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A Madhouse In Goa

A Play

by Martin Sherman

A Samuel French Acting Edition



New York Hollywood London Toronto

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A Madhouse in Goa was first presented at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith on 28th April 1989. It was directed by Robert Allan Ackerman with the following cast:

PART ONE:
A Table for a King

DAVID ..... Rupert Graves
MRS. HONEY ..... Vanessa Redgrave
COSTOS ..... Ian Sears
NIKOS ..... Larry Lamb

PART TWO:
Keeps Rainin' all the Time

DANIEL HOSANI ..... Arthur Dingam
OLIVER ..... Larry Lamb
HEATHER ..... Vanessa Redgrave
DYLAN ..... Ian Sears
ALIKI ..... Francesca Folan
BARNABY GRACE ..... Rupert Graves

Designed by Ultz
Lighting Design: Gerry Jenkinson
Music (Mabel's Song): Richard Sissons

United States Premiere Presentation
Produced by
The Second Stage Theatre, New York City
on 21 October 1997
Artistic Director: Carole Rothman

CHARACTERS:

PART ONE
A Table for a King

DAVID:	early 20's, American
MRS. HONEY:	early 60's, American
COSTOS:	eighteen, Greek
NIKOS:	30's, Greek

PART TWO
Keeps Rainin' all the Time

DANIEL HOSANI:	late 40's, American
OLIVER:	late 40's, British
HEATHER:	late 40's, American
DYLAN:	Heather's son, 19, American
ALIKI:	mid-20's
BARNABY GRACE:	late 20's, American

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

The same cast members may appear in both acts, in two configurations suggested by the original cast list opposite. The roles may also be doubled in different ways, or not doubled at all; it is up to each individual producer.

Also, *A Table for a King* may, if desired, be performed separately as a one-act play.

For
Sue Fleming
and
Philip Magdalany

PART ONE
A Table for a King

(Darkness. DAVID's voice is heard.)

DAVID. *(Voice only)* A star fell on Albania. I saw it. Just a few minutes ago. And across the dark Ionian Sea, riding a cool breeze from the Levant, the heavens dance. The moon, burnt orange, shines like an illuminated teardrop. *(Pause)* Oh shit! What's an illuminated teardrop? What a dreadful sentence. Why do I sit here writing about the Levant? I don't know what the Levant is. Or where. It sounds so romantic, though. If only I wasn't alone. Why do I keep this idiot journal? I have to get out of here. Away from this island. Why did I come to Corfu? Will 1966 go down in history as the summer I chased my melancholy across Europe? Oh! Pretentious! Cross it out! Why can't I write a decent sentence? Do people look at me and laugh? What am I doing here?

(The lights rise on the veranda of the Kistos Inn.)
(A tiny village in Corfu. Summer. 1966.)
(The inn – small, very white and comfortable, stretches out behind the veranda. The veranda itself is occupied by a number of tables, some of them set for breakfast. A door on one side leads to the kitchen. There are steps on the other side that lead to rocks, which descend, in turn, to

the sea that stretches out before the veranda. A group of beach chairs is piled on top of each other near the steps.)

(It is a blazing hot morning.)

(MRS. HONEY sits at the centre table – the largest table and one with a commanding view. She is in her early sixties, American.)

(DAVID, also American, sits at a nearby table. He is in his early twenties. He wears slacks and a long-sleeved shirt, buttoned to the top. His movements are awkward and insecure.)

MRS. HONEY. Waiting! I'm waiting. Hello. I'm waiting! *(COSTOS walks in from the kitchen, carrying a tray. He is Greek, eighteen, handsome, wearing shorts and a tee-shirt. He is humming 'Yesterday' by The Beatles.)* Where is Yannis Kistos? Yannis Kistos or his brother Nikos Kistos? The proprietors of the Kistos Inn? I demand to see the Kistos Brothers! Tell them I'm waiting. For my tea. *(COSTOS puts the contents of his tray – breakfast – on DAVID's table. He is still humming.)* And my toast. For my breakfast. *(COSTOS walks off with the tray.) (To DAVID.)* Glory Hallelujah! I declare ... this is not a well-run establishment. I'm sure you've noticed. I saw you arrive yesterday morning. Time enough for you to observe how poorly run this establishment is. Sweet Jesus! And yet the Kistos Brothers own a popular inn. Oh yes. Difficult to believe, isn't it? It does supply the most luxurious accommodations on this part of Corfu, but what does this part of Corfu have to offer, I ask you? A few goats, a dirty taverna, a puny village and that dreadful view of the Albanian coast. Have you seen anything *move* on the Albanian coast? I have never even been to Albania. Yes, it is

a popular inn, Chez Kistos Frères. Do you know who ate here Friday night? Lawrence Durrell! They wanted me to give up my table for him. This table. Quite the best table. I always insist upon it when I make my reservations. I have been here three times. I suppose it is a very special place, the Casa Kistos, don't you think? Serene. Well – what has he done, I ask you? Lawrence Durrell? Write a quartet. I'm not impressed. You're supposed to compose quartets, I believe, not write them. Have you read it? There's a wonderful hotel in Alexandria and I don't believe he mentions it at all. Of course, by wonderful I mean quite inexpensive. I suppose nobody in his quartet does anything inexpensive. Or clean. Well, well, well, I don't know. I don't know. I did give up my table. Yes, I did. So I do think I deserve breakfast. Lordy – I do. *(She takes a bell out of her pocket and rings it.)* Waiting! Call Nikos. Call Yannis. Waiting! I'm waiting! I carry my own bell. It's indispensable. Service is appalling everywhere, don't you think? *(Pause)* We have a great deal in common – you and I – a great deal, well perhaps not a great deal, but one thing. We are both travelling alone. Now I will say this for the Kistos Inn. They have single rooms. Solitary travellers are the most despised race on earth, of course you realize that. It is usually impossible to obtain a single room. I always advised my children to marry at an early age so they would qualify for double rooms. Unfortunately, they listened to me. Unlike this waiter. *(She rings the bell again.)* He understands English perfectly. He's just insolent. So – you're a photographer? I saw your camera. It must be very heavy. I suppose that's why you stoop. I noticed your posture at once. What's your name?

(Pause)

DAVID. David.

MRS. HONEY. Now *that* is a fine hotel. The King David. In Jerusalem. Are you Jewish?

DAVID. Yes.

MRS. HONEY. Lordy. An artist *and* a Jew. I do hope you're homosexual as well, they all three seem to complement each other, don't they? I, of course, didn't grow up with any Jews, not in Mississippi. I met them later, a few, on my travels. Where are those siblings? Nikos? Yannis! Will you take my photograph? I long to have my photograph taken. At *my* dinner table. Perhaps L. Durrell has left his spirit at the table. Perhaps it will materialize on film. Oh – please – will you?

DAVID. Well ... I'm not very ...

MRS. HONEY. It will be an adventure, won't it? I did have my photograph taken in Calcutta once. I had just purchased a camera. I thought my children should bave a record of my travels. I asked a sweet little beggar to take my picture. I paid him, of course – he must have been terribly hungry and he had a stoop, just like yours, and only two fingers, one on each hand, which made it difficult to hold the camera, but marvel of marvels, he focused the thing and clicked it too, and then smiled the most wonderful smile and ran off with the camera. I tried chasing him but I think his two fingers gave him extra speed. It always helps to travel light. That, of course, was before I realized my children were not interested in seeing photographs. I wonder if he still has the camera? I have wondered, in the clear light of retrospect, you understand, if he was a leper. I've always had a morbid fear of lepers. Now where would a leper get a roll of film developed? I won't say that question has haunted me, but I

have wondered ... I think it's fair to say his stoop was a permanent stance. So you will – won't you – take my photograph? Please say yes.

DAVID. Well ... *(Smiles)* Yes.

MRS. HONEY. Thank you. Now, if only I can get breakfast. You seem to have yours. *(She rings the bell again.)* I must confess, the bell is hopeless. Never gets me anything. Still ... *(She rings it again, vigorously.)* Waiting! I'm waiting. Sweet Jesus, I'm waiting!

(The lights fade.)
(DAVID's voice is heard.)

DAVID. *(Voice only.)* I met an amazing woman this morning. On the veranda, waiting for breakfast. Her name is Mrs. Honey and she is from Mississippi and she travels all over the world and she never stops talking and I promised to take her photograph. Now why did I do that? I'm so stupid. I *am* stupid. And lonely. And sad. And confused and ugly and desperate. Why am I here?

(His voice fades off.)
(The lights rise on the veranda. Afternoon. It is very hot.)
(DAVID is fidgeting with his camera. The camera is very old and a classic of its kind, resting on a tripod and using plates to record its images. It has a hood to cover the photographer when he wants to check the light. DAVID also has a small portable light-meter in his hand.)
(MRS. HONEY is sitting at her table, wearing a very light cotton dress, her eyes closed, absorbing the sun.)

MRS. HONEY. I feel like I'm under water. Floating. Not real. In a different time. *(She opens her eyes.)* That camera – my husband, the dentist, had one just like it. Many years ago. Is it an antique?

DAVID. I don't know. It takes the best ...

MRS. HONEY. I can't hear you.

(She closes her eyes again.)

(COSTOS enters, carrying a tray. He grins at DAVID. DAVID, embarrassed, ducks underneath the hood. COSTOS walks through the veranda, humming 'Homeward Bound' by Paul Simon. He walks off. DAVID comes out of the hood.)

DAVID. It takes the best ...

(NIKOS enters. He is Greek, in his thirties, and wears shorts and a tee-shirt. His English is only lightly accented. He carries a deck of cards. He sits at a table near MRS. HONEY and starts to play solitaire.)

NIKOS. A photographic session? *(MRS. HONEY opens her eyes.)* Nikos! Yes – indeed. You have a distinguished guest. A famous photographer.

DAVID. *(Embarrassed)* No, I'm just ...

NIKOS. We have many distinguished guests here. This *is* the finest inn on this part of the island. It was very kind of you to give up your table for Mr. Durrell.

MRS. HONEY. Well – he is an artist. Artists make things grow.

NIKOS. *(Losing at solitaire.)* Son-of-a-bitch!

(DAVID is circling them with the light-meter.)

MRS. HONEY. Nikos, you're in the light. Surely he's in the light.

DAVID. No. It's fine.

NIKOS. I am in the way?

DAVID. No.

MRS. HONEY. Of course you're in the way. Nikos went to Oxford.

DAVID. Really?

MRS. HONEY. I find, in general, that if you've been to Oxford, you're in the way. Of course, I can't imagine why he and his invisible brother run a hotel in such an insignificant village. Can you? Speak up, child.

DAVID. Well, I don't ...

NIKOS. Now, my dear Mrs. Honey – I must ask you for another favour. *(He hits his cards.)* Bloody hell.

MRS. HONEY. You play solitaire with such passion.

NIKOS. It is not a sad game, not a lonely game, Mrs. Honey. Not for a Greek.

(DAVID stands next to the camera, holding a small switch connected by wire to the camera.)

DAVID. Now!

MRS. HONEY. What?

(DAVID presses the button.)

DAVID. There.

MRS. HONEY. Oh. I had my picture took.

DAVID. *(Removing the frame.)* I liked the look on your ...

MRS. HONEY. Imperious?

DAVID. Yes.

NIKOS. Another favour. *(To his cards.)* There. That's better.

MRS. HONEY. What did you study at Oxford?

NIKOS. Political science.

MRS. HONEY. But that's meaningless. Especially in Greece.

NIKOS. That's why I run a hotel. *(To his cards.)* Beautiful.

MRS. HONEY. *(To DAVID.)* Take another photograph. With Nikos.

DAVID. Yes?

MRS. HONEY. The two of us.

NIKOS. No.

MRS. HONEY. Yes. Please. You would like that?

DAVID. I would.

MRS. HONEY. Speak up, child.

DAVID. I mumble. I'm sorry.

MRS. HONEY. You what?

DAVID. Mumble.

(He circles them again with his light-meter.)

MRS. HONEY. Well, yes, you swallow your words. So did the dentist. Too much saliva, he said. I'd say a miserable child-hood. Which would explain your clothing. You're so overdressed. It's blazing hot, isn't it? My, my, you're buttoned. What is the temperature, Nikos?

NIKOS. I must ask you ...

MRS. HONEY. Oh, Nikos, ask not, ask not. Come – have your picture took too. Leave those silly cards. It is a lonely game, no matter what you say. I used to play it endlessly. While the dentist was dying. It's a game for *that*. Stand here. Put your arm around me. Host and guest. Milk and honey.

NIKOS. If it pleases you. *(Rises)* Where?

MRS. HONEY. Right here. *(Motions her side.)* Do you like this, dear?

DAVID. Closer.

MRS. HONEY. Pardon?

DAVID. *Closer.*

MRS. HONEY. Swallow all the saliva and then speak. Closer, Nikos. Just stand still. He has to run around with that silly little thing and focus. You're a handsome man, Nikos. Nice legs. The dentist's legs were appalling.

NIKOS. Tomorrow evening, my dear Mrs. Honey ...

MRS. HONEY. Oh Nikos, you're so single-minded. Don't you ever ramble?

NIKOS. There is a special guest coming for dinner.

MRS. HONEY. When?

NIKOS. Tomorrow evening.

MRS. HONEY. Oh. You said that.

NIKOS. Yes.

MRS. HONEY. Well, that's nice. I hope he enjoys it. Will you be serving something with lamb?

NIKOS. I must ask you ...

MRS. HONEY. You mustn't, you mustn't. Don't talk. He doesn't want your mouth to move.

DAVID. It's alright. I'm not ready.

(He ducks under the hood.)

MRS. HONEY. I think he said he's not ready.

NIKOS. I must ask you to give up your table once again.

MRS. HONEY. You ask too much.

NIKOS. For one evening only.

MRS. HONEY. One evening too many.

NIKOS. It is a special favour.

MRS. HONEY. It is *my* table. It has the best view. One of the olive trees. Of the beach. Of the sea. Of that empty little rowboat in the water. Of Albania. I come to this hotel because of the view of Albania.

NIKOS. I am serious.

MRS. HONEY. I am too. About the table. I do reserve this table, as well as my room, four months in advance. Do any of your other clients do that? I seriously doubt it.

NIKOS. This guest is very special.

MRS. HONEY. More special than Mr. Durrell?

NIKOS. Yes.

MRS. HONEY. He has written a quintet, then? Lordy, this insignificant village is crawling with great artists.

DAVID. *Almost ready.*

MRS. HONEY. You needn't shout. The dentist was the same way, if he wasn't mumbling, he was shouting. Smile, Nikos. Tell me, who is this very special guest? Is it Mr. Auden or Mr. Stravinsky or, gracious me, Mr. Picasso? Are they all rushing to Corfu? Do they think the view of Albania might inspire them?

NIKOS. I could choke you, Mrs. Honey.

(MRS. HONEY laughs. DAVID stands next to the camera, holding the switch.)

DAVID. Now.

MRS. HONEY. Oh. Now, Nikos. Smile. Just imagine your hands around my neck, and smile.

(NIKOS breaks into a broad smile.)

NIKOS. He is not an artist.

MRS. HONEY. Then he doesn't deserve a table.

NIKOS. He is a king.

DAVID. *(Presses the switch.)* Got it.

MRS. HONEY. A king!

(DAVID quickly turns the plate over and replaces it in the camera.)

DAVID. One more.

MRS. HONEY. Goodness – dime a dozen.

DAVID. This one will be faster.

MRS. HONEY. You meet kings and princes and dukes everywhere these days. Running around without their countries, looking for a free meal. Where is this one from?

DAVID. Can you smile again?

NIKOS. From here.

MRS. HONEY. Here?

DAVID. Please?

NIKOS. Yes. Here.

MRS. HONEY. Greece?

NIKOS. Greece.

MRS. HONEY. Oh, Nikos. Well, well, well. So it's that King. Your King. This King. *The* King. Dining at the Kistos Inn?

NIKOS. He has a home nearby.

MRS. HONEY. With Mr. Durrell? Are they lovers? Oh, you Greeks are so sly. Does the King come here for your legs?

NIKOS. Choke.

MRS. HONEY. *(To DAVID.)* Take one of Nikos – by himself.

NIKOS. No – no – no.

(He moves away and sits at his table again and resumes his game of solitaire.)

MRS. HONEY. Nikos is obviously more important than he seems. Oh, Nikos, Nikos. *(Pause)* No. I won't give up the table.

NIKOS. You can sit at my table.

MRS. HONEY. It's too far away. It's near the kitchen. It attracts Greek Mosquitos.

NIKOS. You can sit with the honeymoon couple.

MRS. HONEY. *With* them?

NIKOS. I'll put them with the Germans.

MRS. HONEY. That would destroy their marriage. So would I. I have a wicked tongue. No, no.

NIKOS. You can sit with the French scientist.

MRS. HONEY. He'll talk to me. In *French.* No, no.

NIKOS. You can sit with your friend here.

(He points to DAVID, who is dismantling the camera.)

MRS. HONEY. He wants to be alone with his thoughts. He's happy that way. Alone. No, no, no. The King will have to sit with the Germans or the French scientist or even with

you, although, if you did study political science. I don't think you would have anything to say to him. No, Nikos, I won't give up my table. If he were an artist, like Mr. Durrell ... then I'd grumble and I'd protest, but in the end, I'd graciously give in. But a King! A politician! He has blood on his hands, Nikos. Quite simply that. On some level – even if he's a nice young man – he's a killer. You must know that. You studied that. A murderer. Oh, let him go to the local taverna. Let him dine with his deeply distressed subjects. But this table – is mine.

(Pause)

NIKOS. I must have it.
MRS. HONEY. Mine.
NIKOS. I *will* have it.

(He throws the cards off the table and stands up.)

MRS. HONEY. I've paid for it.

NIKOS. *(Smiles)* We've just killed each other not too long ago, Mrs. Honey. My people. Brother against brother. As they say. We watched each other die. *(Pause)* A Greek isn't a Greek if he tells the truth. Pardon my lapse. For this is the truth. I will have the table. *(He kisses MRS. HONEY on her forehead.)* Dear lady. I always enjoy your visits here.

(NIKOS leaves.)
(Silence)

MRS. HONEY. Smooth. Don't you think?

DAVID. I don't know.

MRS. HONEY. Too smooth. There's a story there. How does a Greek boy from Corfu get to Oxford? Where did he learn perfect English? Why does he run a hotel? And where on earth is the other one, his brother? Oh, there is a story there. And we will never know it, you and I, we will never know it. When we travel, we pick up impressions, that's all. Never the truth. We're never invited inside. *(Pause)* You and I. *(Pause)* Will they be pretty photographs?

DAVID. I hope.

MRS. HONEY. Are you pleased?

DAVID. I think so.

MRS. HONEY. Aren't you hot? All those buttons.

DAVID. No.

MRS. HONEY. I have very little in life, you see. The dentist is dead. The children don't need or want me. I see deceit everywhere. I have very little. Occasionally, in some insignificant village, in some country I barely know, I have a table. Do you understand? Why are you so quiet? Look at your hair. It just sits there. You must give it some *style. (She runs her fingers through his hair, messing it up, trying to give it some body.)* Someday, you will understand.

(The lights fade.)
(DAVID's voice is heard.)

DAVID. *(Voice only.)* Why did I bring this awful camera? No one travels with a camera like this. It's so heavy. The plates weigh a ton. Why do you think I can take photo graphs? When I try to carry the camera *and* the suitcase together, it's a living hell. I keep throwing clothes away, to

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