

More Than What

a cycle of 7 short plays

by Janet Kenney

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More Than What

The players:

Andrea; the bride
Jack; the groom
Melody; sister of the bride and maid of honor
Eve; best friend of the bride and bridesmaid
Ruth; mother of the groom
Dave; father of the groom
Stephie; siste of the groom
Uncle Bob; uncle of the bride

The plays:

The Woman You Deserve	Jack, Dave
Maybe It's Just Dust	Andrea, Melody, Eve
Why You Have to Be Careful	Jack, Stephie
Ma in Her Kerchief	Andrea, Ruth
The Space Beside Me	Melody, Uncle Bob
The Way You Laugh	Ruth, Dave
More Than What	Andrea, Melody, Eve, Jack

Approximate running time, without an intermission, is 95 minutes.

Simple sets are as indicated; not much is needed to create them.

The order listed here is what seems most sensible, in terms of traffic and costume changes. The plays can also be done individually.

The Woman You Deserve

Characters:

Dave: fifty plus. He's wiry, energetic. Father of the groom.

Jack: twenty-something. The groom. Nauseated.

Time: Present. Saturday morning.

Place: The best man's boyhood bedroom. Clearly, it hasn't been inhabited in quite a while, but it was a nice place for a boy to grow up. It doesn't take much to suggest the room: maybe a few old trophies, a twin bed with a cowboy or Star Wars bedspread. . .

At rise: Jack is in front of the mirror, partly dressed in a tux. His tie is hanging, he's having trouble with his cummerbund, and he's in his boxers. Over the next ten minutes, with his father's help, he'll finish getting dressed.

From offstage, rowdy VOICES and dance music: *La Macarena*.

OFF STAGE VOICES
Jack! Jackie! Jackie boy! etc.

JACK
Yeah! OK -- be right there.
(re: cummerbund) Shit.

After a moment, DAVE blasts into the room doing La Macarena. He has no idea what the words are, but he's hitting the vowels. He looks swell in his tux, and might have already had a breakfast cocktail.

DAVE
Ah! Maca, Uu maca eh macarena
Eh, maca, oh maca, eh macarena
ah maca Uu maca eh macarena!
Ehhhh! Macarena!
Jack.

JACK
Dad. . .
Dad.
Dad!

JACK
No line dances.

DAVE
How can she not want line dances? Look at my chicken:

He shows off his excellent chicken imitation for the Chicken Dance.

JACK
Yeah, it's nice, Dad. But no --

DAVE
But everyone --

JACK
When you marry Marissa, you can
do line dances all day.

DAVE
I will.

JACK
Fine.

DAVE
Fine. What's keeping you? Jimmy says he's gonna bite off his bow tie if we don't get going. I tied it a little tight, ha ha.

JACK
No pranks, Dad -- you promised --
It's my wedding day. I get to say.
Go loosen Jimmy's tie.

DAVE
Oh, come on - it's just Jimmy -
Fine, fine - I said "fine" --

DAVE

Ah, we made some strong coffee - it keeps the airways open. I thought you might be nervous, son. Let me tell you: a man is like a key, and a woman is like a lock; a ship, and a harbor --

JACK

DAVE

-- a can of soup, and a pile of crackers --

Will you stop? (re: the cummerbund) It's this thing --

DAVE

Oh, is that all. Here, look at mine - mine looks great. You fasten it in the front and flip it around -- here, bring it 'round to the front and -- here. OK. All right. Suck in your gut -- suck it in. Su -- ah. Damn. Shoulda ordered this to fit, Jackie.

JACK

I did.

DAVE

Oh.

JACK

It fit a month ago! We've done nothing but eat for a month! Every single night, we don't have time to go home and eat, we have to meet with the photographer for like the *ninth* time, we have to check some flower because it's been a wet fall, so the *whatevers* aren't blooming well, so we have to substitute, then we have to go test the reception food, even though we did this a *year* ago, and then we gotta go to seventeen pre-wedding dinners and the rehearsal dinner and the bachelor party, which was, like NACHOS CITY and I haven't been to the gym in, what a month. At least a month. Shit.

DAVE

Um. You can go on a diet.

JACK

I can't.

DAVE

After the honeymoon, I mean.

JACK

No.

DAVE

Here, lean against the wall and I'll try to clip it -- why not?

JACK

Because Andrea can eat whatever she wants and never gain one pound.

DAVE

Look up, get your arms up, squeeze. What's that got to do with anything? Breathe in.

JACK

Because she's so -- she just never gains weight, that's all. She's so - so -- beautiful.

DAVE

Son, let me tell you something: you're supposed to put the pants on first. Ha, ha!

JACK

Oh, dammit, why didn't you --

DAVE

What? I'm helping!

DAVE

Jack, listen, it's OK to be nervous when you're getting married. I was nervous when I married your mother. With good reason, as it turned out. Hah, hah, just kidding you, Jackie.

JACK

Lay off of Mother.

DAVE

What am I saying about your Mother? Today, your mother will walk down that aisle, with her arm on Jimmy's, and she'll look like a queen. People will think she's the bride. She's looking a little thin, I think, though? No? I admire her, son. I always did.

JACK

Thanks, Pop. That's nice.

DAVE

I don't know. Turns out that was the wrong reason to marry someone. Ah, we did all right for a while. But she couldn't admire me, so -- see how that's a bad basis for a thing? But she loves me, Jack. Bet you didn't know that. Your mother's tough to read, but who knows her better than I do?

JACK

Me? Stephie --

DAVE

Ha! You kids. You think she's "Mother." She's "Ruth." You don't know a marriage from the outside, Jackie. I'm gonna tell you a true thing, Jackie. You ready?

JACK
Yeah --
Yeah, I'm ready.

Yeah, shoot.

DAVE
You're sure?
Because I'm only gonna say it
once -
OK, here goes:

DAVE
If you're lucky, you don't deserve the woman you marry. If you're lucky. How's that?

JACK
Good. That was good.

DAVE
A sound piece of advice.

JACK
It was an aphorism, actually. A short --

DAVE
My son, the English teacher, who can't get enough of correcting his father --

JACK
Sorry, sorry. I'm just nervous. They're probably at the church already --

DAVE
They won't start without you. I got another piece of advice. Are you ready?

JACK
Sure, why not? You're on a roll.

DAVE
All right, here goes: If it doesn't work out, it's OK to get a divorce.

JACK
Dad, you don't tell a man on his wedding day that it's OK to get a divorce.

DAVE
Better to get a second chance. Marissa's a nice lady --

JACK
Can you do something for me, Dad?

DAVE
Sure, son. Anything.

JACK
Get Marissa to lose the hat.

DAVE
The hat?

JACK
She showed it to Andrea. Get her to not wear it.

DAVE
But she bought it special for the wedding --

JACK
Nobody behind her will be able to see.

DAVE
They can stand on those kneeler things --

JACK
Maybe she could just take it off for the ceremony, then she can wear it --

DAVE
Hey, leave her alone. You guys are mean to her -- you think she's --

JACK
I didn't say she --
A bit?
What?

DAVE
No, you kids think she's a little bit --
You know, she's -- you all think she's -
Oh --

DAVE
A little tacky. You're just jealous because I'll get to wear a polka dot tie at my wedding.

JACK
She does like her polka dots, Marissa does.

DAVE
I think her house is cute --

JACK
It's great if you're Barney the Dinosaur --

DAVE
Ah, you're all a bunch of snobs.

JACK

We are. It doesn't matter, what we, I mean, if we like her furniture, you know? We're just glad you're happy. I think you two will be happy.

DAVE

Think so, too. That's what I mean about a second chance. Oh, nothing as fancy as this. Probably won't even wear a tux, just a nice suit, might buy a new suit, and a bow-tie, of course, because Marissa wants to get a new dress and all, another hat, dress up a bit, you know --

JACK

Can we stick with my wedding for five minutes before we start talking about yours?

DAVE

We didn't want to steal your thunder, but we're shooting for three weeks from today.

JACK

What? Dad - there's no need to -- just -- look, just wait a little while, then - no family can handle two weddings in one year --

DAVE

Sure we can.

JACK

Listen, once we get the house straightened out, we can have you and Marissa and Stephie and the kids, and, hey, one of Andrea's friends is a Justice of the Peace! He can --

DAVE

No, we want the church. Marissa's first wedding was in Las Vegas --

JACK (overlapping)

That's a big surprise.

DAVE (overlapping)

When she's my wife, you'll get to know her better. You'll like her. And it shouldn't even matter to me, but it does, and then -- and Stephie will, and Andrea. She's got a good heart, Marissa does. Even your mother will like her.

JACK

It's funny. How different they are - Mother and Marissa.

DAVE

Which one you think suits me better? Your mother and I -- we were just from two different sides of the street, Jack. I was from the sunny side of the street, and she was from the side with the shrubs that have those thorns on them, and they scratch you when you walk by -

JACK

No "Mother" cracks, I mean it! She's got enough going on.

DAVE

Oh.

JACK

What?

DAVE

Oh, what, nothing. Like what? What's she --

JACK

What? She's just got --

JACK

-- just personal stuff. That's all.

DAVE

Personal? You think I don't know personal stuff about your mother?

JACK

What are you talking about?

DAVE

What are you talking about?

JACK

You tell me --

DAVE

You tell me --

JACK

Drop it, Dad. Get Jimmy in here, will you? He can do the cummerbund.

DAVE

Jimmy would crush your rib cage. Here - I got a safety pin. Marissa told me: bring some breath mints, some hair goop and some safety pins. See - she was thinking of you. Hand it over - we can sort of "extend" it. I'm a member of this family, you know.

JACK

I know that.

DAVE
You people think I don't know anything.

JACK
What --

DAVE
Think I'm in the dark.

JACK
-- know what? What? Who told you?

DAVE
Stephie.

JACK
Shit. Stephie has a big mouth --

DAVE
That's not news, Jack. She was upset. She wanted to talk to her Dad.

JACK
Does Mother know you know?

DAVE (*a la Groucho Marx*)
Does she know that I know that you know that she knows that I --
I don't think so.

JACK & DAVE
Unless Stephie told her.

JACK
But -- and you still wanna get married in three -- listen - we're all paying attention to Mother right now - not you! Everyone is going to pitch in, and you can help out if you want, but above all you can not add more confusion to the situation, because she's gonna need all of us around her because it's not -- the situation is not -- it's pretty far along, is what I mean. Did Stephie tell you that?

DAVE
Why do you think we pushed the wedding up?

JACK (overlapping)
Jesus, you do this stuff! Marissa can hold off on her new polka dot hat and her proper church wedding until after Mother - until after Mother - uh, dies. Oh, shit. Shit, Pop.

DAVE
Oh, son. Son. Not today. Today, we have a good time.

JACK

Yeah, yeah. Right. OK. But you see why you have to hold off.

DAVE

Oh, no, we're all set with the date and everything --

JACK

Dad, grow up! You are not the center of the world --

DAVE

Hold on, hold on, hold on. You think I would -- Jack. You think that about your old man? Well, I know you think I'm -- but -- ah! there's your confusion. You think your mother would not want to see me married before, uh, things get bad? No, no. She'd want to know there's someone looking after me. She knows enough about *lonely* to not want that for me.

JACK

She knows about lonely because --

DAVE

Because we were lonely when we were married. This is what your mother wants.

JACK

She knows?

DAVE

I'll tell her later. After the --

JACK

Then you don't know. You don't what she'll say --

DAVE

I do --
I know --

JACK

It's what *you* want, that's
all it is --

DAVE

-- no, no, no, I do -- I know. See - your mother wants things -- well, she's a tiny bit, she can be a little, uh -- particular. Because she wants things a certain way --

JACK

Her way, you mean --

DAVE

No, just a certain way that she pictured. She has, uh, she's got these --

JACK

Rules?

DAVE

You're putting words in my mouth, Jackie. No, uh, borders, kind of, kind of around things. It's a way to, uh, it's how she sees things. She sees things in a certain color, with a certain kind of light on things, with a kind of detail. She'll want us to hurry on up. Because that will have some, uh, balance. And she likes a little balance. That's how she is.

(re: cummerbund) There you go.

JACK

Thanks.

DAVE

Sure, son. Your mother will tell me everything after the wedding.

JACK

Will she? Are you right, Dad? Right about this?

DAVE

Kid, who knows your mother better than I do?

Let me tell you one more thing: tell Andrea you need to lose some weight.

JACK

Shoot, Dad. You were making sense for a while there.

DAVE

Tell her everything. She doesn't need to admire you. She needs to know you.

JACK

Oh. OK. Yeah. I mean, yeah, I guess no one knows Andrea better than I do.

DAVE

Son: let me tell you one more thing: You have barely met.

Come on. Let's go loosen Jimmy's tie. I think I hear him coughing.

He flings open the door and calls:

Hey! Guys! I got him! (singing:) Here comes the groom - riding on a broom -- move to the left there to give his butt some room --

Dave dances out as the VOICES offstage call for Jack. Jack takes one more look at his childhood room, shuts out the light and leaves.

BLACK OUT

Maybe It's Just Dust

Characters: **Andrea:** the bride, twenties

Melody: sister of the bride, maid of honor, twenties

Eve: friend of the bride, bridesmaid, twenties

Place: A pretty country graveyard, modern and well-tended. In particular, there is a stone that is a veritable cottage garden; vines weave and tangle around it, blooms fade in the late fall sun.

Time: Present. Late morning, late fall. The day before the wedding.

At rise: A moment of stillness, perhaps, before Andrea and Melody enter. They are both dressed in light fall clothing.

Each carries a cup of coffee from a local take-out, and Andrea has one of those cardboard carry trays with an extra cup of coffee on it.

Melody carries a small formal bouquet; it's a smaller version of the wedding flowers.

MELODY

Oh, it looks nice.

ANDREA

No, it's a mess.

MELODY

It looks fine. It's nice that you keep it so pretty. Really.

The girls each say a little silent prayer. Melody sets the flowers down at the stone, then starts to leave.

ANDREA

Wait, wait.

MELODY

Come on. We have to meet Mom at the salon --

ANDREA (to the "stone")

Well, Dad, here we are. This is just like the wedding bouquets, so, hope you like it. We're lighting a candle for you. Mom looks great. Her dress is beige silk and a bit of lace at the sleeves; she looks really pretty. Aunt Nancy is going to make it in from L.A. and she said, you were right, it's not a real city. Uncle Bob's going to sing, but -

MELODY

Andrea, don't talk to a rock.

ANDREA

You said you'd come out here.

MELODY

I know, but, yeah, fine, little prayer, drop off some flowers --

ANDREA

Look at that tree. It was ten feet high when he died.

MELODY

It's beautiful.

Eve arrives. She carries some landscaping implements: a few different rakes, a trowel, some fertilizer, perhaps a burlap bag for some bulbs. Eve takes a moment to acknowledge the grave, a prayer or a tap on the stone.

EVE

Hey, guys.

ANDREA
Where have you been?

MELODY
What are you doing here?

EVE

Sorry, we had an emergency. One of our clients had a flood, rain gutter blocked and everything finally burst and she lost a bunch of shrubs – two gorgeous fragrant heirloom rosebushes and a –

re: the extra coffee cup

Ooh - thanks – so we had to run over there.

MELODY

Wait, wait, wait. That coffee was for --oh, geez, Andrea, I thought it was for Dad.

ANDREA
For Dad?

EVE
Coffee for your Dad?

MELODY

Wait, you got a coffee for Eve? Oh, no – we just came by to drop off the flowers. We are not gardening today –

EVE
Not a full-blown gardening thing, just –

ANDREA
We'll just clean up a bit --

MELODY

You didn't tell me there'd be raking.

ANDREA

Because I knew you'd fuss: *oh, we don't have time for this today –*

MELODY
We don't!

EVE
We won't be long –

ANDREA
We'll be quick.

MELODY

I have to study. They should hold off exams till after your sister's wedding, but they don't.

ANDREA

You can go. Take the car and I'll catch a ride back with Eve.

MELODY

If we don't meet Mom at the salon she's going to get hot pink on her nails.

ANDREA

Let Mom get whatever color she wants. You're driving her crazy.

MELODY

I'm not. What's that?

Andrea sprays the stone and gets some paper towels out of Eve's bag, reaches for the stone.

ANDREA

It's bleach.

EVE

Bleach and water. It clears up mold and bird droppings –

MELODY

Don't touch it! Bleach lingers. Don't touch it –

EVE

Andrea, just spray it. Here - adjust the sprayer –

MELODY

At least wear gloves.
You're supposed to get some rest today.

ANDREA

I'm fine.

MELODY

I have to pick up Aunt Nancy by four ---

EVE

I can go get your aunt.

MELODY

Andrea –
We'll come by after the wedding.

ANDREA

I can't get married if his gravesite doesn't look nice.

MELODY

Hand me that rake.

EVE

The lady lost a five year old kousa dogwood. It was just starting to take – it's got a fabulous root system - and Dad says we shouldn't put another one in till Spring – Melly, Mel, easy. Stop, stop, not like that. That's a porcelain berry. Like this.

ANDREA

That's a very expensive vine, Mel. Eve got that specially for here. Look at the berries: they look like little robin's eggs.

Perhaps a moment of quiet tending, before

ANDREA

Melly! Gentle –

EVE

Here, here. Melly. You take this rake and rake over there. That's the vinca. You can't damage vinca.

MELODY

Can't damage the vinca. It's all going to die over the winter anyway –

EVE

No, vinca's evergreen --

ANDREA

Vinca's evergreen.

MELODY

We look like a bunch of sheep, hanging around on the grass. This just seems like a waste of space. We can't keep using up ground like this. This could be a nice park or something. People could walk here.

EVE

Lots of people walk around here. Andrea and I walk over to my Mom's grave. People jog and walk their dogs –

MELODY

The dogs would like a park better.

EVE

My Dad popped a button off his suit. Deep breath, standing up straight to see how he looks: Fhew! Right off the jacket. Very funny. I had to stitch it back on.

MELODY

Does the thread match?

EVE

No, it's red, Mel. Gee, he's getting heavy.

She shakes some bulbs out of the burlap sack.

MELODY
What are those? What are you –

EVE
Just a few bulbs.

ANDREA
Cool. What are they?

MELODY
Oh, no, you don't. You two are not planting bulbs.

EVE
They're Dutch mini tulips. About six inches. We got them from –

MELODY
Guys, this is not gardening day! It's OK to clean; you want it to look nice, fine. But you two think we have all day, and we don't, and we have been tending our nails for three months because Andrea thinks fake nails look tacky –

ANDREA (overlap)
They do –

EVE
But we have to plant these today –

MELODY
No. No planting of bulbs.

ANDREA
Melody, the ground could freeze any day now.

EVE
They're "Bride's White." They're so white, they're almost blue. I got them for today.

ANDREA
Oh, Eve. That's beautiful. Thank you.

Andrea goes to dig –

MELODY
Andrea, if you break a nail I'll have your head.

ANDREA
Melody, SHUT UP.

MELODY
What??

EVE
Andrea!

ANDREA

You were rude to the waitress this morning.

MELODY

I was not.

ANDREA

Melody, the eggs were fine.

MELODY

They were runny –

EVE (reminding them of their location)

Guys, guys, guys, guys.

MELODY & ANDREA

Sorry. . .

EVE

My Dad said to tell you that he changed his mind and he won't come to the wedding unless you promise to dance with him twice with no cut-in's even from Jack.

ANDREA

Fair enough. (to Melody) Will you visit my grave?

MELODY

Oh, come on, Andrea. Don't be ridicul—

ANDREA (to Melody)

Will you?

EVE

I will.

ANDREA

I know you will, Eve, I appreciate it. But I think my sister should come. Who's going to tend it if you move away?

MELODY

Or dies. She could die. You two are a couple of ghouls. Andrea: you don't have a grave.

ANDREA

Sure I do. Jack and I picked out a nice spot just over the hill.

MELODY

What? Why?

EVE

You did? Near the stream?

MELODY
You're not dead, yet --

ANDREA
Will you visit my grave or not?

EVE
Guys, guys, guys. Graveyard manners.

ANDREA
Melody has no manners! She made the florist cry.

MELODY
I did not! She has allergies. She said she has allergies.

ANDREA
The bouquet looks fine.

MELODY
The ribbon is wrong --

ANDREA
She liked the color--
She had an inspiration --
You should let people alone-
You don't threaten to cancel
the order the day before --

EVE
The florist has
allergies?
Funny line of work
for someone who has -
OK, OK, Andrea -
Melody -- whoa --

MELODY
What if she changed it
to something ugly?
I'm just watching out
for you - wasn't going
to cancel the order --

Oh! No!

EVE
What's the matter?

MELODY
What happened?

ANDREA
I broke a nail.

MELODY
I knew it! I knew it! I said we should get wraps so we don't have to worry about it, but,
no, you need to have real nails, and you can't videotape the wedding because --

ANDREA
People have been getting married for
thousands of years without
video tape. Those gowns you liked
were ugly -- they were garish -
This is my wedding but you want
everything your way --

MELODY
-- because people have been getting
married for thousands of years
without video tape. Why do need
a Victorian -- they were not ugly!
I have not had two minutes to
myself in two months!

EVE

All right, all right, all right you two, stop! Stop. Here's what I'm thinking. This is what my Dad and I do sometimes when we're getting on each other's nerves –

ANDREA

Oh, no, not that --

MELODY

What?

EVE

We stand across from each other and say whatever we want, and none of it counts because we said we can do it. It's like a clear zone -- it's all nothing.

MELODY

That's bizarre.

EVE

We live together, work together and hang out all the time. So, Melly, you stand here. Andrea. You stand here. No. Back up.

MELODY

This is stupid –

ANDREA

Can we just garden?

EVE

No, it works -- Andrea - you don't want to be that close – you'll be yelling all over his stone. Now, just, you know, say whatever you want. OK. Go.

MELODY

I just –

ANDREA

You know –

Pause. Maybe another try.

EVE

Come on, guys.

MELODY

It's been --

ANDREA

I know you –

EVE

You have to try.

MELODY
I have not caught my breath --
in three months. I'll be lucky
if I don't flunk out this semester!
I'm already getting a "C" in --
Well, not a "C" -- but maybe
a "B." Could be a "B -" -
I HATE B's --

ANDREA
When you get married you
can have roses. I don't want
want roses. Everybody gets
roses. Wildflowers are
elegant. Chamomile is not
a weed. Chamomile is a
wild --

EVE
There you go.

Great, great --

FABULOUS!

Eve! Stop that.

ANDREA

Sorry.

EVE

Pause. They're done.

I can't believe I told you to "shut up."

ANDREA (to Melody)

It's OK. I should shut up once in a while.

MELODY

All right, let's get going.

ANDREA

We should finish up.

MELODY

I'll do it.

EVE

No, no --

ANDREA & MELODY

No. You two just relax. Go stretch out. I'll do it. Care if I have a broken nail, Mel?

EVE

Knock yourself out.

MELODY

ANDREA (to Melody)
Is Mom really getting hot pink on her nails?

MELODY

Nah, no. I don't think so.

Eve tidies, plants the bulbs.

EVE

Your mom's getting "Beach Pebble" on her nails, same shade as her dress. She called me last night. You guys were driving her crazy. I swear my Dad thinks about asking her out sometimes. I guess they've known each too long, though. My Dad loved your Dad so much.

ANDREA

He'd have looked so handsome in a tux.

MELODY & EVE

Oh – so handsome!

MELODY

Did we ever see him in a tux?

ANDREA

His wedding pictures –

MELODY

No, one *on* him, you know, wearing one.

ANDREA

Aunt Nancy's wedding? Did he wear a tux?

MELODY

No, a suit, I think. A black suit. So handsome.

ANDREA

So handsome.

MELODY

It may not even be bones anymore. Maybe it's just dust by now.

ANDREA

Maybe. But it's his dust.

MELODY

Where's your grave?

Over there. ANDREA (pointing up the hill)

MELODY
Cremate me, OK? I don't like this dirt and mold business.

ANDREA
OK.

MELODY
And throw my ashes in the pond at the cottage, OK?

ANDREA & EVE
OK.

EVE
Then you guys won't have to do anything.

EVE
We'll go for a swim once in a while.

ANDREA
We'll think of you.

MELODY
That'll be fine.

As Eve tends the site, and the girls rest,

BLACK OUT

Why You Have to Be Careful

Characters:

Stephie: about 40, sister to the groom

Jack: the groom, late twenties

Time: Present, late afternoon; Tuesday, about a week before the wedding

Place: The kitchen of Stephie's comfortable suburban home.

At rise: Stephie listens to the radio or maybe has a mini-tv going, and is working on a lovely little flower girl's dress. There's another one just like it on the chair beside her.

After a moment, there's a loud BANGING out front, from the porch, there's a loud yell --

JACK (O.S)

Ow! Oh – man – oh –

STEPHIE

Jack? Jack what are you doing here at this hour? I thought you were coming by later –

JACK (O.S)

Why does she leave her bike out --

STEPHIE

Wait – wait –

JACK (O.S)

I'm bleeding –

STEPHIE

Gimme a sec –
You can't see the
dresses! Wait! Wait!

Jack bursts in with blood on his knee. Stephie finishes stashing the dresses.

JACK

I don't care if the dresses --
Stephie --
All right, all right, all right.
I have to see my leg --

STEPHIE

Of course you care ---
I don't want you to see them before --
Close your eyes!
Your leg is fine --

JACK

Ow, ow, ow. They should put those bikes away better --

STEPHIE

It was on the porch. That's where it goes.
Mighta been a little crooked or something.

JACK

They should put them in the
garage.

STEPHIE

Hey, Jack.

JACK

Steph.

STEPHIE

Settle down. (re: the knee) Here. Put some ice on it. Want a beer, Jack? No, it's early. Have a Coke. No, you're gaining weight. Have a diet coke. Here, caffeine-free diet coke. Geez, who'd think I'd ever have so much soda in the fridge? Who thought I'd let the kids drink soda? Then you find they're eating Doritos with that orange coating that you can smell from the living room and you think: how did that happen? Know what I mean?

JACK

I'll have some Doritos.

STEPHIE

I just told you you're gaining – all right. Yick. I'll hold my breath.

JACK

How can I fix the cabinet when I need surgery?

STEPHIE

Why don't you just fix it when you come to pick up the girls?

JACK

I won't have time. The knee will have to be removed. Tell Nessie I'm gonna get her.

STEPHIE

She wanted to know if you were going to get a swimming pool after you were married.

JACK

How is that connected?

STEPHIE

How do I know? Jack, you can't start prostate exams too early. Mr. Patero down the street has cancer and he's only 55. They caught it in time, thank God. How's your blood pressure? Do you even have a physician?

JACK (re: cabinet)

What did you guys do to this?

STEPHIE

We were watching TV and we heard this crash and Nessie said, "I didn't do it." Poor thing.

Want to see the dresses?

JACK

You said –

STEPHIE

I know but I can't sit here and not work on them. I don't have time. Close your eyes.

She gets them from their hiding place and lays them out for him to see.

Open them.

JACK

Oh, my God. They're beautiful. Andrea's going to love them. She'll cry. Thanks, buddy.

STEPHIE

Ginnie got an A on that geography test.

JACK

That's my girl.

STEPHIE

Nessie got a B-. She's sad.

JACK

OK. We'll have a geography date as soon as Andrea and I get back --

STEPHIE

Nessie asked me the other night, if Andrea is our Aunt after she gets married, does that mean Jack is not our Uncle?

JACK

What? Where'd she get that?

STEPHIE

Who knows where she comes up with this stuff.

JACK

I have explained all this to them about 65 times.

STEPHIE

They're over-tired.

JACK

I'll have a talk with her.

STEPHIE

Thanks. Do you have life insurance, Jack? Not that crappy little stuff that comes with the job. Buy the next level. Otherwise, it's just enough to bury you. Don't eat any more Doritos, Jack. Your fucking liver will fail.

JACK

My fucking liver?

STEPHIE

What? Can't swear in front of the kids. No, you have to watch everything you say. Have to watch what you do. Have to be a freakin' role model every second. Have to think about whether you could bring a man home so you don't raise sluts for daughters.

JACK

They're not sluts.

STEPHIE

They're eight. When they're 15, you pay for stupidity.

JACK

They're fine, Stephie. They're fantastic and happy and wonderful. They're going to look so gorgeous in their dresses. You're doing a great job.

STEPHIE

Throw me that seam ripper. The blue thing -- yeah the -- thanks. Know what's gonna happen, Jack? Jimmy will seat me before the wedding, and then the kids will walk down the aisle strewing petals, and everyone's going to think what lovely children she has and it's a shame they had to go through a divorce.

JACK

We all know --

STEPHIE

Andrea's family doesn't.

JACK

They do.

STEPHIE

The immediate circle, probably. But those aunties from upstate. They'll be thinking, *Oh, these young people don't stay married anymore*. Old bitches. Fucking old bitches. I go to PTA meetings, fund raiser barbeques, parent teacher conferences. People just assume I'm divorced. We'd be getting middle-aged by now and getting paunchy and having a bad month or two here or there. But we would never have divorced. Seems like I can say that now because he's not here to get on my nerves, right? I don't get annoyed because he left the toilet seat up or took off for a weekend when I needed him to watch the kids. That man was not a weekend golfer, you know, Jackie? Be hanging around the yard with the kids. But, he's not, and whose fault is that? It's not mine, it's not my fault, but half of Andrea's family is going to think I'm divorced.

JACK

We'll tell them.

STEPHIE

No, no, then we'll be tragic. Then we'll be a case study in why people should not drive drunk. He does that maybe, what, once a year? Four times in his life? And that's it.

JACK

We don't have to say anything. Let them think what they want.

STEPHIE

Yeah. The hell with them. Does Andrea's mother know?

JACK

Sure she does. Andrea must have told her. This glass is cracked.

He throws it out and checks the others for cracks.

STEPHIE

You could make sure her mother knows so she doesn't think divorce runs in our family.

JACK

They'll be able to tell anyway. If the girls had been through a broken marriage, they'd be gunslingers.

STEPHIE

Oh, Lord. What – uh -- "Pfeffel! Watch your back!"

Jack turns and shoots at someone behind him.

JACK

"Thanks, Schmidt."

STEPHIE

What was that? What were we? Was that --

JACK (overlapping)

TV show. "Alias Smith and Jones." They were gunslingers who had been wrongly accused of killing someone, so they took on aliases and went around shooting people to prove their innocence.

STEPHIE

Seems like a lot of work.

JACK

They had a price on their heads.

STEPHIE

A price on their heads? Oooh, that's bad. God. Your gunslinger phase. I thought that would never end.

JACK

I was mad at Dad for leaving Mother.

STEPHIE

Ginny asked if you were going to leave. You know, move away. I mean, far away.

JACK

These children have to be brought to the skating rink. As soon as we get back, I'll take them to the rink and we'll play laser battle and they'll be fine. I would never leave them.

STEPHIE

Jack, you can't say that. What about when you have kids? You'll need a bigger house.

JACK

They have bigger houses near here.

STEPHIE

You can't promise them that, though. I don't want you to promise that if you –

JACK

We're not moving far away. We like it here. Andrea wouldn't leave her Mom –

STEPHIE

No offense, but her Mom won't live forever –

JACK

She won't even leave her Dad. She likes to keep the grave tidy. Some people think it's kind of creepy, but it always looks good.

STEPHIE

Well. They don't move graves.

JACK

I'll always be driving distance. We'll see that they understand that. And before you know it, *they'll* be driving over to see *us*.

STEPHIE

Right. OK.

JACK

(re: cabinet) All right; that'll hold. I have to run. I'm meeting Dad and Jimmy at the tux place –

STEPHIE

Tell Daddy to call me. Wait, wait! On Andrea's Dad's side, who's that old lady with the scary glasses?

JACK

His sister Jean?

STEPHIE

Yeah. Tell Jean. Anyone who smokes that much talks a lot. But don't say exactly what happened. Just that he was very young, an accident. We don't have to let them know how stupid he was. How amazingly careless and thoughtless. It's OK to say – no, don't say that it was a drunk driving accident, because then they'll bad mouth drunk drivers, and I want the girls to hear that part from me, not from some stupid great-aunt of Andrea's Auntie Whatever.

JACK

Schmidt: who cares?

STEPHIE

Rumors start at weddings, Jack. What are the girls going to hear about their father that I can't control?

JACK

You're right.

Don't touch that till the glue dries. I'll pick up the girls at five. Andrea wants them to --

Getting off the counter, he slips. Maybe even a few more glasses come tumbling down.

STEPHIE

Jack!

JACK

Shit! I'm OK, I'm OK –

STEPHIE

Jesus, Jack! Are you trying to kill yourself – you can't just be tumbling all over the place, you know! You can't be leaving a wife and children behind with – with no – with only uncles and – and grandparents and –

JACK

I'm fine.

STEPHIE

I don't think Andrea would survive widowhood.

JACK

I think she would, but, you know, I'm fine.

STEPHIE

Shit. Look at these dresses! God, they're awful.

Stephie starts to pull the dress apart with the seam ripper.

They're a mess. They're crooked and the flowers don't line up and the crinoline is all screwed up –oh, geez, I have to start over. Maybe I can call the woman who made the bridesmaids gowns – maybe she can rush – I never sewed a crooked seam in my life –

JACK (overlapping)

Stop! Stop! Don't pull that – leave that – they look great – stop, stop, stop!

STEPHIE

No, they'll pucker.

JACK

How can they pucker with this much stuff on them? They're great. Really.

STEPHIE

I've been to ten weddings since he died. But not yours. Not yours, Jackie boy.

JACK

I'll tell Andrea to tell them what you want them to know. Anything you want, and nothing more.

STEPHIE

Right. 8 years ago. Car accident. I was 28. 28 years old when I was widowed and you inherited two girls.

JACK

Two terrific girls. Can you explain to those terrific girls that they shouldn't worry at all, and I'll talk to them, too?

STEPHIE

OK.

JACK

Could you possibly put the dress back together before tonight? Andrea will faint.

STEPHIE

Sure. It looks all right. I guess it's OK.

JACK

See if you can get the girls to take naps before tonight, OK? And you get some rest.

STEPHIE

You, too.

He's on his way out, but:

JACK

Oh! Trash.

He heads into the kitchen closet to get the trash.

STEPHIE

I got it, Jack. Just leave it – leave it –

JACK

Stephie. It's Tuesday. I got the trash. I'll be back for the girls later. If I don't get to the tux place fast, Dad will do something awful to Jimmy.

STEPHIE

"Don't lose your head to save a minute; you need your head; your brains are in it."

JACK

Nessie?

STEPHIE

'Course.
Pfeffel.

JACK

Schmidt.

STEPHIE

Be safe.

BLACK OUT

Ma in Her Kerchief

Characters:

Andrea: twenties, (the bride) a newly-married woman

Ruth: Andrea's mother-in-law, late fifties or so

Place: The living room of Andrea and Jack (her husband)'s small suburban home. The place is ready to go for Christmas. There is a picture window behind the tree. A mantel, bare. Boxes of ornaments.

Time: Christmas morning, 2:00 a.m., the present.

At rise: The tree lights are all off. Ruth is standing at the window beside the tree. She is in her bathrobe and a silky scarf covers her head. What bit of hair shows is wispy and nearly gone. After a moment, Ruth starts to sift through the ornament box.

A moment, then Andrea, in bathrobe and slippers, appears at the top of the stairs. She startles Ruth.

RUTH
Oh! Andrea. I thought -- Jack's asleep?

ANDREA
You can't hear the snoring?

RUTH
You'll get used to that.

ANDREA
I doubt it.

RUTH
I never did. To Dave's, I mean.

ANDREA
Any sign of Santa?

RUTH
Not yet. But it's only two. He's probably in Spain.

ANDREA
Probably.

RUTH
Can we turn on the tree lights?

ANDREA
Of course – (*she does so*).

RUTH
I didn't want to, well, I'm not paying the bill –

ANDREA
Don't be silly. Did you have a nice nap?

RUTH
My last Christmas, and I'm sleeping through it.

ANDREA
Well, we'll have a busy day tomorrow. It was smart to take a nap.

RUTH

When the children were young, Dave used to keep a little jingle bell in his pocket and ring it once in a while. The kids would scream and dash up the stairs.

ANDREA

Dave's funny.

RUTH

He's easy with people, not like me.

ANDREA

Oh, now don't say that –

RUTH

I can't live here if you're going to be using that tone with me.

ANDREA

Sorry.

Ruth pulls a string of white lights out of the box, starts to work on the mantel.

RUTH

Do you think I should have divorced Dave?

ANDREA

I couldn't know a thing like –

RUTH

He looked so handsome at the wedding. How do they put that in the paper? "Survived by ex-husband?"

ANDREA

I really don't know. What would you like it to say?

RUTH

I'll get back to you on that one.
Open your present, will you?

ANDREA

But it's not – all right, if you want.

She opens a large package. It's a sweater; one of those embroidered/appliquéd Christmas jobs. It's ghastly.

Oh, I love it!

ANDREA

Take it back –

RUTH

No, no, I love it – I'll wear it tomorrow –

ANDREA

Andrea: every little thought shows on your face.

RUTH

ANDREA
Oh! I hate that! I've always been like that – I'm sorry, it's a very sweet gift, it's just a little loud for me, and I'm always hot, especially tomorrow when I'll be cooking the turkey, and that takes all day – Right. Sorry.

RUTH
It's fine, don't worry about it --
It's fine, return it, I don't mind.
Please, please return it.

ANDREA (*re: the decorating*)
Maybe we should do this in the morning.

But Ruth persists.

Well, here, let me help you with that.

The two of them work at the mantel.

Thank you for not doing it without me.

RUTH

ANDREA
Jack said it was your favorite thing to do. He said you said, "the mantel draws the eye in the room, past the tree, past the gifts, because it's a permanent part of the house. It's the part that stays after the holidays, therefore it's the most important part of the decorating, and should have some dignity and solidity to it."

God, I'm long-winded.

RUTH

Oh, no, I --

ANDREA

I'm teasing. Have I never teased you before?

RUTH

I don't think so.

ANDREA

I'll have to tease you again sometime.

RUTH

All right.

ANDREA

It'll give us something to look forward to.
(*re: a box of ornaments*) Oh, these. Dave came home with these one night.

RUTH

They're nice.

ANDREA

They are. He'd been out celebrating; the "silly season," you know, and usually he'd come with these god-awful pieces of tacky junk. They went into the trash before morning. And he'd come home with an entire box of candy canes, dozens of canes, and he'd just hand them to the kids, before dinner, and if I tried to take them away, he'd say, "Oh, Ruth, relax, it's Christmas," as if a person should be ill or drunk because -- "Oh, Ruth, it's Christmas."
What do you call me?

RUTH

What?

ANDREA

You never call me anything. You -- I just realized that.

RUTH

Oh. "Mrs. Driscoll."

ANDREA

No!

RUTH

I do, yeah.

ANDREA

Of course, that's *your* name, now.

RUTH

ANDREA
Yes, yes it is.

RUTH
That's funny. I just don't think I ever --

ANDREA
When I first met you, I said, "It's lovely to meet you Mrs. Driscoll," and you didn't correct me, didn't say, "Oh, call me "Ruth," or call me, whatever, "Mother," or something --

RUTH
Well, I'm not your mother --

ANDREA
Some of my friends call their mothers-in-laws "mother," but ---

RUTH
That's just silly. It's a gratuitous and obvious attempt at unearned intimacy, don't you think so?

ANDREA
Yeah. Yes, sure.

RUTH
What would you like to call me?

ANDREA
Oh, whatever you want me to call you.

RUTH
We left it at "Mrs. Driscoll?"

ANDREA
After that, I just said "Hi, _____." "How are you _____?" "How are you feeling _____?" Like that.

RUTH
Did you? Just that big pause like that?

ANDREA
Not a pause, no, more like a blank.

RUTH
Ruth. My name is Ruth. Let's just go with that. Please. Call me "Ruth."

ANDREA

Fine. Ruth.

RUTH

No, that won't do. Then Jack will call me "Ruth." Then Stephanie will call me "Ruth."
No, I don't want my own children to call me "Ruth."

ANDREA

I'm sure they won't --

RUTH

One of the women in my chemo group --

ANDREA

The Tuesday night --

RUTH

No, the Wednesday -- that's the "Death and Dying" group on Tuesday.

ANDREA

Oh, right --

RUTH

There's a woman in that group, and her name is Janine. A nice name, but somehow or other along the way, her daughter has come to call her "Janine." How do you suppose that happened?

ANDREA

Maybe she asked her to ---

RUTH

What would prompt a parent to have her children call her by her -- you live your whole adult life being this person's parent - rearrange everything, spend all your time, give up anything, anyone, do any -- all because of that, what is that, a title? "Mother?" A job? A life. It's a life. You don't give that up lightly.
Your mother wouldn't like it if you called me "mother" --

ANDREA

She's not that fussy. I think as long as I continued to address her as "Mom," she wouldn't --

RUTH

Is "Mother" formal? Is it too formal that Jack and Stephanie call me "Mother"?

ANDREA
No. Yes. It seems a bit, yeah, Victorian, I guess.

RUTH
What should they call me?

ANDREA
I think it's a little late to get them to change, now.

RUTH
I guess I'm running out of time --

ANDREA
That's not what I --

RUTH
Well, I am.

ANDREA
How about some warm milk? My mom used to put vanillin and sugar and --

RUTH
I'd just throw it up.

ANDREA
If you don't go to bed, Santa won't come.

RUTH
My God, you're a pretty girl. You and Jack will make such pretty babies. And I'll never -- I'm so sorry for that. I don't believe in angels; don't know if there's any -- I'm not sure. . . but, if there is such a thing, if there's a lingering, a hovering. . . I'll be one, and I'll watch over them all the days of their lives.

ANDREA
I'll let them know that.

RUTH
Good. I'm going to give you a proper Christmas present.

ANDREA
No, that's --

Ruth takes off her diamond ring.

I want you to have this.

RUTH

No, no, I can't --

ANDREA

It's going to fall off anyway.

RUTH

Stephie should have this.

ANDREA

Oh, please. Have you seen the size of that rock she's got? I only kept wearing it to annoy Dave. You and Jack will always struggle for money. Some people just do, I'm sorry to tell you. The good news is, you don't care.

RUTH

We don't.

ANDREA

But turquoise is not a proper engagement ring.

RUTH

We can't see spending a year's salary on a --

ANDREA

Keep it.

RUTH

I really don't think it's right for me. Really, and Stephie would -- she'd -- and Jack --

ANDREA

Will you take this ring -- with this ring -- take this, and keep it and cherish it and cherish -- and cherish. . .

RUTH (overlapping)

I will. Certainly, I will. I won't take it off till I give it to my daughter.

ANDREA

Ah, what's wrong with me? I'm all sappy tonight.

RUTH

It's a sad night. It's all about waiting, you know? Nights are long sometimes, that's all.

ANDREA

RUTH

They're gonna get longer, missy. They're going to get very long. You two children are wonderful to --

ANDREA

Please, please, we want you here. It's our wedding present, your staying.

RUTH

That's a lousy present. Will you take back that sweater?

ANDREA

I will.

RUTH

Fine. Good. Thank you.

ANDREA

Thank you.

RUTH

Thank you, what? We should finish that sentence.

ANDREA

I don't know --

RUTH

Call me something.

ANDREA

Thank you, Mrs. Driscoll.

Ruth hands over the gathered mantel decorations and Andrea takes over. Ruth, tired, sets herself in a comfy chair and watches (er, supervises).

After a moment lights fade to,

BLACKOUT

The Space Beside Me

Characters:

Melody: Mid- to late twenties. Younger sister of the bride, the bridesmaid.

Uncle Bob: Andrea and Melody's paternal uncle. Mid-fifties or so. Older is OK.

Time: Present, night before the wedding after the rehearsal dinner. It's late.

Place: The outer lobby of a nice restaurant. Maybe some red-flocked wall paper, a bowl of mints, a coat rack and some mirrors. The lights behind them are dim; it's clear that they're the last ones out.

Bob and Melody are both dressed for a dinner in such a restaurant, but not formally. Uncle Bob's tie is loose, his jacket is off, and, when Melody comes out of the Ladies Room, she'll have a pile of nice clothes with her, but be wearing jeans and sneakers.

UNCLE BOB

Melly? Melly! I'm leaving in two seconds. One --two --.

He hums a bit of the Wedding March. . .marches. . . paces. From the nearby parking lot, horn HONKING.

Melly? Come on.

Melody explodes out of the Ladies Room.

MELODY

I'm coming, I'm coming. Ach, why do I have to have my period now --

UNCLE BOB

Ah, geez --

MELODY

Sorry. I thought you knew about that stuff. Menstruation and all that. Got "my time" -- got the painters in town --

BOB

Oh, stop it.

MELODY

Tampon!

BOB

All right, that's enough --

BOB AND MELODY

-- young lady.

MELODY

I don't think that "young lady" stuff worked out, Uncle Bob. OK, let's go --

BOB

Why do we have to go to another party? Why don't we all just go home and rest?

MELODY

Because it's a wedding. We all need to be deathly ill at the end of it.

BOB

Hey, uh, let me ask you something.

MELODY (*anticipating the questions*)
You look thin. Your bald spot doesn't show.

HONK, HONK from the parking lot.

UNCLE BOB
All right, come on, Auntie Beth'll leave without us.

MELODY
Auntie Beth is driving? Why is --

BOB
I had a few drinks at the dinner, you know, so--

MELODY
You still drive better.

BOB
She got new glasses.

MELODY
Oh, brother. Well, if I die on the night before my sister's wedding, at least it'll be poignant. I'll drive.

BOB
She won't let you. Let me ask you something.

MELODY
Auntie Beth'll take a heart attack --

BOB
I just got a little, uh - let me ask you something --

MELODY
What? The song? By the time you do it, everyone'll be pissed. You'll do great.

BOB
Did you see the movie, "Father of the Bride?"

MELODY
Uh. Sure, yeah. Steve Martin and, uh - -

BOB
No, no, no. The right one: Spencer Tracy. Elizabeth Taylor. Now, there was a bride. He has dreams, Spencer Tracy does. Bad dreams. You got lipstick on your teeth.

MELODY

Damn.

BOB

He can't walk her down the aisle. He tries. The floor won't stay still. It becomes other things - it becomes a sponge, a treadmill, an escalator, but he's backwards on it, and the black and white checks on the floor keep slipping away from him and he falls, and she's waiting there for him, he has to walk her down, but he's --

MELODY

(re: teeth) All clear?

BOB

Yeah. He's not sure he can do it. Thinks he'll screw it up, that's what.

MELODY

Have you been having bad dreams, Uncle Bob?

BOB

The floor becomes a golf course, and in my dream, I know it's the church, but I still get out my nine iron.

MELODY

Do you hit anyone with it?

BOB

No, I'm just swinging, you know, but I can't find my golf ball --

MELODY

As long as no one gets hurt. You'll do fine. Come on. Auntie Beth --

BOB

Oh, don't worry about her. She's having a smoke by now.

MELODY

Great. The car will -- [stink]--

BOB (overlapping)

What if I trip? What if Andrea's dress gets caught - that thing there, what if --

MELODY

The train. The thing is the train. You'll be beside her. The train is in the back.

BOB

What if I walk too fast.

MELODY

Andrea won't let you. She's gonna milk it, believe me.

BOB

What if I get nervous, and don't say the right thing when the priest says --

MELODY

Uncle Bob! You'll do fine. That was a movie, Uncle Bob. The floor is not a golf course. Don't flip out on me. I got a pretty high maintenance group on my hands here, you know? Andrea's gotta have everything perfect; Jack's peeing his pants, his father's a nut, his mother's a snob --

BOB

But I'm not your Dad.

MELODY

Oh. You look like him. You do. I can see what he'd have looked like.

BOB

But I'm not --. Not even close.

MELODY

When he died, Andrea and I talked this out one night. We were, what? 13 and 15? Ready for marriage. But not ready. We didn't have anyone to walk us down the aisle. I climbed up into Andrea's bunk and we cried all night, and talked all night - talked about this particular problem. Of course we decided: you. And before she fell asleep, Andrea said: Uncle Bob. Yeah, Uncle Bob.

BOB

I'm a poor substitute for your Dad.

MELODY

Ain't that the truth.

BOB

Uh-oh! Noogie Patrol!!!

MELODY (re: her ruined hair)

Ah, man - I just fixed this.
She wants you. Trust me.

BOB

Ah, Melly. Smelly Melly.

MELODY

Jack's mother doesn't like that name.

BOB

Who can understand these people? Smelly is a nice name.

MELODY

It's lovely. Andrea's carrying his handkerchief.

BOB

That's nice.

MELODY

We washed it.

BOB

Even better.

MELODY

It was getting musty. OK. So, you OK?

BOB

Sure. Yeah. They'll start the music, and I'll take her on my arm, and we'll -- off we go. Down the aisle. And when the fella says, Who gives this woman - I'll say, I do.

MELODY

You do!

BOB

And when you get married, I'll have some practice. I'll be a pro! We'll walk down the aisle --

MELODY

No! I -- uh -- no, we -- uh.

BOB

Oh. Uh.

MELODY

Uh. OK, OK, let's go --

BOB

Oh, no, it's not -- my, uh --

MELODY

Let's just get through Andrea's wedding and we'll worry about mine if I ever finish law school then go on more than three dates with the same person.

BOB

You should go out with ---

MELODY

Don't start with that guy - he drools.

BOB

He'd had gum surgery! You have to give him a second chance --

MELODY

After law school, I'll date, OK? Right now --

BOB

You want Uncle Sam to walk you down the aisle? Yeah, we could just take turns. Skip it. Me and my big mouth. You know what happens when you ASSUME: you make--

MELODY

I'm leaving without you.

BOB

Gotta give her time to air out the car. Ach, of course you want Uncle Sam, him being a lawyer and all --

MELODY

Uncle Sam is a louse.

BOB

Don't say that about your --

MELODY

He is --

BOB

I know that - he's my brother, isn't he? 'Course, lotta girls like to have their mothers walk them down. Doesn't have to be a man, you know, Women's Lib and all --

MELODY

"Women's Lib?" No, Mom is not walking me down the --

BOB

Jack could do it. You know, he'll be a great brother-in-law. The first time I saw him with Andrea, I thought: this is it. She's gonna marry him. You could tell, you know?

MELODY
You could. But Jack's not --

BOB
You girls. We just wanted to do right by you girls.

MELODY
You did.

BOB
Worms?

MELODY
Sorry?

BOB
The worms. You're mad because I made you bait your own hooks all the time. I thought it was a good lesson in life --

MELODY
It was. That was Andrea who threw up.

BOB
It was?

MELODY
Yeah. I like worms. I like the way their guts squish out when you stick 'em.

BOB
Yeah. We haven't been fishing in ages, kiddo. We should go.

MELODY
We should.

BOB
Next time you have a long weekend, don't stay in the city and study. Come home, and we'll go fishing.

MELODY
I will. And we won't bring Andrea because she's a girl.
Fix your hair - come here.

He sits so she can get at his hair, which is just naturally messy.

BOB

You should spit on the comb.

MELODY

I'm not spitting on the comb.

BOB

Did you flip a coin?

MELODY

What coin?

BOB (*she's spraying a bit of hair spray*)

Don't spray that stuff! Oh, geez. If you flipped a coin, then that makes sense.

MELODY

Uncle Bob! We're not taking turns. I just don't want -- No one. No. I don't want anyone.

BOB

That's your decision.
How do I look?

MELODY

If I can't have Dad, I don't want anyone.

MELODY

If I can't have Dad, I don't want anyone.

BOB

Oh.

MELODY

I told you, that night. Andrea fell asleep. But I didn't. I stayed awake all night. Just when the sky was turning light, I thought, No. No one. I just want a space beside me, where Daddy should have been.

BOB

You make things hard for yourself.

MELODY

Things just are that way.

BOB

But you'll be sad.

MELODY

A little.

I'm not even going to walk down the middle of the aisle. I'm going to walk on the left, the way you're supposed to. The way we would have.

BOB

Well. That's -- that'll be nice. You know: you are a young lady. Come on. If your aunt's asleep you can drive.

MELODY

Wait a second. Sing it for me.

BOB

Nah, come on. You can hear it tomorrow.

MELODY

No, no, do it.

Uncle Bob launches into what should be a really, really good imitation of the great Louis Armstrong singing "What a Wonderful World."

As he sings, Melody offers her arms, leans into him, and they dance - more like swaying a little bit. There's no space between them.

BOB (sings)

I see fields of green/red roses, too/I see them bloom/for me and you/And I think to myself/What a wonderful world. . .

Sachmo takes over, and the horn HONKS from the parking lot, and they ignore it, and the lights fade to

BLACKOUT

The Way You Laugh

Characters:

Ruth: mother of the groom, Jack, and Dave's former wife. Late fifties/early sixties.

Dave: father of the groom, Jack, and Ruth's former husband. Late fifties/early sixties.

Time: Present. About two weeks before Jack and Andrea's wedding.

Place: The front room of Ruth's small, elegant condo.

At Rise: Empty room. After a moment, an exuberant KNOCK at the door.

DAVE (O.S.)

Knock, knock. Knocky, Knock Knock Knock.

RUTH (O.S.)

I'm coming, hold on.

Ruth makes her way across her small living room. It's taking a long time. She is wearing simple, elegant clothing. Nothing tight. She looks newly-thin.

DAVE (O.S.)

Ruth! It's cold out here! "Let me in, Let me in!" "Not by the hair of our chinny-chin-chins" / Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll BBLLLLLOOOOWWW your house --

RUTH (sitting instead)

It's open; come on in.

Dave makes his entrance, finishing the story --

DAVE

-- blow your house in --

RUTH

Stop.

DAVE

I stopped. How are you Ruthie? I got your dress.

RUTH

Thanks.

DAVE

You should try it on.

RUTH

I don't need to try it on.

DAVE

What if they have to take it in again?

RUTH

They won't.

DAVE
What if it's too big?

RUTH
Then it will be loose.

DAVE
Here's the list. I smell nice coffee. How can you not have email? Everyone has email!
How did anyone ever have a wedding without email?

He hands her a few sheets of paper then heads into the kitchen.

RUTH
They came to each others' houses. Get me a cup, too, will you?

DAVE (O.S)
You didn't have a cup yet? There's no milk –

RUTH
There's cream.

DAVE (coming back in)
Ooo! Yum. Did you eat?

RUTH
Did I eat? So this is the list of songs that the fellow has?

DAVE
Yeah, that's what he usually uses. He says he can get anything we want, but the kids want us to look at the list and see if we can choose some that will have "family significance;" stuff that'll keep us old fogies dancing.

RUTH
You'll dance to anything.

DAVE
Oh, Ruthie, I'm good. Watch this:
Ah! Maca, Uu maca eh macarena
Eh, maca, oh maca, eh macarena
ah maca Uu maca eh macarena!
Ehhhh! Macarena!

RUTH
Dave. . .
Dave --

Point taken. Lovely job.
Will you dance with me at the wedding, Ruthie? Not dancing at Stephe's wedding was wrong.

RUTH

That was a long time ago, Dave. We were being stupid about things. How about this one? "What a Wonderful World?"

DAVE

I think Andrea's uncle's singing that or something? Bob? You've met him. Nice guy. He does a great impression of Sachmo, I hear.

RUTH

Looking forward to that.

DAVE

Ruth, I hate it when you do that.

RUTH

Do what?

DAVE

You've given up on the thing before you even see it. Could be very nice. Could be very fun. Maybe it's like having Sachmo in the room.

RUTH

All right, that sounds nice. It does.

DAVE

You give up too soon.

RUTH

I said "all right." "The Way You Look Tonight." My mother loved that.

DAVE

There you go, then. Mark it down. Should we use our wedding song? It's probably not on the list.

RUTH

No, I don't think it's appropriate for us to choose that –

DAVE

Why not? It has family significance –

RUTH

We're divorced.

DAVE

Is that why you don't live with me anymore?

RUTH

Oh, stop. No, I don't think Marissa would appreciate that –

DAVE

Oh, fine. It's a stinky wedding song anyway –

RUTH

It's not! It's very nice –

DAVE

Ruth, "The Blue Danube" is not a good wedding song – not for the first dance. That should be something you can sing along to, so you can sing it to each other years later. You can't –

He hums some of The Blue Danube Waltz, then he "figures out" the words, and sings it:

DAVE

The the the blue blue blue dan-danube ah ah
Dance with me, Ruthie. Just once --
Come on, you like the way I dance --
The the blue blue danube, ah, ah, come on

RUTH

Dave, that's not even funny. It's just
silly –
No, I don't want to dance, Dave –
Dave, can we just look at the list --

She reacts sharply to a pain somewhere in her body.

DAVE

What? What! I didn't touch you!

RUTH

It's fine, it's fine. Give me a minute –

DAVE

What happened! I didn't touch you! Ruthie --

RUTH

I'm fine, it's all right –

DAVE

Should I call an ambulance? 9-1-1? Want me to --

RUTH

No, no, that's not necessary – don't be dramatic.

DAVE

Ruthie, would you let me call you an ambulance?

RUTH
No, you may not call me an ambulance.

DAVE
Too late: You're an ambulance.

RUTH
I said you couldn't do that, Dave.

DAVE
You didn't get the joke.

RUTH
Dave, I got the joke. --

I know, Dave.

I was trying to keep you from telling that kind of terrible old joke. I know you like them, but other people don't – don't tell jokes like that at the wedding. You'll make Andrea's family sad.

DAVE
Geez, Ruth. I don't remember you laughing at my jokes.

RUTH
I laugh at your jokes when they're funny. I laugh heartily.

DAVE
Oh, you do? You laugh HEARTILY?

RUTH
I do when there's something to laugh at.

DAVE
No, no, Ruth, you don't laugh enough. And you don't laugh loud enough when you do. You need to laugh! How else could you get through difficult times? Right? Need the ol' laugh-o-rama.
Have you heard Marissa laugh? That's a laugh!

RUTH
I've heard her. It's quite a laugh.

DAVE
It's a terrific laugh! It's loud and exuberant --

Very loud. RUTH

It'll be nice when I'm old and hard of hearing. DAVE

That will be wonderful. Dave, you're so fidgety. Don't hover. Sit down. How about some Diana Ross? RUTH

Dave sings: Ain't no mountain high enough/ain't no mountain high enough/ain't no --. Ruth stops him with a gesture or a look.

Coffee OK? DAVE

Sure, it's fine. RUTH

What's the matter, Ruthie? Want me to warm it up for you? You OK? DAVE

I'm maybe a little tired from all these preparations. It's quite an event, isn't it? My little boy getting married. RUTH

You don't like Andrea? DAVE

Yes, of course. I'm very fond of her. RUTH

Oh, the poor kid. DAVE

What? Now what did I do? How about this one: "They Can't Take that Away From Me" – that's nice to dance to— RUTH

He sings it.

Could you possibly not sing every single song. I know how they go. RUTH

DAVE

OK, mark that one down. So you told Andrea you were, What is that: *Andrea, I'm very fond of you.*

RUTH

What's wrong with tha—

DAVE

Andrea's a doll! She's a little angel! Marissa slobbered and blubbered all over her when they met –

RUTH

That sounds charming.

DAVE

How is she supposed to feel welcome in this family? You know, Marissa doesn't either. She tells me that, and I feel bad to think that family is not welcoming to new people. They didn't get that from me, I tell her.

RUTH

From me?

DAVE

You and Jack and Stephe, you three form a little, you've had the wagons circled for years, and you don't let anyone new in and you don't let anyone in on your little secrets and you, ah, you make people feel left out.

RUTH

We don't mean to. Just a bad habit. Marissa doesn't keep secrets, I'll say that much for her.

DAVE

Nope, she just lays it all out on th – what? Like what? What does that mean?

RUTH

I'm sorry her son doesn't like you.

DAVE

He does! Well, he will. When did she tell you that?

RUTH

At the shower. Group of women sitting around doing nothing. Awful. Marissa was holding court.

DAVE

I don't have any secrets.

RUTH

Not anymore. Did you really "bawl just like a baby boy" when she said she'd marry you?

DAVE

I didn't cry. I was a little sniffly, maybe. She shouldn't tell people I cried.

RUTH

And I agree with you: I don't think her dog should sleep in the bed with you.

DAVE

Oh, she shouldn't be telling you stuff like that –

RUTH

He's, what, a mastiff?
That's a big dog. What is he, .
160 pounds?

DAVE

I know what he is --
I know he's a big dog --
I know how much he weighs --

RUTH

Does she know you're afraid of dogs?

DAVE

Oh, geez! You didn't say that to her! I'm not afraid of dogs!

RUTH

You are!

DAVE

No, no, he's a good boy. Gideon's
a good boy --

RUTH

How can she not know that?
You have to tell her that –

DAVE

No, I can't do that, Ruthie. She was alone for years. She had no one after the kids grew up – she just had the dog, you know. He's been good to her. I can't ask her that, to just –

RUTH

But you're right – he needs to sleep on the floor – Do you want me to say something?

DAVE
No, no, Ruth, don't say anything--
Just leave it alone --
Stop it.
Oh, stop that – I'll take care of it eventually.
We'll work something out --
Ruthie, stop –

RUTH
I don't mind. It's the least I can do.
I'll just mention it in passing.
How can you sleep?
160 pounds! That's a small bear.
Does he shed?

Ruth laughs herself into a pain jag.

DAVE
I'll get you some water –

RUTH
I don't need water.

DAVE
I'll get you some water.

RUTH
I don't want water. Why does everyone want to get water for you when you're in pain?
I'm not thirsty. I'm keeling over. I don't need a glass of water to do that. Just hold on a
minute. We'll do the list.

DAVE
Ruthie, it would kill you to let a guy get you a glass of water?

RUTH
It's not necessary.

DAVE
It would kill you?

RUTH
It would not kill me.

DAVE
People don't know what to do when you're in trouble. If you don't let them call an
ambulance or help you, something, you should let them get you a glass of water.

RUTH
All right

DAVE

All right. Not a lot to ask.

RUTH

No, no.

DAVE

That's right. Just a little – little bit of water never hurt anyone.

RUTH

Do I have to drink it? The water? If I'm keeling over and a person brings me a glass of water, I can't really stand, mind you, but I don't want to hurt this person's feelings, or make him feel badly in any way, so I should drink the water, or can I just hold it with the hand that I'm not using to grip the banister or the nearest object that will keep me from falling?

DAVE

Once you have the water, you can decide for yourself what to do with it. You just could let people lift a finger. Maybe run errands. Go pick things up for you. Pick up the groceries. Take you somewhere, pick you up somewhere. You don't tell people what's going on, so they don't know what they should do.

RUTH

People should understand that we have a wedding to get through.
Dave: I think Marissa's a riot.

DAVE

Thanks. That's a good thing, right?

RUTH

Thanks for picking up the dress for me.

DAVE

Ah, you're welcome. Anytime. Come on. We'll do the list. Let me get myself another cup.

RUTH

All right. Dave – can you heat this up for me?

DAVE

Sure. Sure thing.

He grabs her coffee cup and heads for the kitchen, singing, "They Can't Take That Away From Me."

DAVE

“The way you wear your hat; the way you sip your tea/the memory of all that; no, no, they can’t take that away from me”

BLACKOUT

More Than What

Characters:

Andrea: the bride, twenties

Melody: sister of the bride, maid of honor, twenties

Eve: friend of the bride, bridesmaid, twenties

Jack: the groom, twenties

Place: A bench, a stone wall, a ledge, just outside a country club reception hall. It is late fall.

Time: The present.

At Rise: Andrea sits outside on the stone wall in her wedding gown, no coat. After a moment, Melody runs out with a white coat.

Notes:

Both Melody and Eve are wearing “winter white” gowns, though they are slightly different styles to indicate their roles in the wedding; Melody’s is a bit more elaborate.

MELODY

There you are!

She drapes the coat over Andrea's shoulders.

MELODY

Did you think the chicken was dry?

ANDREA

Wedding chicken is always dry.

MELODY

For the price of this place?

ANDREA

(re: her own dress) This dress is so pretty.

MELODY

It is. Honey, we need to do the garter in twenty six minutes.

ANDREA

Did you see the green in Jack's eyes tonight?

MELODY

I thought they were brown.

ANDREA

They have green flecks. Tonight, in the candlelight – tonight, they were shining.

MELODY

They were.

ANDREA

His left eye tooth juts out. Did you know that? You can't really see it, but when he kissed me after the ceremony - " – you may kiss *the bride!!* — I noticed it. That tooth will need work.

MELODY

Andrea. Cold feet *after* the wedding dinner is just bad thinking. Tonight, he has teeth.

ANDREA

Remember when I pulled a clump of hair out of Joanie's head? We were five, six. She took my Barbie.

MELODY

Well, then she deserved it.

ANDREA

Big clump of it. But, in the long run, it didn't matter at all, did it?

MELODY

Of course, it grew back.

ANDREA

Exactly. This isn't my coat.

MELODY

But it's white.

ANDREA (taking it off and laying it on the bench)

I think it's Auntie Beth's --

Eve comes out carrying a white coat, but she just holds it.

EVE

Andrea -- there you are. I wanted to give you a minute, but --

MELODY

It's OK, Eve, I've got the situation under control --

EVE

You don't know what the situation is.

The groom, Jack, enters from another door, carrying a white coat. He drapes it over Andrea's shoulders.

JACK

There you are! My mother saw you sneak out --

ANDREA

It's hard to "sneak" in a wedding dress.

JACK

Listen: I had a lot of champagne, and the Franklin brothers were doing tequila shots, and you know you just sort of get sucked into those things, and, I'm, I'm sorry.

ANDREA

For what?

JACK
I don't know. I didn't do something stupid?

ANDREA
You're not even drunk.

JACK
I figured I'd say that, just in case.

ANDREA
Let me look at you.

MELODY
Do you floss, Jack?

JACK
Uh, sure --

MELODY
Well, then that'll be fine. Come on. Uncle Bob's going to do his "Sachmo" thing and I --

ANDREA
No! No, stay --

JACK
Do you really want to leave my father alone with the DJ? He'll make him play "The Chicken Dance."

But she's the bride, so everyone settles down.

ANDREA
This isn't my coat.

EVE
It's mine.

ANDREA
Melody and I touched tongues.

MELODY
Andrea!!

JACK
What??

EVE
Oh, Andrea, I don't think --

JACK
Why'd you do that?

MELODY

Andrea! We were - what age, we were kids! I was ten, maybe. I was --

ANDREA

We heard you had to touch a boy's tongue
when you kissed him, so we --

MELODY

Andrea, JESUS, this is ridiculous --

ANDREA

Don't take the Lord's name in vain on my wedding night.

MELODY

Sorry, OK. Jack: no big deal. We were just fooling around at the cottage. NO big deal.

JACK

Uh, fine. (to Andrea) Weren't you supposed to tell me all your deep, dark secrets
before we got married?

ANDREA

I forgot about that one.

MELODY

I did, too. I would certainly have mentioned it at the rehearsal dinner.

ANDREA

You forgive me?

JACK

Nothing to forgive.

MELODY

Sorry for touching your wife's tongue, Jack.

JACK

No problem, Melody.

MELODY

Thanks, Jack.

JACK (to Melody and Eve)

We'll be in in a minute.

ANDREA

No! Stay.

MELODY

You know, Skittles, you're carrying this "Queen for a Day" thing a little too far. You'll be throwing people into the moat --

But she's the bride, so everyone settles down. There's a bit of a pause.

ANDREA

Honey. Jack. Um. This isn't my coat, either.

EVE

Do you want me to go get yours?

ANDREA

Eve kissed me.

JACK
Fine, fine, high school stuff-
I don't want to hear about it --

EVE
Oh, God --

MELODY
What??

ANDREA

Tonight.

EVE

You kissed me back.

ANDREA

I know I did. But I didn't mean it in the same way that you meant it, I think, and that's not fair to either of us, it's not the ---

MELODY (overlapping)

You kissed a bride on her wedding night??

EVE

It was an accident --

ANDREA

"Tongue" is not an accident --

MELODY (overlapping)
You French kissed a bride on her --
the, the

ANDREA
No, no, not, not "tongue" - not in
traditional sense, not in --

JACK

Wait a second, wait a second, wait a second! Wait a second. What the FUCK are you guys talking about??

ANDREA (overlapping)

Oh, swearing on our wedding night, very nice.

JACK

Andrea! Do you have anything else you should have told me before we got married?

MELODY

Jack, it's fine, it's nothing. We were kids, Eve's drunk --

EVE

I'm not drun--

MELODY (overlapping)

-- and it's fine. Let's go inside before this fabric freezes and attaches to us and we die.

ANDREA

Jack? Honey? Are you OK? It was -- it's hard to explain. It was just a lovely moment, and it got a little out of hand, and in twenty years it'll be funny --

JACK

I'm sure it will.

MELODY

It'll be a riot . . .

JACK

All right, all right --

EVE

Well, not funny, but . . .

JACK

All right, all right, all right. Quiet! Huh. Do it again.

ANDREA

Jack, Jackie --

EVE

Jack!

MELODY

Oh, brother. "Bambi and Delila Go to Prep School --" . . .

JACK

Hey! Hey. I think I'm doing pretty well under the circumstances. I think I'm thinking pretty clearly. If I see anything - I mean - *anything* in this kiss . . . well, then we have made a very serious mistake.

ANDREA

Honey, listen --

EVE

I will not --

MELODY

This will be SO funny in --

JACK
You tell me it was nothing. Fine. Show me.

EVE
It's not a freak show, Jack -

ANDREA
No, do it.

EVE
But –

ANDREA
“But” nothing. My husband said he -- so -- so, OK.

MELODY
Well, I'll be inside if anyone needs --

JACK
No, stay --

MELODY
Wwwhhhyyy??

JACK
Because you're my sister now.

ANDREA (to Melody)
Please.

MELODY
Fine, fine. We should sell tickets. Cover the limo --

Jack silences her, then indicates to the others that they should begin. The girls do a little peck on the cheek kind of thing.

ANDREA
All right? There you --

EVE
OK, well, that oughtta do it --

MELODY
Looked pretty dull to me, Jack.

JACK
No! No. You kiss my mother that way. Do it right.

Andrea and Eve kiss. Still awkward, but with more vigor. He inspects carefully, dragging Melody around them as if the girls are on top of a music box and they are watching it spin. After a moment, still lip-to-lip with Eve:

Can we stop now?

ANDREA

Yeah.

JACK

EVE
It was my fault, Jack --

ANDREA
See, honey? Nothing.

MELODY
Accidents happen, Jack.

EVE
I always meant to do that. Since, maybe, junior year. I definitely meant to do it before you got married --

MELODY
Yeah, that would have been the time --

EVE
And then, as the day approached, I thought, just do it. But, next thing I knew, there we all were, up at the altar. And I guess I thought it doesn't matter now. You're safe. You're taken. You just look so pretty with your hair up. You look like a princess.

JACK
Uh, Eve -- so, you're gay?

EVE
Um. I don't think so.

ANDREA
Probably not.

MELODY
No, I don't think so --

EVE
Gosh, Jack. I'm so sorry. Please forgive me.

JACK
You didn't touch her breasts or anything?

MELODY
Oh, Jack, that's gross.

ANDREA
Hey! Hey - you're not enjoying this are you?

EVE
Of course not!!

JACK
Whoa! You kissed a girl on our wedding night and *I'm* in trouble??

ANDREA
No, no. I'm sorry. I'm -- You, uh, you didn't like that?

JACK

I'm a little nauseous.

MELODY

I can taste my chicken in my throat.

The opening strains of "What a Wonderful World" are heard from inside.

EVE

Melody, if you're not helping, you're just making things worse.

MELODY

You are not allowed to lecture right now! You really are not! I'm not mad because you kissed Andrea. I am annoyed because it was thoughtless. I'm talking about without thought! You don't get to just play out your every little impulse. I have worked my butt off on this wedding! So far, everything has been perfect and it is going to stay perfect. Now - knock it off, pull it together, get inside and we are doing the garter in seventeen minutes, by my watch!

EVE

OK. Jack, forgive me as soon as you can.

JACK

Will do.

From inside, a pretty darn good "Sachmo" imitation starts.

MELODY

Oop! Uncle Bob! Andrea. Majesty. May I go?

ANDREA

You may.

MELODY

And may I take Eve with me?

ANDREA

You may.

MELODY

If you want, I'll pull out Eve's hair in the Ladies Room.

EVE

I deserve it.

MELODY

Guys: you've been married for six and a half hours. In the long run, things disperse.

Melody and Eve gather the coats and exit, as --

MELODY (to Eve)

Did you know my cousin Joan is gay?

ANDREA (overlapping)

So. What do you think?

JACK

Does it increase the odds that you'll run off with a woman at some point?

ANDREA

No. I am married to you.

JACK

Well, I think when women leave their husbands for women, most times the husbands are surprised.

ANDREA

It was just one kiss.

JACK

With a girl. God, you are something. Do you want me to have a sex change?

ANDREA

Jerk.

JACK

Why did you tell me?

ANDREA

I just swore, in a room full of people we love, that ". . .I will live in the truth with you from this moment on."

JACK

You mean, if this had happened last week, you would have let it slide?

ANDREA

It could only have happened tonight. Tonight, I was standing in the bathroom looking in the mirror and I loved myself. I loved — this dress is SO pretty — and I loved everyone in the whole hall, and the attendant in the Ladies Room. I mean: who is this person? Waiting for people to pee and primp so she can -- she's just doing a job, right, just feeding her kids and paying off her car and I almost, Jack, I nearly fell over with it - this respect for her.

And all that chicken! Chicken at a Wedding!! A sacred, frightening event, and people still need to eat! That's so cute! And your eyes! They have green flecks in them!!

Then Eve came in, and she looked at me, and the two of us hugged, and then we hugged tighter, but it wasn't enough. So I kissed her, or she kissed me, it doesn't matter. It was just love, the whole love. It was all so much, it was so, it was more than, more than I could, more than, what, I don't know. God. Do you have any idea what I'm talking about?

JACK

Only a little bit. It's why I married you. Teach me that.

They kiss, a lovely kiss. Uncle Sachmo finishes, to raucous applause.

Eve wears strawberry lipstick.

A scary awful line dance music BLARES from the hall.

ANDREA

Oh, no! I told them no stupid line dances!!

JACK

This is what happens when you leave my father unsupervised.

Andrea makes a dash for the hall.

JACK

Wait a minute, wait a minute. According to your theory, aren't stupid line dances wonderful, too?

ANDREA

Oh. Uh. Right. Well. Right you are. See? You do understand.

They kiss, embrace, what have you, then "line dance" their way back to the hall.

BLACKOUT