wearing sunglasses so he can't exactly see where he's going.

HUGH:

Good morning!

ARTS:

Watch out!

HUGH trips over one of the sculptures and lands sprawled out over the floor. The others go running over to him.

ARTS:

Mr. Chapman!

YOGI:

Are you all right?

TAILOR:

Did you scuff your shoes?

HUGH:

I'm fine. I'm fine.

TAILOR:

Let me help you up.

ARTS:

I'll do it.

YOGI:

No me!

The three tug at him, not really being very helpful.

HUGH:

Thank you. Thank you. Do I still look all right?

TAILOR:

Marvellous.

ARTS:

I love what you've done to your hair.

YOGI:
So sophisticated.

HUGH:
Thank you. *(he hands out some cash)* Here, for all your hard work.

YOGI & TAILOR & ARTS:
Thank you Mr. Chapman!

HUGH:
Is my jacket ready yet?

TAILOR:
Almost Mr. Chapman. I'm just letting the fabric breathe.

ARTS grabs HUGH and pulls him over to the sculptures.

ARTS:
In the meantime, Mr. Chapman why don't we start today's culture lesson.

YOGI takes HUGH's other arm and pulls him in the opposite direction.

YOGI:
Mr. Chapman I can sense your liver is extremely blocked.

HUGH:
Blocked? Really?

YOGI:
I don't want to think about what's happening on in your chakras.

ARTS pulls HUGH away.

ARTS:
Culture first. Yoga after.

YOGI tries to pull HUGH away.

YOGI:
We need to get those limbs limber and the blood flowing.

ARTS:
Nothing gets the blood flowing like looking at art.

ARTS and YOGI start pulling in earnest.

YOGI:
Have you been practising your nostril breathing?

ARTS:

Did you go over your Rembrant flash cards?

YOGI:

Let go you Culture cretin!

ARTS:

Let go you Yoga freak!

HUGH breaks away from the two.

HUGH:

All right, all right, all right. There's no need to tear me to shreds. There's time for everything. Rock Paper Scissors.

ARTS & YOGI:

What?

HUGH:

Rock Paper Scissors. That's how we'll decide who's going first.

TAILOR gives a snorting laugh which he quickly suppresses. ARTS looks at YOGI who shrugs.

YOGI:

When in Rome...

ARTS and YOGI put out their fists.

ARTS:

One, two, three.

ARTS puts out a flat hand and YOGI puts out a fist.

HUGH:

Paper covers Rock. Culture wins.

ARTS:

Yes!

ARTS does a victory dance, before realizing that "victory dances" aren't very cultured or sophisticated.

ARTS:

Ah hem. We're going to look at some abstract art today. First we have this very intense sculpture by Marihee Wana. Look at this piece and tell me what you see.

HUGH:

A giant ashtray with fuzzy pom poms.

TAILOR and YOGI laugh out loud and try to cover it up as coughing.

ARTS:

All right, yes, on a literal level, on a conscious level. But on a deeper, more sophisticated level, the milieu of the piece is exploring the plight of the common man in modern society.

HUGH:

It is?????

ARTS:

Watch out!

HUGH has turned around suddenly and because he has his sunglasses on, can't quite see where he's going so he almost takes out the ashtray art and some other pieces. He ends up on the floor.

ARTS:

Perhaps we could explore without our sunglasses today.

HUGH:

But they're Monticello's. They're *(as if quoting a commercial)* expanding my horizons.

YOGI:

Speaking of horizons, why don't we review your nostril breathing.

HUGH:

Ok.

YOGI:

Nadi Sodnana: Alternate Nostrils. Breathing is very important. It cleans out all the toxins in the body.

HUGH:

Do I have a lot of toxins?

YOGI:

I can see the toxins oozing out of your pours.

HUGH:

Oh no.

YOGI:

There's a toxin sheen on your skin.

ARTS:

Better not get that near the fabric.

YOGI:

Let us begin: First the left. (*they plug the left nostril and breathe heavily out the right*) And then the right. (*they repeat the process with the right nostril*)

ARTS:

Good grief.

YOGI:

Become one with the universe. Be at peace with your life force.

HUGH plugs both nostrils.

YOGI:

Feel the cleansing oxygen moving through you - not both nostrils, not both! Let go, let go!

HUGH:

Sorry. I got carried away.

ARTS hauls HUGH up off the floor and over to a painting of a red splotch on a white canvas.

ARTS:

While you're on your break, let's look at this painting. It's by Ulysses Tool and the original is hanging in the National Gallery. The gallery bought it for three millions dollars.

HUGH:

Three million dollars?? Are you kidding - (*he finds a shred of snobbish poise*) Oh. Three million? Is that all?

ARTS:

Very good Mr Chapman! Snaps for you! (*she snaps her fingers in appreciation*) Now. Tell me what you see.

HUGH considers the painting from all angles, up close and far away.

HUGH:

A blob of ketchup on a snow bank.

TAILOR and YOGI snicker. ARTS whips around to glare at them.

YOGI:

Oommmmmmm.

ARTS:

Mr Chapman. This painting explores the plight of the common man in urban society.

HUGH:

I thought that was the ashtray.

ARTS:

No, no. That was the plight of the common man in modern society. This explores the plight of the common man in urban society. Two totally different concepts.

HUGH:

And condiments.

ARTS:

What?

HUGH:

Ketchup. Mustard. Two completely different condiments.

ARTS:

Does anyone have an aspirin?

TAILOR:

The suit is finished!

HUGH applauds.

TAILOR:

Please! No applause. You'll bruise the fabric. You must try it on immediately. You (*he gestures to ARTS and YOGI*) - step away from the suit. Mr. Chapman. What do you think?

HUGH:

It's very bright.

TAILOR:

It's the latest in Paris design.

HUGH:

Are those flowers....

TAILOR:

Floscular furbelow.

HUGH:

Flatulent farbelow - are they supposed to be upside down?

TAILOR:

Do you think I would make you something that wasn't the latest fashion?

HUGH:

Of course not.

TAILOR:

That I would lead you astray with your style?

HUGH:

Of course not!

TAILOR:

I will drown myself in the mud puddle if you think so low of me.

HUGH:

Don't do that! Don't do that. The suit is wonderful. I did want to tell you though, I think these shoes you've given me are too small. They pinch.

TAILOR:

The shoes do not pinch.

HUGH:

Yes they do. I can tell they pinch because I can feel them pinching.

TAILOR:

It is all in your imagination. The shoes fit perfectly.

HUGH:

But -

TAILOR:

Silence! It is now time to wear the suit.

ARTS and YOGI do a little trumpet raspberry with their lips.

TAILOR:

Silence! Mr. Chapman. Assume the position.

HUGH snaps to attention with his arms straight out. The TAILOR helps HUGH get into the jacket.

TAILOR:

The finest Jaconet, Jacquard, Jardinere. The most exquisite Bombazine and Brocatelle. Crepe, crepon and crap (he clears his throat) A masterpiece to behold. Behold!

AGGIE, HUGH's sister, enters. She takes one look at HUGH in his suit and starts to laugh.

Disgraceful!
TAILOR:

HUGH:
Aggie you stop that right now.

AGGIE:
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

TAILOR:
It's very rude to laugh at people.

HUGH:
Very rude.

AGGIE:
I know, I know. It's just that you look a neon peacock
exploded on your chest.

HUGH:
(to the others)
Is that a bad thing?

TAILOR:
Absolutely not!

ARTS:
You look wonderful.

YOGI:
She doesn't know what she's talking about.

HUGH:
(to AGGIE)
You don't know what you're talking about.

AGGIE:
I know what ugly looks like.

HUGH:
I won't have you laughing at my tailor's hard work.

AGGIE:
You look so ridiculous.

HUGH:
(to the others)
Do you think I look ridiculous?

TAILOR:
Absolutely not!

ARTS:

You look wonderful!

YOGI:

A vision to behold.

TAILOR:

You are without a doubt a sophisticated gentleman!

HUGH:

Thank you. I knew I could count on you. (*he hands each of them some money*) Here, for all your hard work.

TAILOR & ARTS & YOGI:

Thank you Mr. Chapman.

AGGIE:

No they're not biased at all.

HUGH:

Perhaps we should continue with my lessons latter.

YOGI:

As you wish.

TAILOR:

We are at your service.

ARTS:

At your beck at call.

*The YOGI makes the "call me" gesture.
The three exit.*

AGGIE:

Watch out of the mud puddle. I'd hate to see you lose your cash in the undertow. (*she turns to HUGH*) Oh Hughie.

HUGH:

Hugh. It's Hugh.

AGGIE:

This money is making you lose your marbles.

HUGH:

I would think you'd be grateful. All I get is grief! I offered to buy the diner for you.

AGGIE:

The diner and I are doing just fine.

HUGH:

I bought this wonderful house -

AGGIE:

Eyesore.

HUGH:

Wonderful house for us to live in.

AGGIE:

(her voice rising)

Which already has foundation problems. The place is sinking and the mud is rising. We're going to have a moat before long!

HUGH:

Not so loud, not so loud. You'll bruise the fabric.

AGGIE:

Bruise the fabric? You wanna see me bruise some fabric? I'll show you bruised fabric!

HUGH:

Aggie, your blood pressure! You're not supposed to get upset!

AGGIE:

Then why are you upsetting me so much!

HUGH:

Take your anger and throw it away.

AGGIE takes a big breath. She poses as a pitcher and throws her anger away like a baseball. HUGH mimics her actions.

AGGIE:

I take my anger and I throw it away. I take my anger and throw it away. I take my anger and I throw it away. *(she takes a deep breath)* Hugh. You're family, so I have to love you. But enough is enough. Why do you want with all these things anyway? How is this giant ashtray helping you?

HUGH:

It's very deep and expensive. It's an examination of.... It's a....

AGGIE:

People are coming out of the woodwork to laugh at you.

HUGH:

It's exploring society in something something.

AGGIE:

Either that or they want as much money as you'll give them. You're the laughing stock of the whole county.

HUGH:

I got it! It's exploring the plight of the common man in modern society. Ha ha! Ha! Ha!

AGGIE sighs and drops into a chair.

HUGH:

Aggie. I just want to better myself. What's so wrong with that?

AGGIE:

Is that why you're hanging all over Doug Malamy?

HUGH:

Ah, ah, ah. Don't you say one word about Doug.

AGGIE:

He wouldn't even cross the street to say hi before you won the lottery. And now all he does is mooch money.

HUGH:

And I'm glad to give it. He's my very best friend. You're just jealous because your little brother is hanging out with the big shots.

AGGIE:

He's a slimeball. He wears sunglasses indoors.

HUGH:

What's wrong with that? It's a sign of sophistication.

HUGH crashes into a piece of furniture.

AGGIE:

Uh huh.

HUGH:

He has a condo on Lake Ontario. He's from Richmond Hill.

AGGIE:

If he's from Richmond Hill what's he doing spending all this time in Nickel County?

HUGH:

He's into real estate.

AGGIE:

Being a real estate agent is not "into" real estate.

HUGH:

He picked out this place -

AGGIE:
This sinkhole.

HUGH:
This place especially for me.

I'm sure he'll be hightailing it in the other direction when the living room is underground.

An offstage voice calls out. It is DOUG Malamy.

DOUG:
Anybody home?

AGGIE:
There's your new best friend. Here to mooch more money I'll bet.

HUGH:
I'll bet you he's not. I'll bet he's here to pay me back.

AGGIE:
Oh yeah?

HUGH:
Yeah.

AGGIE:
Care to make it interesting? And it can't be money.

HUGH:
What did you have in mind?

AGGIE:
If I win you have to wash my diner clothes for a whole week and you can't pay anyone to do it for you.

HUGH:
And if I win, you have to eat 14 hardboiled eggs.

AGGIE:
I hate eggs. Especially hardboiled ones.

HUGH:
I know. They made you puke in the eighth grade in front of Tyler Hamilton. All over his shoes. But if you don't want to -

AGGIE:
Deal.

Deal.
HUGH:

DOUG Malamy enters. He is wearing all black and wearing sunglasses. He looks very slick and much cooler than HUGH. During the following AGGIE cleans up the art and puts away the mannequin and yoga mat. She's mainly keeping tabs on the conversation.

Chapman!
DOUG:

Malamy!
HUGH:

Morons.
AGGIE:

Nice suit.
DOUG:

Do you like it?
HUGH:

Love it.
DOUG:

HUGH:
It was finished just this morning. Feel the fabric. Gently.

DOUG:
Oooooooh.

AGGIE:
Did we get a sky light in here when I wasn't looking? I didn't realize it was so bright.

DOUG:
You are looking sharp Chapman. You're zooming right by me into Sharp City.

AGGIE:
Which is right beside Asinine ville.

HUGH:
I'm glad you recommended that tailor. He's a whiz.

AGGIE:
He's whizzing something.

HUGH:
Don't you have somewhere to be Aggie?

AGGIE:
No.

DOUG:
Say, Chap old pal.

HUGH:
Yes Mal old chum.

DOUG:
I've borrowed a bit of money from you over the past little while.

HUGH:
(with a look at AGGIE)
Have you? I've barely noticed.

DOUG:
I just wanted to settle the account. I like to keep my business up to date.

HUGH:
Settle the account eh? Put the water on to boil Aggie.

AGGIE:
I'm not boiling anything till I see the cash in your hand.

DOUG:
Have you been keeping track of our transactions?

HUGH:
Yes indeedy I have. Look Aggie, I'm getting out the accounts ledger. *(he goes to a sideboard and pulls out a small book)*

AGGIE:
Cash in hand, brother dear.

DOUG:
Ready.

HUGH:
Ready: the first time I gave you fifty dollars.

DOUG:
That's right.

HUGH:
And the next time it was a hundred.

DOUG:

Also right.

HUGH:

And then it was seventy-eight for the Gucci socks.

DOUG:

Much indebted to you for those.

HUGH:

And one hundred and forty for your Tailor.

DOUG:

He recommended the socks.

HUGH:

Two hundred and sixty four dollars and twelve cents for your mechanic.

DOUG:

Twelve cents, exactly right.

HUGH:

And one hundred and fifty for emergency yoga lessons.

DOUG:

What does that come to?

HUGH:

Nine hundred and two dollars and twelve cents.

DOUG:

Twelve cents, exactly right! Now. Add two hundred to that and we'll be completely up to date.

AGGIE starts to laugh.

HUGH:

(writing in book)

Two hundred dollars. There! Oh.

AGGIE:

I hope you like stinky socks Hughie.

HUGH:

Please excuse my sister. She has no class.

AGGIE:

And proud of it!

DOUG:

If there's a problem...

Big problem. AGGIE:

No problem. HUGH:

Huge problem. AGGIE:

There's no problem! HUGH:

I can go elsewhere for the money. DOUG:

So go. AGGIE:

No, no! HUGH:

It's just that you're my best friend. DOUG:

And you're my best friend. HUGH:

There are plenty of people in Toronto who will lend me money. DOUG:

Great! Send us a postcard. AGGIE:

No, no stay right here. I've got it in my bedroom. HUGH:

HUGH scampers off. AGGIE looks like she wants to explode.

Oooooooooohhhhhhhhhhhhh! AGGIE:

AGGIE takes a deep breath and does her anger exercise.

I take my anger and I throw it away. I take my anger and I throw it away. I take my anger and I throw it away. AGGIE:

Blood pressure huh? I know a doc who can clear that up for you like that. *(he snaps)* DOUG:

AGGIE:

Thanks but no thanks.

DOUG:

Aggie, why don't you have a boyfriend?

AGGIE:

Doug, why don't you have a girlfriend? Oh that's right, you're a horses ass.

DOUG:

How's Lucy doing? I miss seeing her fresh face.

AGGIE:

Her face is fine where it is.

DOUG:

Aggie, you should really find a boyfriend.

AGGIE:

Is that right.

DOUG:

He might take some of the bitterness out of your personality.

AGGIE:

Doug, have you ever had the plight of the common man shoved -

HUGH enters waving cash.

HUGH:

Here we are, here we are. Aggie put that down. It's expensive.

DOUG:

Thanks Chapman. You're a real pal.

AGGIE:

"You're a real pal."

DOUG:

Say, can I have a word with you, over here? I have something big to discuss with you.

HUGH:

Big? Is it?

DOUG:

It is.

HUGH:

Oh goody! Ah - very interesting. Aggie do you mind? (*he gestures for her to leave*)

AGGIE:
(she's not going anywhere)

Not a bit.

HUGH brings DOUG to a corner of the room. During the following AGGIE does what she can to overhear the conversation and HUGH and DOUG do what they can to keep away from her.

HUGH:
 Tell me everything. Did she like the ring?

DOUG:
 Loved the ring. The fireworks display was a nice touch.

HUGH:
 And the flowers? She's been getting my flowers every day?

DOUG:
 Every day.

HUGH:
 And the sweet tarts?

DOUG:
 The sweet tarts were too sweet.

HUGH:
 Disaster!

DOUG:
 But the Jujubes were just right.

HUGH:
 No one can resist a jujube! So have I wooed enough?

DOUG:
 Wooing is a tricky business Chapman. You have to have patience.

HUGH:
 But it's so hard doing it long distance.

DOUG:
 That is the way a gentleman woos a lady. And you haven't told anyone you're doing this right?

HUGH:
 Not a soul.

DOUG:
 Not even Aggie?

HUGH:
Especially not Aggie.

Both HUGH and DOUG look at AGGIE. She smiles and waves at them. They smile and wave back.

DOUG:
It's very important that you tell no one about this. A gentleman never kisses and tells until the woman he's wooing is won.

HUGH:
As wong as you're wure.

DOUG:
What?

HUGH:
Wothing.

DOUG:
Ok. But Chapman, this is what I'm here to tell you. You're ready to move on to phase two of the wooing process.

HUGH:
Phase two?

DOUG:
The face to face meeting.

HUGH gives a little scream and clamps his hand over his mouth.

HUGH:
I finally get to meet her?

DOUG:
You do.

HUGH:
In person?

DOUG:
Exactly.

HUGH:
When?

DOUG:
Today.

Today! HUGH:

Today! DOUG:

Where? HUGH:

Here! DOUG:

Here? HUGH:

DOUG:
She's coming here, to meet you.

HUGH jumps up and down like a little school boy.

HUGH:
This is so exciting! I'm so excited! I've never been more excited in my whole life!

HUGH sees both DOUG and AGGIE staring at him. He tries to regain some composure.

HUGH:
Maybe I should change.

DOUG:
I think what you're wearing is perfect. So chichi. She'll melt at your feet.

HUGH:
Malamy, are bright colours really all the rage in New York and Paris?

DOUG:
Absolutely.

HUGH:
Then how come you're not wearing them.

DOUG:
Chapman, you're a man ahead of the crowd. Ahead of the game. Ahead of time and space. You're so much more "with it" than I am.

HUGH:
Really?

DOUG:
Pink is the new black.

HUGH:
It is?

DOUG:
Whenever you're wearing pink, you're really wearing black.

HUGH:
And black is very sophisticated.

DOUG:
Exactly.

HUGH:
I should wear *more* pink then.

DOUG:
Pink all around! (*he looks at his watch*) Say I should go. Put a shine on your shoes Chapman, cause I'll be back with your lady love.

HUGH:
This is so exciting!

At this point, AGGIE is trying to hard to hear what they're saying that she leans too far over and falls over in a heap.

HUGH:
I'll see you out.

They move to exit. As they do so HUGH makes a face and sticks his tongue out at AGGIE.

AGGIE:
Better watch it or your face'll stay that way. I hope you both drown in the mud moat! Oooooooooooh. (*she takes a deep breath to calm herself*) I am dying to know what they were talking about. I'm positive they're up to no good.

The sound of singing is heard from the other side of the stage. LUCY enters. She is dancing with great joy and holding a bouquet of flowers. She dances around the room. As she lands by AGGIE, takes a deep sniff from the bouquet and swoons.

AGGIE:

Let me guess. The milkman.

LUCY:

*(swatting AGGIE with the
flowers)*

Aggie!

AGGIE:

Silly me. They must be from Carter.

LUCY:

(with a lovesick sigh)

Carter. Aggie, have you ever been so deep down in love, deep down, drag down, over the moon in love.

AGGIE:

How about vomit inducing love. I've been there.

LUCY:

*(swatting AGGIE with the
flowers)*

Agatha Chapman!

AGGIE:

Stop it!

LUCY:

You are missing out.

AGGIE:

Am I?

LUCY:

You have wasted all these years looking after me instead of looking after yourself.

AGGIE:

And what should I have done? Left you in a bag by the side of the road? Your parents would have loved that. *My* parents would have put *me* in a bag by the side of the road.

LUCY:

*(flinging her arms around
AGGIE)*

You are the best cousin in the whole world!

AGGIE:

I know. It's written on one of my t-shirts, so it must be true.

LUCY:

Smarty pants.

LUCY continues to sing and dance around the room.

AGGIE:

What are you so happy about? More than your normal incredible, out of this world, the sun never sets happy.

LUCY:

I have the biggest news. I can't wait to tell you! But I can't tell you. It's supposed to be a secret.

AGGIE:

I presume this has something to do with Carter?

LUCY:

How did you guess?

AGGIE:

I've never seen anyone inhale flowers.

LUCY:

Oh Aggie I'm bursting. But he made me swear not to tell. Carter and I are in love and.. and.. ooooooooooooh!

LUCY runs around trying to think of a way to tell AGGIE without telling AGGIE. She claps her hands and jumps up and down as she gets and an idea.

LUCY:

Oh, oh, oh!

LUCY tugs on her ear a la Charades.

AGGIE:

You want me to play charades?

LUCY:

Work with me. (*she tugs her ear again*)

AGGIE:

Sounds like....

LUCY runs around trying to think of a word that rhymes with "propose."

LUCY:

Um, um, um... I don't know what it sounds like!

AGGIE:

I thought charades were supposed to be silent.

LUCY:
Smarty pants. Ok. I got it!

LUCY does an action that is supposed to be a "porpoise" but look more like a lot of flailing around

AGGIE:
Carter got you electro-shock therapy?

LUCY:
AGGIE! Of course not! Look at it again.

LUCY does the action again.

AGGIE:
You look like....frying bacon.

LUCY:
No.

AGGIE:
A jack in the box?

LUCY:
No!

AGGIE:
Boiling water!

LUCY:
It's a porpoise. I was doing a porpoise.

AGGIE:
It was?

LUCY:
Yes!

AGGIE:
So he's taking you to Marine Land?

LUCY:
No! Porpoise is just like Propose, only different. Don't you see how exactly alike they are?

AGGIE:
Propose? As in marriage proposal?

LUCY:
Of course! It's a great charade. I can't believe you didn't get it.

AGGIE:

Why didn't you just pretend you were walking down the aisle with your flowers. *(she hums the wedding march and demonstrates the simplicity of the action)*

LUCY:

That would have worked. *(she starts to jump up and down in excitement)* Isn't this the best news ever? Carter is going to propose! I'm going to be married. I'm going to be married. I'm going to be - why aren't you excited?

AGGIE:

Going to propose, doesn't have quite the same ring as "He proposed."

LUCY:

Oh he did propose. Unofficially. He wants to talk to Hugh first.

AGGIE:

Are you sure that's wise?

LUCY:

(with a love sick sigh)

He wants to ask Hugh's permission to marry me.

AGGIE:

That's old fashioned.

LUCY:

(with a love sick sigh)

That's Carter.

AGGIE:

I don't think there's a hard and fast rule on asking permission of the bride's cousin.

LUCY:

I know, I know. But I think it's so sweet.

A door slams off stage.

CARTER:

(calling out from offstage)

Anybody home?

LUCY:

It's him!

LUCY thrusts the flowers at AGGIE, does a lightening fast primp and calls out.

In here Carter.

LUCY:

*LUCY grabs the flowers back and poses.
CARTER enters. He's clearly a clean cut
small town boy with his best suit on.*

Oh Carter. You look so nice.

LUCY:

You think so?

CARTER:

Hi Carter.

AGGIE:

Hi Ms. Chapman.

CARTER:

Carter, how many times do I have to tell you to call me Aggie?

AGGIE:

Sorry Ms. Chapman.

CARTER:

You're going to have to get used to it, especially if we're going to be related.

AGGIE:

Lucy! You told.

CARTER:

I didn't. She guessed. Mostly.

LUCY:

It's supposed to be a secret.

CARTER:

Not for much longer. Here he comes.

AGGIE:

I'm so nervous.

CARTER:

Don't get nervous. You know what happens when you get nervous. Remember to breathe.

LUCY:

Is my tie straight?

CARTER:

LUCY:

As straight as can be.

AGGIE:

Ok you two. Shoulders back, chin up, chest out, and show him those pearly whites.

All three stand in a line and put on big toothy grins. HUGH enters and is taken a back.

HUGH:

What's going on? Why are you all smiling like that?

AGGIE:

Carter has something he wants to talk to you about.

AGGIE pushes CARTER forward.

CARTER:

Hi Mr. Chapman.

HUGH:

Hello Carter.

CARTER:

Lovely day isn't it?

HUGH:

(with his own love sick sigh)

Yes it is.

CARTER:

That's some mud puddle you've got outside.

HUGH:

(smirking at AGGIE)

I'm thinking of turning it into a swimming pool.

CARTER:

That's a great idea. You could dive in off the porch. Not too hot today do you think?

AGGIE:

Carter, wasn't there something else you wanted to talk about besides the weather?

CARTER:

Yes. All right. Oh boy. Here we go. Mr. Chapman....

Suddenly CARTER'S left hand swings out involuntarily, almost striking HUGH across the face.

Hey! HUGH:

Carter! Breathe honey! LUCY:

LUCY wraps her arms around CARTER so that the flinging hand doesn't do anymore damage. She's not entirely successful.

What was that! AGGIE:

I've got a tic. CARTER:

It's just when he gets nervous. Whooaaaa! LUCY:

CARTER's hand flings out of control again and flings LUCY to the side.

That's some tic. AGGIE:

I don't have time for games. HUGH:

Aggie! Stall! LUCY:
(whispering)

AGGIE grabs HUGH as he's leaving. On the side, LUCY calms CARTER down to the point where his hand is only twitching slightly.

So. Hugh. What were you and Slug talking about before? AGGIE:

Nothing special. HUGH:

You looked pretty excited for nothing special. AGGIE:

I don't know what you're talking about. HUGH:

Do you have a hot date or something? AGGIE:

HUGH:

No! No I don't! No date whatsoever! No one here is dating anybody!

CARTER:

Ok. I'm good.

LUCY:

He's good!

AGGIE:

He's good! Come here Hugh. Now you listen carefully to Carter.

HUGH:

I don't have time for tomfoolery.

AGGIE:

Sure you do.

LUCY:

(to CARTER)

Remember to breathe. It's when you forget to breathe that things get wonky.

AGGIE drags HUGH to centre stage and LUCY helps CARTER over as well. LUCY then joins AGGIE off to the side.

CARTER:

Sorry about that Mr. Chapman. Nerves.

HUGH:

What's there to be nervous about?

CARTER:

Right. Ok. Oh Boy. Here we go. Mr. Chapman....

CARTER starts to go down on one knee, as if he's going to propose to HUGH. This startles AGGIE and LUCY. They move to either side of CARTER and bring him back up to a standing position.

AGGIE:

Whoa, whoa, whatcha you doing there?

LUCY:

Are you fainting?

CARTER:

No. Everything's fine. I'm going down on one knee.

AGGIE:
You do that to her, not to him.

CARTER:
Oh.

HUGH:
Is this going to take long?

AGGIE:
No time at all, right Carter? *(she pushes him forward again)*

CARTER:
Right. Mr. Chapman. Lucy and I have been stepping out for quite some time now.

AGGIE:
(aside to LUCY)
Stepping out?

LUCY:
He's so dreamy.

HUGH:
Yes, actually I wanted to talk to you about that.

CARTER:
Me too! Not to me. To you. You see?

HUGH:
Not at all.

CARTER:
Me either. Mr. Chapman I know you're not Lucy's father, but I wanted to come to you anyway. I think it's only proper. Lucy and I have been seeing each other for quite some time and I think, we both think, we're ready for the next step.

*CARTER'S hand goes a little wonky but
CARTER gets it under control.*

CARTER:
I'd like your permission to ask Lucy to marry me.

*LUCY gives a squeal of delight and
faints lightly into AGGIE'S arms.*

HUGH:
I see. Well, Carter, I only have a couple of questions for you.

CARTER:
Anything at all Mr. Chapman.

HUGH:
Are you sophisticated?

CARTER:
What?

HUGH:
Do your parents come from city stock?

CARTER:
Huh?

AGGIE:
Hugh....

HUGH:
Is there sophisticated blood in your veins?

CARTER:
My family was born and bred here.

LUCY:
What's going on?

HUGH:
Would you take Lucy away from this backwards place once you're married? Would you move to Toronto?

CARTER:
Of course not. I'm going to inherit my father's farm.

HUGH:
Then I refuse.

AGGIE:
What!

CARTER:
What?

LUCY gives a squeal of dismay and faints again on AGGIE, this time quite hard sending the both of them to the ground. CARTER's tic starts to flair up as well.

HUGH:
I refuse. You cannot marry Lucy. Stop waving that arm around!

CARTER:
I can't help it!

*CARTER continues to crash about as
AGGIE tries to get LUCY off of her.*

AGGIE:
Hugh you brain dead moron!

HUGH:
Remember your blood pressure Aggie.

AGGIE:
What are you talking about you mental defective bonehead!

HUGH:
I'm going to make sure Lucy becomes a sophisticated lady.
Country life is for country bumpkins.

AGGIE:
Hugh when I get my hands on you I'm going to - (*LUCY is too heavy and AGGIE can't get out from under her*) Oh for Pete's sake. Carter help me!

CARTER:
I can't stop the tic!

As CARTER comes towards her, AGGIE gives a tremendous shove which launches LUCY into CARTER. AGGIE advances on HUGH. HUGH runs around the ashtray art to keep his distance from her.

HUGH:
Now, now Aggie. Blood pressure.

AGGIE:
There is nothing wrong with my blood pressure and there is nothing wrong with living in the country!

HUGH:
I disagree.

AGGIE lunges at HUGH. HUGH keeps out of her reach. CARTER tries to keep LUCY from sprawling out over the floor but it's extremely difficult.

AGGIE:
I'm going to make you eat that jacket.

HUGH:
I'm not going to change my mind.

AGGIE:

Carter, you have my blessing. You don't need his. Obviously those sunglasses have cut off all the blood to his brain.

CARTER:

I'm sorry Ms. C. I just wasn't brought up that way.

AGGIE jumps up and down in frustration.

AGGIE:

WHY NOT!!! If there was any time to be a typical man, now would be the time!!

HUGH:

Can you not shout around my jacket?

AGGIE gives a roar and lunges at HUGH again.

HUGH:

Aggie! Throw your anger away!

AGGIE takes a hurried breath and does the baseball actions in a furious, uncalming manner.

AGGIE:

Carter get over here! Hugh. We are going to discuss this like rational adults.

AGGIE is still doing her baseball actions. CARTER tries to leave LUCY but every time he goes away LUCY falls off the chair and on to the floor. He's also trying to control his tic at the same time.

AGGIE:

Carter!

CARTER:

She won't sit up.

AGGIE:

Just leave her on the floor.

CARTER:

I can't!

AGGIE:

Oh for Pete's sake.

*When AGGIE goes over to help CARTER
HUGH sees his chance for escape.*

HUGH:

There's nothing to discuss. If you'll excuse me, I have to practice my nostril breathing.

*HUGH slips away and runs out of the
room.*

AGGIE:

Hugh come back here! We're not finished! I hope that suit gives you a rash!

*AGGIE has a little temper tantrum. At
the end, she finally takes a deep
breath and does the throwing away
exercise in a less frenzied manner.*

AGGIE:

I take my anger and I throw it away. I take my anger and I throw it away. I take my anger, I'll tell you where I'd like to take my anger.

CARTER:

Does that really work?

AGGIE:

Does it look like it's working?

LUCY wakes up.

LUCY:

Why am I lying on the floor?

CARTER:

Lucy! Are you ok?

LUCY:

I think so. What happened?

CARTER and AGGIE help LUCY up.

AGGIE:

You've had a bit of a shock.

LUCY:

I just had the strangest dream. You asked Hugh if you could marry me and he said no. Isn't that the silliest thing ever? *(she laughs)* What a stupid dream. *(she laughs some more but stops when she sees the others aren't joining in)* Why aren't you laughing? You're acting as if it's true. *(with a gasp)* It's not true is it?

AGGIE:

Catch her Carter, she's going to go!

LUCY:

No, no. I won't faint. Did he really refuse?

CARTER:

He did. Do you want to faint now?

LUCY:

No. But I will run to my room and cry my eyes out. Excuse me.

LUCY runs out.

AGGIE:

Don't worry Carter. We'll figure out something. Maybe I can give Hugh an accidental concussion. Or amnesia. Do you think if I hit him with this ashtray I could give him amnesia? Think about how hard we'd have to hit Hugh to give him temporary brain damage. Or permanent brain damage. Either works for me.

*AGGIE runs out after LUCY leaving
CARTER alone on stage.*

CARTER:

Ohhhhhhhhh shoot.

*He glumly slumps into a chair. DOUG
runs in shouting for HUGH.*

DOUG:

Chapman! Good news! Chapman! Hey Carter, what's shaking?

CARTER:

Nothing.

DOUG:

Are you all right?

CARTER:

No. I'm miserable.

DOUG:

You? You're never miserable. You're one of those incredible, out of this world, the sun never sets happy people.

CARTER:

Well today I'm miserable.

DOUG:

What's up?

CARTER:

I asked Mr. Chapman if I could marry Lucy.

DOUG:

That's great! How old-fashioned! Congratulations!

CARTER:

He said no.

DOUG:

That's not great. So what? Get married anyway.

CARTER:

I can't.

DOUG:

How 19th century of you. That's delightful and freakish all at the same time. Why'd he say no?

CARTER:

He said I'm not sophisticated enough.

DOUG:

Did he.

CARTER:

I don't have city blood in my veins.

DOUG:

Hmmmmmm.

CARTER:

I never thought being a city person would be the one thing I needed to get Lucy's hand.

DOUG:

That's what he wants eh? Well, why don't you give it to him?

CARTER:

How?

DOUG:

What if we did a little maneuvering, a little collusion, a little sneaky deaky, so that there was no way he could turn you down?

CARTER:

You can do that?

DOUG:

Sure.

CARTER:

But how? What do I do? When? Where? Wait. Hold it right there. Why would you help me?

DOUG:

Out of the goodness of my heart kid. I'd hate to see the lovebirds clipped.

CARTER:

You don't like me.

DOUG:

So young and yet so harsh.

CARTER:

You just called me freakish.

DOUG:

True. Let's just say if Hugh was busy with something it would help me out. But if you don't want to do this and not marry Lucy, I'll just be one my way.

CARTER:

I'll do anything.

DOUG:

Come on. I'll tell you exactly what to do.

They exit one way. WYNTER Basso totters on from the opposite side. She is dressed all in black with sunglasses and extremely high heels. She looks puzzled.

WYNTER:

Hello? Doug? Doug?

Behind her HUGH comes in, not wearing his jacket. He sees WYNTER and freezes.

WYNTER:

DOOOOOOOOOOOOOUUUUUUUUUGGGGGGGGG!

HUGH looks dismayed.

Blackout.

ACT TWO

Lights come up. WYNTER stands centre stage with HUGH behind her.

WYNTER:

Dooooooooooooooooooooouggggg!

HUGH:

(aside)

It's her! I don't have my jacket on. I can't let her see me like this.

HUGH runs off as DOUG runs on.

DOUG:

Dear heart! No need to bluster. I thought you were going to wait in the car till I got things sorted out.

WYNTER:

It was a long drive. I need to use the ladies. Powder my nose.

DOUG:

Of course. I believe you'll find a powder room straight through there.

WYNTER:

On the right?

DOUG:

No, no. Left Dear heart.

WYNTER:

Don't go anywhere.

DOUG:

Wouldn't dream of it.

*WYNTER totters off in one direction.
HUGH comes running on from another.*

HUGH:

Malamy!

DOUG:

Chapman!

HUGH:

Where is she?

DOUG:

Who?

Her! HUGH:

Who her? DOUG:

HUGH:
Wynter Basso. I saw her. I think it was her. I haven't seen her in person before so I guess I can't be sure. And I only saw the back of her head. But she looked like I thought she would look like if it were her. At least from behind. How do I look?

No, no, no. DOUG:

What? HUGH:

You can't wear that shirt. DOUG:

But I was wearing it before. HUGH:

Green. You need a green one. DOUG:

I don't know if I have a green one. HUGH:

Green is what will really impress her. So go find one. DOUG:

DOUG pushes HUGH out of the room in one direction as WYNTER enters from the other direction.

WYNTER:
What an odd house. Ooooooh I love the giant ashtray.

AGGIE:
(calling from off stage)
Hugh!

Hide! DOUG:

What? WYNTER:

Hugh! Where are you? AGGIE:

DOUG:
Get under that lampshade!

DOUG drags WYNTER to the side, takes a giant lampshade off a lamp and puts it on WYNTER's head.

DOUG:
No matter what happens, don't move and don't say anything.

AGGIE enters.

AGGIE:
Hugh are you - Oh. It's you.

DOUG:
Why Aggie hello. How are you? I thought you were working this afternoon.

AGGIE:
Have you seen my brain dead brother?

DOUG:
I believe he's upstairs. Putting on a green shirt. Are you going out?

AGGIE:
A green shirt. He ruins a girls life and all he can think about is changing his shirt. Unbelievable!

DOUG:
Say, I was just talking to Carter. Who knew Hugh would take all of this so seriously.

AGGIE:
Where did Carter go?

DOUG:
Oh, he's around.

AGGIE:
If you see my brain dead brother tell him I've gone to the drug store for Lucy.

DOUG:
Okay-doky.

AGGIE:
I swear his brains are leaking out his ears.

DOUG:
Ha, ha. Oh Aggie, you are so funny. Hee hee hee.

AGGIE is on her way out but turns back to stare at DOUG.

What?
DOUG:

What are you up to?
AGGIE:

Nothing.
DOUG:

I don't believe you. Maybe I should hang around.
AGGIE:

You're right Aggie. You should stay.
DOUG:

Huh?
AGGIE:

We should talk. We never talk. We should get to know each other.
DOUG:

Why would I want that?
AGGIE:

We need you and me time. We'll have coffee. Better yet, we could do lunch.
DOUG:

Stay away from me.
AGGIE:

Can I pencil you in for next Tuesday? We'll do a long lunch. A couple of hours at least.
DOUG:

Tell Hugh I'll be right back.
AGGIE:

AGGIE exits on the run.

Works every time.
DOUG:

Dougie!
WYNTER:

DOUG runs over to WYNTER and takes the lampshade off her head.

WYNTER:

Who was that?

DOUG:

The dragon lady.

WYNTER:

Why did I have to pretend to be a lamp?

DOUG:

Because. No one knows you're here.

WYNTER:

You know I'm here.

DOUG:

True but -

WYNTER:

My hairdresser knows I'm here.

DOUG:

All right. Some people - you told your hairdresser??

WYNTER:

I tell my hairdresser everything.

DOUG:

This is supposed to be a secret. The fewer number of people who know, the less likely a reporter will find out. I'm convinced we would have been swarmed in Toronto. That's why it was better you came here.

WYNTER:

But why aren't we at your house?

DOUG:

To throw the reporters off the scent.

WYNTER:

Yes but Dougie, if the reporters were going to follow me, surely they would have followed me here just as well as they would have to your house and -

DOUG:

But they didn't and you're safe and we don't have to dwell on it anymore.

WYNTER:

You know, I never gave a second thought about being pestered by the paparazzi until you brought it to my attention.

DOUG:

A beautiful socialite such as yourself should be prepared for such things. You never know where a picture might surface my love.

WYNTER:

Ah ah ah. You can't call me that yet. We're not official.

DOUG:

When will we be official?

WYNTER:

Very very soon.

DOUG:

I was hoping that ring would have made it sooner.

WYNTER:

You spend too much money on me Dougie. Too too much.

DOUG:

It's my pleasure.

WYNTER:

But this ring is so expensive.

DOUG:

It didn't cost me a thing.

WYNTER:

Dougie you've already given me so many gifts. Flowers every day, fireworks by the water. And I love jujubees.

DOUG:

No one can resist a jujubee.

WYNTER:

And you just won't take no for an answer.

DOUG:

Some would say that's part of my charm.

WYNTER:

Some would say.

DOUG:

Now dear heart I must tell you. We are in the home of the very generous and yet quite eccentric Hugh Chapman. So you shouldn't mind anything he says or does. Just go along. Go with the flow. Go flow.

HUGH:
(offstage)
 Psssssssssst.

WYNTER:
 Do you hear something?

HUGH:
(offstage)
 Psssssssssssst.

DOUG:
 Ah, our host. Why don't you admire at the ashtray.

*DOUG moves over to the side and meets
 HUGH who is in panic mode.*

HUGH:
 I don't have a green shirt. I don't have a green shirt.

DOUG:
 It's all right. Don't worry about it. Take a deep breath. Do that baseball thing Aggie does.

HUGH:
 Malamy! That's for anger management not blind panic.

DOUG:
 Take a breath and you'll be fine.

*HUGH takes a deep breath. Perhaps he
 does his nostril breathing.*

DOUG:
 Great. Ready for phase two?

HUGH:
 No! Yes. Can I think about it? No, no, I'm ready. Yes. Ready.

DOUG:
 Here we go. Oh, before I forget. Don't mention the gifts you've bought her.

HUGH:
 Why not?

DOUG:
 It's so vulgar to talk about material things.

HUGH:
 Not sophisticated.

DOUG:

Not by half.

HUGH:

I should have known that. Stupid, stupid, stupid.

DOUG:

Oh yes, and another thing. Don't mention that you're wooing her.

HUGH:

Doesn't she already know?

DOUG:

Of course she does. But it's never spoken about in phase two. Especially not in public.

HUGH:

What phase does the public wooing come in?

DOUG:

I'll let you know. Let's go.

HUGH:

Wait! I'm not ready! I can't do this!

DOUG:

Take a breath Chapman. You'll be fine. Haven't you ever had a girlfriend. *(before HUGH can answer)* Never mind. Don't answer that. I don't want to know. Here we go.

DOUG brings HUGH over to WYNTER.

HUGH:

Oh boy. Oh boy.

DOUG:

And here we are. Wynter Basso may I introduce Hugh Chapman, Hugh Chapman - Wynter Basso.

HUGH is not sure whether to hug WYNTER, kiss her hand, or not touch her at all. He settles for a hearty handshake.

HUGH:

I'm sorry I don't have a green shirt.

WYNTER:

Well, I've never been fond of green Mr. Chapman.

HUGH:

Oh please. Call me Hugh.

WYNTER:

(sincerely)

That is some suit Hugh.

HUGH:

You like it.

WYNTER:

I do. *(sincerely)* It's splendiferous. Snaps to you! *(she snaps in appreciation)* Everyone I know wears black twenty-four/seven.

HUGH:

Pink is the new black.

WYNTER:

I didn't know that.

HUGH:

That's what my Paris connections tell me.

WYNTER:

Oh I adore Paris.

HUGH:

I love Paris!

WYNTER:

Isn't Paris the best.

HUGH:

The absolute best.

WYNTER:

You are an absolute charmer Hugh.

HUGH:

Some say it's part of my charm.

WYNTER:

(a bit puzzled)

I think I just did.

DOUG:

Ok. Hugh. Mr. Chapman. Didn't you tell me there was somewhere you needed to be?

HUGH:

Oh no. I have all the time in the world.

DOUG:

Say, can I have a word with you, over here? Excuse us please Ms. Basso. *(he drags HUGH to the side)* I think that's enough face to face. We don't want to overdo phase two.

HUGH:

Good plan. You let me know when I'm overdoing it.

HUGH is off and re-joins WYNTER before DOUG can stop him.

HUGH:

Ms Basso....

WYNTER:

Oh if I'm going to call you Hugh, you must call me Wynter.

HUGH:

Charmed I'm sure.

*WYNTER and HUGH share a little laugh.
DOUGH groans.*

HUGH:

Wynter. What a sophisticated name.

WYNTER:

Do you like it?

HUGH:

I do.

WYNTER:

I just changed it recently. I spell it with a Y not a I. That gives it my own chichi spin.

HUGH:

Very chichi. I think I'm going to change my name!

WYNTER:

You should! It's such a now thing to do.

DOUG:

Mr. Chapman could I -

HUGH:

(not paying attention to DOUG)
What a beautiful ring.

WYNTER:

Isn't it marvelous?

HUGH:

It certainly is.

WYNTER:

It was given to me by someone very special.

HUGH:

(with a squeal)

It was? *(he coughs)* I'm sure it was. But let us not discuss material gifts. It's so vulgar.

WYNTER:

I so agree with you Hugh.

HUGH:

(offering WYNTER his arm)

Can I show you some of my art?

WYNTER:

That would be lovely.

From here on in HUGH and WYNTER have their backs to DOUG. They do not see what he is doing.

On DOUG's side of the stage, CARTER appears. He is now dressed in a sophisticated manner: dark suit, slicked back hair, perhaps a moustache and of course sunglasses. As soon as DOUG sees CARTER, he is overjoyed: CARTER can distract HUGH!

He motions CARTER to come out. But CARTER won't step further than the doorway. Unfortunately, he's scared as hell.

HUGH:

Look at this piece. Tell me what you see.

WYNTER:

It looks like a giant ashtray.

HUGH:

You are so smart to pick that up. The ashtrayness is very important to the milieu of the piece.

DOUG is now trying to tug CARTER to make him come in the room. At this point CARTER's tic kicks in.

WYNTER:

You know, I was thinking the artist made it look like an ashtray on purpose.

HUGH:

The sculpture is a exploration of the plight of the common man in modern society. What better way to do that than with an ashtray?

WYNTER:

That is deep.

DOUG is flung across the room. He ends up on his knees. CARTER tries to get his tic under control. Silently, DOUG pleads and begs for CARTER to come out. But CARTER is not ready. He flees.

HUGH:

Now take this painting. On a conscious level it looks exactly like a blob of ketchup on a snowbank.

WYNTER:

That's exactly what it looks like! How subversive.

HUGH:

The artist could have used any condiment in the world. But he chose ketchup. That's very important.

WYNTER:

Do you hear something?

After CARTER leaves DOUG is left pounding the floor with his fist. WYNTER and HUGH turn around to watch him. Slowly DOUG realizes he's being watched and switches into the "Cat" Yoga position.

DOUG:

Ommmmmmmmmmmm. Who feels like some yoga?

WYNTER:

Oh I love yoga.

HUGH:

I adore yoga.

WYNTER:

Isn't yoga the best?

HUGH:

The absolute best. Have you tried alternate nostril breathing?

WYNTER:

Nadi Sodnana! I swear by it.

HUGH:

Let's do some now.

DOUG:

Maybe another time. Ms. Basso, didn't you say you had to get back to the city?

WYNTER:

Here Dougie, hold my shoes.

WYNTER shoves her shoes at DOUG. She and HUGH sit cross legged on the floor. DOUG looks like he's going to complain, and gives up. He shrugs.

DOUG:

When in Rome.....

DOUG joins them on the floor. They breathe through alternate nostrils.

WYNTER:

I breathe in the happiness of the universe.

HUGH:

I let go all my tension and conflict.

WYNTER:

My body is clean.

HUGH:

My mind is open.

WYNTER & HUGH:

Become one with the universe.

They take an especially deep breath in and out.

DOUG:

Does anyone have a kleenex?

WYNTER:

You know, sometimes I get so carried away, I forget and plug both nostrils!

Me too!

HUGH:

WYNTER and HUGH share a laugh. DOUG groans and covers his face with his hands.

AGGIE walks in.

What. Is. This?

AGGIE:

Aggie!

HUGH:

Aggie!

DOUG:

Whoogie?

WYNTER:

AGGIE:
I knew you were up to something. I knew it, I knew it, I knew it! Who is she?

DOUG:
Aggie this isn't what it looks like.

HUGH:
Yes it is.

AGGIE:
Holy macaroni and cheese. You do have a hot date.

DOUG:
No!

HUGH:
(at the same time)
Yes!

WYNTER:
You can't just come in here and start shouting.

AGGIE:
What?

DOUG:
Can I have a word with you, over here?

DOUG drags HUGH to the side.

WYNTER:

We're creating a calm stress free environment and your shouting (*she gestures wildly*) is messing up the air.

HUGH:

It's ok. We can tell Aggie. Things are going really well.

DOUG:

No, no, no!

AGGIE:

Who are you and what are doing in my house, waving your fingers in my face and -

WYNTER:

Blah, Blah, Blah! What are you all bunchy for anyway? What's in your panties granny?

DOUG:

A gentleman never lets on in public that he's trying to date someone.

AGGIE:

Did you just call me granny?

DOUG:

Otherwise it'll all go "kaboom" right in my face! Your face!

WYNTER:

You have got to get into nostril breathing. You so look like you need it.

AGGIE:

Actually I have my own technique. Wanna see it?

HUGH:

These rules are starting to sound odd to me.

AGGIE grabs WYNTER by the nose.

WYNTER:

Owwwww!

AGGIE:

Why don't you try breathing now?

DOUG:

Aggie!

HUGH:

Wynter!

AGGIE:
Isn't that nice and relaxing?

WYNTER:
Owwwwwww!

HUGH:
Aggie what are you doing?

DOUG:
Let go!

AGGIE:
Hmm? Are you speaking to me?

DOUG & HUGH:
LET GO!!

AGGIE:
If you insist. *(she does)*

DOUG:
Dear heart are you all right?

WYNTER:
My nose! My nose!

AGGIE:
Wow. I feel so much better.

HUGH:
What did you call her?

WYNTER:
She's put my new nose out of joint! I have to get to my doctor immediately!

AGGIE:
Have fun, send us a post card!

WYNTER runs off stage. DOUG goes to follow but is stopped by HUGH.

AGGIE:
I can't believe I've never done that before.

HUGH:
Did you call her dear heart?

DOUG:
It's an expression.

Before the boys can get into it further, there is the sound of a door slam, a scream and a large splash from off stage. The boys freeze at the potential disaster of what has just happened.

AGGIE:

All of a sudden I love the mud puddle. I may have to marry the mud puddle. Write it a love poem at least. You know boys, and I hate to be the one to say it cause I'd like to leave her there, but shouldn't we help her?

DOUG & HUGH:

Oh my God!

AGGIE skips out gleefully to help. HUGH is close behind when DOUG sees CARTER entering again. DOUG stops HUGH.

DOUG:

You better stay here. Don't want to ruin that suit!

HUGH:

But...

DOUG takes off. HUGH is about to follow anyway, when he hears CARTER clearing his throat behind him.

CARTER:

Monsieur Chapman?

HUGH:

Who are you?

CARTER takes a deep breath. He then plunges into the space towards HUGH. He vigorously shakes HUGH's hand.

CARTER:

Monsieur Chapman! Bonjour. Je suis tres heureux a see vous. Je suis Monsiuer Montebank. *(he poses)*

HUGH:

You're French aren't you. That's french you're speaking right?

CARTER:

Oui, bien sur! Je suis un homme tres important de Paris. *(he poses again)*

HUGH:
What?

CARTER:
Je suis un homme tres important de Paris.

HUGH:
I don't follow you.

CARTER:
(with a cough)
Very important man from Paris.

HUGH:
Did you just say you were a very important man from Paris?

CARTER:
Mais oui!

HUGH:
Did you say it in French?

CARTER:
Mais oui!

HUGH:
And I understood every word! And I've never taken a French lesson in my life! All this culture training must be paying off. I just picked up French.

CARTER:
Oh boy.

HUGH:
Hello!

CARTER:
Bonjour!

HUGH:
Monsieur Montebank?

CARTER:
Monsieur Chapman!

They laugh and throw their arms around each other.

HUGH:
So. What can I do for you? Why are you here? And who let you in?

CARTER:

Ah. Ca c'est un very easy explanation. Je suis tellement excited that I couldn't wait a parole avec you.

HUGH:

Really? You just had to come here? You couldn't wait! Is that what you're trying to say?

CARTER:

Sort of. Bien, Ecoute, Vous avez un cousin jaune. Lucy.

HUGH:

You know, you remind me of someone.

CARTER:

Eh?

HUGH:

Who do you look like? Who? Who? Who?

CARTER:

Eh, Monsieur Chapman. Your cousinne. Lucy?

HUGH:

That's it! You look like that country bumpkin. You are the spitting image of Carter!

CARTER:

Nooooooon.

HUGH:

Yes.

CARTER:

Nooooooon.

HUGH:

It's incredible really. Can you imagine? This small town loser Carter tried to marry my cousin. Can you believe it?

CARTER:

Impossible!

HUGH:

Of course I said no.

CARTER:

Mais oui.

HUGH:

What she really needs is to meet a guy like you. You know that suit looks familiar too. I think I have one just like it.

CARTER:

Noooooooooon.

HUGH:

Yes I think I do. I guess that means I'm a pretty sophisticated guy if we've got the same suit huh?

CARTER:

Fantastique!

HUGH:

Fantastic!

DOUG enters.

HUGH:

How's Wynter?

DOUG:

Oh she's fine. I was sent in to get a couple of towels.

HUGH:

Aggie knows where they are.

DOUG:

Oh I really wanted to get the towels. Besides, I heard voices. I wondered who you were talking to.

HUGH:

Monsieur Montebank, let me introduce you to Doug Malamy.

DOUG:

Monsieur.

CARTER:

Monsieur.

DOUG:

Say Chapman, can I have a word with you, over here?

HUGH:

Please excuse me for a moment Monsieur Montebank.

CARTER:

No problem.

CARTER cringes. HUGH looks askance at that for a second and then shrugs it off. He joins DOUG.

DOUG:

Chapman old pal, do you know who you're talking to?

HUGH:
Monsieur Montebank?

DOUG:
Who just happens to be one of the most sophisticated men in all of Paris. All of Europe, even. Nay, in all seven continents!

HUGH:
All seven?

DOUG:
Why's he here?

HUGH:
I don't know yet. He just said that he had to talk to me. He couldn't wait.

DOUG:
Well if he's got something to say to you, I'd listen good and hard.

HUGH:
I will, I will.

DOUG:
I can't wait to find out what he wants.

DOUG claps HUGH on the shoulder and exits. HUGH rejoins CARTER.

HUGH:
So. Monsieur Montebank. You were saying?

CARTER:
Bien. Ecoute. Vous avez un cousine jaune. Lucy.

HUGH:
You know Lucy?

CARTER:
Bien sur! Elle est beautiful.

HUGH:
Wait a minute. Are you telling me, that you came here because of Lucy?

CARTER:
Mais oui!

HUGH:
Mais oui! You've seen Lucy!

CARTER:
Absolument!

HUGH:
Absolument! And you love Lucy?

CARTER:
Bien sur!

HUGH:
Bien sur! And you want to marry Lucy?

CARTER:
Absolument! Lucy est so beautiful et Je must marry her!

HUGH:
You must marry her?

CARTER:
Je ne....won't take no for an answer. Monsieur.

HUGH:
This French stuff is getting easier all the time. Monsieur Montebank. I only have one question for you.

CARTER:
Ok.

HUGH:
Are you a sophisticated gentleman?

CARTER:
Mais oui. Je habite en Paris. Ma famille habite en Paris. Tout ma petite chien (*he barks*) et chats (*he meows*) et rats (*he squeaks*) habite en Paris.

HUGH:
This is too much! (*calling out*) Lucy! Lucy! I hoped and dreamed for a good match. I was thinking Toronto, New York - (*calling out*) Lucy! Lucy! But I never dreamed of her attracting a man from Paris. (*calling out*) Lucy I have something very, very, very, very, very important to tell you!!! This suit is the latest in Paris design. Feel the fabric. Gently.

CARTER:
(*feeling the fabric*)
Ooooooooooh.

HUGH:
I give my blessing one-hundred percent!

LUCY enters

LUCY:
What is it? Have you changed your mind?

HUGH:
Better than that! Meet your new husband!

LUCY:
What?

HUGH:
This is the man you're going to marry!

*LUCY sways as if she's going to faint.
CARTER looks torn between going to help
her and keeping up the disguise.*

LUCY:
Come again?

HUGH:
This is Monsieur Montebank. He's going to be your husband.

LUCY:
Carter is going to be my husband.

HUGH:
Forget Carter. Monsieur Montebank is the real deal.

LUCY:
He doesn't look like the real deal.

CARTER:
Eh Mademoiselle....

HUGH:
He's the most sophisticated man in Paris.

LUCY:
So.

HUGH:
In Europe.

LUCY:
Who cares?

HUGH:
In all seven continents!

LUCY:
I hate him!

Lucy!
HUGH:

CARTER:
*(trying to get LUCY to look
close at him)*
Mademoiselle!

LUCY:
I hate him. I think he's stupid looking. I'd never marry
anyone with such stupid hair, with a stupid, stupid,
moustache, and stupid, stupid, stupid -

CARTER:
Mademoiselle!

*CARTER draws LUCY close so she can look
in his eyes.*

LUCY:
Oh!

CARTER:
Bonjour Lucy.

LUCY:
(whispering)
Carter?

*CARTER twitches as if to prove his
identity.*

LUCY:
Oh. Oh! OH! I love you!

LUCY throws her arms around CARTER.

HUGH:
I knew you'd see the light.

LUCY:
I do, I do, I do!

HUGH:
Now, now, save it for the wedding.

LUCY:
So Hugh, you give us your blessing?

HUGH:
One hundred percent!

LUCY hugs CARTER again. There is noise from off stage. AGGIE and DOUG enter with WYNTER. Both AGGIE and DOUG are holding towels to act as an enclosure for WYNTER who does not want to be seen.

HUGH:
What happened?

LUCY:
Is she all right?

AGGIE:
Oh she's fine.

There is a sob from inside the towel.

HUGH:
Is her nose ok?

AGGIE:
Oh yes. Apparently the hair is a priority now.

DOUG:
She's going to wait in the bathroom for her hairdresser to arrive.

HUGH:
Is it really that bad?

There is a sob from inside the towel.

AGGIE:
I think we should call the Mounties.

DOUG:
Keep walking. Straight, straight, almost there.

HUGH:
Aggie, great news! We have a wedding to plan for.

AGGIE:
You came to your senses did you?

HUGH:
This is Monsieur Montebank.

AGGIE:
Who?

HUGH:
Lucy is going to marry the most sophisticated man in all seven continents!

AGGIE:
WHAT?

AGGIE snap back towards HUGH, bringing the towel with her. This exposes WYNTER who looks a fright. She is covered in mud from head to toe. As soon as she notices that she's no longer covered, she screams and runs off stage in a panic.

DOUG:
She's not so good when she's mussed.

WYNTER:
(*offstage*)
DOOOOUUUUUUG!

DOUG sheepishly exits. AGGIE advances on HUGH.

HUGH:
Now Aggie....

AGGIE:
You want to run that by me again? Particularly the part where Lucy is marrying someone who is not Carter?

LUCY:
Aggie, it's no big deal.

CARTER:
Madame....

AGGIE:
No big deal. No big deal! Do I have to spell out the hugeness of the deal?

HUGH:
Calm down.

LUCY:
Don't get upset.

CARTER:
Madame....

AGGIE:
What?

CARTER:
(with the same cough)
I'm Carter.

LUCY:
(with the cough)
Carter.

CARTER:
(with the cough)
Carter.

HUGH:
Do you two need a glass of water? That's some cough.

LUCY:
(with the cough)
Carter.

CARTER:
(with the cough)
Carter.

AGGIE:
Oh. Oh. *(she points to LUCY and then to CARTER)* Ooooooooooh.
Oh wow. Well. Ok then. That changes things quite a bit.

HUGH:
You're not upset?

AGGIE:
Upset? Why should I be upset? I think it's swell.
Congratulations you two. Champagne all around!

Everyone gives a big cheer.

HUGH:
You know Aggie, I thought those anger management exercises weren't working at all. But I was totally wrong.

AGGIE:
Well it wouldn't be the first time.

AGGIE starts to laugh, LUCY and CARTER join in. And even though he has no idea what the joke is, so does HUGH. DOUG enters wearily.

DOUG:
Any sign of the hairdresser?

AGGIE:
It's only been five minutes.

DOUG:
I know.

HUGH:
Good news Malamy! Lucy is going to marry Monsieur Montebank!

DOUG:
What a surprise.

LUCY:
(aside to AGGIE)
We're going to have to tell him the truth aren't we?

AGGIE:
(aside to LUCY)
Oh we will. How about on your tenth wedding anniversary?

HUGH:
This is so exciting! Everything has worked out for the best!

DOUG:
Say, Monsieur Montebank, can I have a word with you, over here?

HUGH:
What about?

DOUG:
I have an idea.

HUGH:
Do you speak French?

DOUG:
Of course. Ladies would you like to join us?

HUGH:
Aggie you don't speak French.

AGGIE:
Only all my life. Where have you been?

The group confers as DOUG silently diagrams what they are going to do. HUGH tries to overhear, but hears nothing.

HUGH:
What's this all about then?

DOUG:

I just had an idea and Monsieur Montebank agrees with me one hundred percent. Since Lucy is going to be marrying the most sophisticated man in seven continents, that's going to raise her status quite a bit.

HUGH:

I never thought of that.

DOUG:

Of course you haven't. So we think you should get something to, to raise your status.

HUGH:

Like what?

DOUG:

The Monsieur is going to make you a Count.

HUGH:

You can do that?

CARTER:

Bien sur! *(he snaps his fingers as if to say "easy as pie")*

HUGH:

That would be so exciting. I would love to be a Count. Count Chapman.

AGGIE:

Oh no. I think he should get a name change to go with the Counthood. Countship. Whatever.

LUCY:

Me too.

DOUG:

Great idea.

HUGH:

I was just thinking about changing my name. Something I can put my chichi spin on.

AGGIE:

I like the sound of Count Imbecile.

HUGH:

Count Imbecile. That's French.

AGGIE:

Nothing gets by you.

HUGH:

Count Imbecile. That does sound good. Sophisticated. Wynter will like that won't she!

AGGIE:

I'm sure she'll love it. Won't she Doug?

DOUG:

Sure.

HUGH:

So what do I have to do to be a Count?

DOUG:

There's a little ceremony. Chapman you come centre. Why don't you get into one of your yoga positions.

HUGH:

Why?

DOUG:

To help you relax. Downward dog is pretty relaxing isn't it?

HUGH gets into the downward dog positions, which is an inverted V shape with hands and feet on the floor and the butt high in the air.

DOUG:

All right. Ladies, you will circle round our Count candidate with this consequential Latin phrase: "Sona si Latine Loqueris."

LUCY:

(aside)

What does that mean?

DOUG:

(aside)

Honk if you know Latin. Ladies if you please?

AGGIE and LUCY circle HUGH repeating the phrase.

DOUG:

Very good. A bit louder now. And louder still. Excellent! Monsier Montebank. Assume the position!

CARTER:

Oui Monsieur!

CARTER stands behind HUGH. The Ladies are still chanting.

DOUG:

Monsieur Montebank! By the power invested in you, by official decree and legislation, I prevail upon you to transmogrify Hugh Chapman into Count Imbecile!

The Ladies cut off their chanting. CARTER winds up and smacks HUGH rather vigorously on the butt.

DOUG:

You're a Count.

Everyone jumps up and down with shouts of "Hurray" and "Congratulations!" They all hug HUGH and slap him on the back. HUGH, of course, looks pleased at becoming a Count.

WYNTER storms on stage, still looking like a wreck.

WYNTER:

I can't believe this. My hairdresser got caught on the 401 and she's turned around. She's not coming! What am I going to do? I hate the country. I can't believe you made me come here Dougie. I am never leaving Toronto again! Don't call me.

WYNTER storms off.

DOUG:

Bye bye! Send us a post card.

AGGIE:

You don't look too upset to be losing your girlfriend.

DOUG:

Those city girls. They're all the same.

HUGH:

Malamy! If I'm a Count does that mean I'm above a gentleman?

DOUG:

Ok.

HUGH:

So I can throw out all those silly gentleman rules and go after what I want more directly?

DOUG:

Why not?

HUGH runs out after WYNTER

HUGH:

Wynter! Wynter! Wait for me! I'm a Count now! Marry me!

The other's all look at each other in disbelief?

AGGIE:

Marry me?

They all fall over themselves to follow HUGH out to see what happens next.

Black out.