Whose Wives Are They Anyway?

An American Farce

by Michael Parker

A Samuel French Acting Edition



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Whose Wives Are They Anyway?

AN AMERICAN FARCE

by

MICHAEL PARKER

was first produced at the Delray Beach Playhouse,
Delray Beach, Florida
on October 1st, 1998

The Cast

JOHN BAKER	Michael DeGrotta
DAVID McGACHEN	Marc Streeter
TINA	Ann Patrice Gomersall
MRS. CARLSON	Jodie Dixon
WILSON	Jack Gordon
D.L. HUTCHISON	Charlotte Sherman
KARLY McGACHEN	Nedria DeGrotta
LAURA BAKER	Marcie Hall

Directed by Randolph Del Lago
Designed by Ann Cadaret

Original title:
WHOSE WIFE IS IT ANYWAY?

CHARACTERS

JOHN BAKER *(age 35-40)*: A vice president of The Ashley Maureen Cosmetics Corporation, he is a successful business executive, who, because of his kind and gentle nature, allows himself to be manipulated into compromising situations by the more dominant personality of David. Alternating between the roles of himself and David's "wife," he is caught up in a whirlwind of events beyond his control, but nevertheless manages to show great strength of character and personality. *(Hardworking, honest, straightforward and full of initiative.)*

DAVID McGACHEN *(age 45-50)*: A distinguished looking man, he has risen to become a vice president of The Ashley Maureen Cosmetics Corporation more by guile and cunning than ability and hard work. Relentless in his efforts to impress his new boss, he attempts to manipulate all those around him. Even when his plan to create two alternative wives begins to unravel, he never gives up scheming and plotting, and always seems to come up with "one more idea." *(Clever and cunning, a relentless schemer.)*

TINA *(age 20-30)*: The young, pretty country club receptionist. She is good at her job, impressing the guests with her smile and personality. Once she has been persuaded to impersonate John's wife, she embraces the role wholeheartedly. After a little too much champagne, she seems to have difficulty keeping all her clothes on, and ends up at the heart of many of the visual comic sequences. *(Bright, sexy, a bubbling personality.)*

MRS. CARLSON *(age 45-55)*: The club manager. A straight-laced, severe woman who, in a few years will no doubt become a typical "old battleaxe." At this stage in her life she prefers to take the moral high ground, and does not hesitate to preach the evils of sex and adultery. She sees herself as guardian of morality for the country club, and makes sure all her guests know it. *(Dominant, bossy, efficient, yet rather likeable.)*

WILSON *(age 60+)*: The club handyman. He is the complete and total hypochondriac. You name it, he suffers from it! An endearing and comic character, he lights up the stage at his every entrance with his chronic complaints. Never far from most of the comic

sequences, he is a pivotal character who observes all the madcap happenings going on around him. *(Likeable, funny, with a great sense of humor.)*

D.L. HUTCHISON *(age 45-50)*: The new president of The Ashley Maureen Cosmetics Corporation. She is bright, smart and self-assured, with a "take charge" nature. She is the "straight man" of the plot, for whose benefit the duplicate wives have been produced. She is a somewhat overbearing character, serious in nature, who, at all times, is all business. She is finally revealed as a duplicitous hypocrite in the surprise ending. *(Smart, attractive, efficient and personable.)*

KARLY McGACHEN *(age 40ish)*: She is quite a strong character who reacts in a positive and forceful way to the apparent infidelity of her husband David. Determined to make him jealous, she is party to several hilarious scenes as she makes a play for the reluctant Wilson. *(Determined and calculating, yet with a tender side.)*

LAURA BAKER *(age 30-40)*: A pretty little thing who is somewhat dominated by the stronger character of Karly, she is a simple soul who just wants to love and be loved by her husband John. She never quite understands what is going on around her. She cries at the drop of a hat, and spends much of her time on stage in tears. *(Tender, loving, naive.)*

SETTING

The action of the play takes place in the reception area, and rooms 11 and 13, of The Oakfield Golf and Country Club, somewhere in New England.

TIME: The Present

ACT I:
Early Friday evening in August

ACT II:
The action is continuous

ACT I

(The curtain rises on an empty set. It is the reception area, hallway and guest rooms 11 and 13 of The Oakfield Golf and Country Club.

The entranceway, D.R., leads to the bar, dining room and front entrance to the club. R. is the reception area, with a small counter, which has a call bell and a telephone on it, behind which is a double-hinged door to the office. U.R.C. are two or three steps to a landing with a railing each side of them. In the center of the U.S. wall on the landing is the door to room 8. The landing continues off R. to other rooms and the terrace, and off L. to rooms 11, 13 and the pro-shop.

The L. 60-65% of the stage consists of rooms 11 and 13 which are built up to the same level as the landing. The walls are all cut out, with the exception of the U.S. walls and the connecting pocket door between the two rooms, which is closed. Each room has a double bed and a bedside table with a reading lamp and telephone on it. The tables are R. of the bed in room 11 and L. of the bed in room 13. Room 11, to the R. of room 13, has a bathroom U.R. of the bed. Room 13 has a bathroom D.L. of the bed. These two rooms are of equal size and identical in decor.

D.R.C. in the reception area is a small couch with an afghan neatly folded over it. To its L. is a low backed easy chair. Between them is a small side table with a telephone and a newspaper on it.

After a few moments, JOHN BAKER and DAVID McGACHEN enter from the front entrance. JOHN, age about 40, is a fairly quiet, mild mannered man, overshadowed a little, as we shall see, by the more dominant personality of DAVID, but nevertheless a successful executive, who knows what he wants in life. He is the vice

president in charge of marketing for The Ashley Maureen Cosmetics Corporation. DAVID, perhaps 45-50, is a tall, distinguished looking man, who has risen to become the vice president in charge of franchise operations for the Ashley Maureen Corporation, more by guile and cunning than ability or hard work.
Both are dressed casually, ready for the golf course, and carry small suitcases, which they put down by the counter.)

DAVID. *(Looking around as he enters.)* Not a bad little place, not bad at all. *(He rings the call bell.)* We'll get checked in and we'll just have time for nine holes before dinner.

JOHN. Do you think we've got time? It's nearly five o'clock.

DAVID. You betcha. It doesn't get dark till about 8.

JOHN. Well, I guess we could then.

DAVID. We've got to make the most of the weekend. Your idea to send our wives to New York, so they could go shopping for the whole weekend was brilliant. *(He rings the call bell again.)* Come on. Come on.

JOHN. It might just be the most expensive idea I've ever had. Have you any idea how much damage those two can do on Fifth Avenue?

(Enter TINA from the office. She is young and very pretty. Age 20-30, she is bright and personable, well suited to her job as the receptionist. She is wearing a dark fitted skirt, a brightly colored long sleeve silk blouse, hose and high heels.)

TINA. I'm sorry if I kept you waiting, but the phone system in the entire building is in the process of being rewired. This one *(She indicates the counter phone.)* doesn't seem to work at all, so I had to take a call in the office.

JOHN. Oh that's alright, we've only been here a minute.

TINA. You must be the two guys from the Ashley Maureen Cosmetics Company I spoke to this morning.

DAVID. That's right, I'm David McGachen, and this is John Baker.

TINA. Hi! I'm Tina. Could you fill these in please. *(She puts two*

forms on the counter as the phone on the side table rings.) Good grief, that can't ring, it's not an outside line. *(She crosses L. to pick up the phone as JOHN and DAVID fill in the forms.)* Hello, what? No I can not put twenty dollars on Little Green Man in the 4:30 at Belmont. This is The Oakfield Golf and Country Club. That's alright. Goodbye. *(She hangs up and returns behind the counter.)* The worst part is the phone company people all left at four o'clock, and you know we won't get anything done now till Monday morning. *(They hand her the forms.)* Two singles for two nights, right?

JOHN. Right.

TINA. I always use it you know.

JOHN. Use what?

TINA. Ashley Maureen make-up.

JOHN. Oh good. I'm sure I've got some samples in the car. I'll get you some later.

TINA. Ooh thank you. What do you guys do for the company?

JOHN. Well, I'm the vice president in charge of marketing, and David here is the vice president for franchise operations.

TINA. You here on business or pleasure?

DAVID. Strictly pleasure. We're here to play golf till we drop. It'll probably be the last chance we get for quite a while.

TINA. Oh?

JOHN. You might have read it in the paper, but Ashley Maureen has just been taken over by the Stratford Corporation. The new president starts on Monday, so I don't think we'll be taking another long weekend for a while.

TINA. Well, I bet you have a terrific weekend. I've put you in rooms 11 and 13, and the pro shop is just past room 13 at the end of the hallway.

JOHN. Oh, we should bring the golf bags in here then?

TINA. Yes, I'll get someone to carry them for you.

(Enter MRS. CARLSON from U.R. She is a rather severe looking woman, somewhat dour and taciturn, who does not seem to enjoy life very much and appears to resent people who do. Age perhaps 50, she is very conservative in dress, with little or no make-up and her hair up in a bun or French roll.)

MRS. C. *(Comes D.)* Good afternoon gentlemen. You must be the people from The Ashley Maureen Corporation. I'm Mrs. Carlson. I'm the manager of the club.

DAVID. *(Shakes hands.)* I'm David McGachen, how do you do? And this is John Baker.

JOHN. *(Shakes hands.)* I'm pleased to meet you.

MRS. C. How do you do? Now is there anything I can do for you?

DAVID. Thank you, but this young lady is taking very good care of us.

TINA. Have you seen Wilson?

MRS. C. I just left him. He's sweeping leaves out on the terrace.

TINA. I need him to carry some bags. Can you hold the fort for a minute?

MRS. C. Of course.

TINA. Won't be a minute.

(Exits U.R. The counter phone rings.)

MRS. C. *(Picks up the phone.)* Oakfield Golf and Country Club. You want me to what? A "C" note on the nose of a little green man? Why in heaven's name would you want me to put anything on the nose of a little green man? Because who scratched? Listen young man, I don't know who you are, or what you want, but I am not going to enter into any discussion about who is scratching what. *(She hangs up.)* I really must apologize gentlemen. I take great pride in the fact that I manage a club that is usually the very model of propriety and decorum. I'm afraid these mixed up phone calls are just driving us all crazy.

(She busies herself with papers behind the desk.)

DAVID. I wonder what he'll be like?

JOHN. Who?

DAVID. The new president of the company, D.L. Hutchison.

JOHN. I don't know, but I've heard the Stratford Corporation run a really tight ship.

DAVID. Oh?

JOHN. I've heard they get all involved in your private life, and if you don't do things their way, you're out.

DAVID. Oh boy! We're going to have to watch it. You know that old saying, "a new broom sweeps clean."

(Enter TINA from the U.R. landing. She is followed by WILSON. He is dressed in tan pants and a colored golf shirt with the club logo embroidered on it. Age perhaps 60, he is a crotchety old geezer who wouldn't be happy if he had nothing to complain about, and appears to be resentful of everything and everyone.)

TINA. *(Coming D. from the landing.)* Here you are gentlemen. This is Wilson. He'll help you with the bags.

WILSON. Golf bags are they?

JOHN. Yes, of course.

WILSON. I've got a bad back you know.

JOHN. Oh dear, perhaps I should help you then.

MRS. C. Wilson! Don't take any notice of him, he's perfectly fit.

JOHN. Well there's two golf bags, so why don't I help him anyway. Come on Wilson.

(He exits to the front entrance.)

WILSON. *(Following him.)* That's very kind of you sir, if it wasn't for this hernia of mine I'd be able to—

TINA. *(Laughing.)* You'll get used to Wilson, everybody does. *(The phone in the office rings.)* I'll get it.

(Exits to office.

(The door to room 8 opens and D.L. HUTCHISON comes down the steps. She is a handsome woman, age 45-50, very smartly dressed in a pastel colored two piece suit, high heels and conservative accessories. She is what you might expect of the C.E.O. of a multimillion dollar corporation, smart, intelligent, bright and self-assured.)

MRS. C. *(Hands DAVID a key.)* Here you are Mr. McGachen. I

see Tina's put you in room 13, up the steps and second on your right.

DAVID. Thank you.

(MRS. C. exits to the office.)

D.L. *(Comes D.)* Excuse me, Mr. McGachen?

DAVID. Yes.

D.L. Mr. David McGachen?

DAVID. Yes.

D.L. Do you by any chance happen to work for the Ashley Maureen Corporation?

DAVID. Yes, as a matter of fact, I do.

D.L. You have a rather uncommon name, so I thought it must be you. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm D.L. Hutchison, from The Stratford Corporation, and your new president at Ashley Maureen.

DAVID. *(Shakes hands.)* How do you do? *(Just a little flustered.)* How did you know who I am?

D.L. *(Crosses L. to sit in the chair, and gestures to David that he should sit on the couch.)* Oh, I've been studying the personnel files of all the executives. I like to know as much as possible about the people who work for me.

DAVID. *(Sits.)* I see.

D.L. Our corporate policy is to play an active role in the off-duty lives of our employees. We believe a happy executive is a productive executive.

DAVID. Quite right D.L.

D.L. So, you here for the weekend?

DAVID. Yes we're just checking in.

D.L. Good, I'm here for the weekend too. I'm in room 8. You know this is a wonderful coincidence, we must make the most of the opportunity.

DAVID. We must?

D.L. Yes, of course. I have the chance to meet you and your wife and get to know you both a little, before we all get down to work on Monday.

DAVID. My wife?

D.L. Of course. She is here with you, isn't she?

DAVID. Well actually she's gone shopping—

D.L. Excellent. I'll meet her when she gets back here then. You know, confidentially, just between the two of us, if there's one thing I simply can't tolerate, it's men who go off to play golf on the weekend without their wives. No one like that will ever work for me. I want my executives to be very involved with their families.

DAVID. You do?

D.L. Yes indeed. *(Stands.)* I'll look forward to meeting your wife. Shall we say cocktails before dinner? Let's meet here about six then.

DAVID. *(Stands.)* Well actually—

D.L. Good, that's settled then. I'll see you later.

(Exits up the steps and into room 8. Enter JOHN and WILSON from the front entrance, each carrying a large golf bag.)

WILSON. It puts a strain on your intestines you know, carrying loads like this.

DAVID. John, we're in trouble.

JOHN. What?

DAVID. Quick let's get into our rooms.

JOHN. I haven't even got a key yet. *(DAVID is pounding the call bell.)* What in heaven's name is going on?

(TINA enters from the office.)

DAVID. Have you got Mr. Baker's key?

TINA. Right here sir, number eleven.

(She hands him a key.)

DAVID. *(Picks up both cases.)* Good, hurry.

(He leads the way up the steps, then L. on the landing, followed by JOHN and WILSON carrying the golf bags.)

WILSON. I knew a guy once, got a ruptured spleen from carrying golf bags.

TINA. Wilson, could I see you in the office when you've finished please?

(Exits to office.)

WILSON. *(Now at the top of the stairs.)* I'd sprint right down, miss, but my shin splints are giving me all sorts of problems today.

(Exits L. on the landing.)

JOHN. *(Opening the door of room 11 and talking to DAVID over his shoulder.)* Just calm down, let's at least get into our rooms. Boy this is small. *(He walks around the bed and opens the bathroom door.)* That's better, there's a dressing room as well as a bathroom.

(He leaves the golf bag in the bathroom, comes back to the door, picks up his suitcase from outside the door and puts it on the bed. Meanwhile, DAVID has opened the door of room 13, and put his suitcase in the bathroom. WILSON has now stopped in the doorway of room 13 and taken the golf bag off his shoulder. DAVID then notices the connecting door, slides it open and goes into room 11.)

DAVID. Listen, John, we're in all sorts of trouble.

(WILSON reacts and leans forward to listen.)

JOHN. What are you talking about?
DAVID. I've just met D.L. Hutchison.
JOHN. He's here?
DAVID. Worse than that. She's here.
JOHN. She?
DAVID. She.
JOHN. So? *(WILSON is now leaning forward trying to listen, and JOHN, looking past DAVID, sees him through the open connecting door.)* Ahem!

(He nods towards WILSON.)

DAVID. *(Realizes WILSON is still there and turns back into room 13. He reaches for the golf bag, but WILSON, who is not about to surrender the bag until he has received a tip, clutches it tightly and backs away. DAVID takes a couple of bills out of his pocket and hands them to WILSON.)* Thank you Wilson. That'll be all.

WILSON. Thank you sir.

DAVID. I'll take that.

(WILSON hands him the golf bag and closes the door of room 13. A second or two later we see him come D. and exit to the office. DAVID props the bag against the bed in room 13 and returns to room 11.)

JOHN. So, D.L.'s a woman. What's she like?

DAVID. She wants to meet our wives.

JOHN So, what's wrong with that?

DAVID. You don't understand. She's staying here at the club and wants to meet our wives for cocktails at 6 o'clock tonight.

JOHN. Well, didn't you tell her they're not here?

DAVID. No, thank goodness.

JOHN. What?

DAVID. Get this. She said any man who went off to play golf on the weekend without his wife would never work for her.

JOHN. Oh boy!

DAVID. Oh boy is right. What are we going to do? We're dead if we don't produce our wives.

JOHN. What do you mean "we"? She doesn't know I'm here does she?

DAVID. Come to think of it, I guess not.

JOHN. Right. That's it then. I'm headed out of here and right back home.

DAVID. You can't leave me in this mess. What am I going to do?

JOHN. You can start a whole new career as an olive stuffer for all I care. I'm outta here.

DAVID. Very funny! Now let me think. I've got to find a wife by six o'clock and we know the girls will never be home before mid-

night, and then it's an hour's drive to get here ...*(He trails off, deep in thought.)* wait a minute, wait a minute. I've got an idea.

JOHN. What?

DAVID. Do you remember that play you were in a couple of years ago?

JOHN. What play?

DAVID. You know, the one where you escaped by dressing as a woman.

JOHN. Sure but—oh no!

DAVID. Why not?

JOHN. Because we'd never get away with it.

DAVID. Of course we could. Everybody said how convincing you were.

JOHN. Yes, but I had clothes and a wig and make-up.

DAVID. There's a dress shop in the lobby and a beauty parlor with wigs in the window, and the one thing we're certainly not short of is make-up.

JOHN. David, this is stupid.

DAVID. You've got to help me. After all if it had been you D.L. had seen, I would have helped you.

JOHN. Would you really?

DAVID. Of course, what are friends for?

JOHN. Alright, I'll stay and help. I'm just not convinced this is the way to go.

DAVID. O.K. Do you have a better idea?

JOHN. Well, not really—

DAVID. Well then?

JOHN. O.K. I think you're crazy, but O.K.

DAVID. Alright. Let's get you to the dress shop and the beauty parlor.

JOHN. What am I going to tell them in the shop?

DAVID. Tell them you're going to a costume party or something. Let's see if the coast is clear.

(Leaving the connecting door open, they exit room 11, closing the door and go R. on the landing. Meanwhile WILSON has entered from the office, followed by TINA, who is carrying a phone.)

TINA. Let's try changing this phone please Wilson. Maybe this one works, I'll be right back.

(Hands him the phone.)

WILSON. Alright, but I don't think it'll do any good, it's the wiring and this junction box under the counter that's all screwed up.

TINA. Try it anyway. *(Exits to office.)*

(WILSON takes the phone off the counter and bends down behind it. He is out of sight as JOHN and DAVID come down the steps.)

DAVID. O.K. It looks like it's all clear. Go and get the clothes and remember, get back to the room as quick as you can.

JOHN. Are you sure you want me to dress up as a woman?

(They have come D.R. just below the counter.)

DAVID. Yes. I definitely want you to be my wife. *(WILSON's head slowly appears over the counter top, mouth open, eyes bulging.)* Now get going, and remember as far as anyone else is concerned we're both in room 13.

(JOHN exits to the front entrance. DAVID turns to go U.S. WILSON ducks out of sight. DAVID goes back into room 13, closing the door, picks up the golf bag and goes into the bathroom. WILSON stands up, his mouth wide open.)

WILSON. I don't believe it!

(Enter D.L. from room 8. She comes down.)

D.L. Ah Wilson, I wonder if you could do something for me please?

WILSON. Well, as long as it doesn't place a strain on my herniated disc, I'd be pleased to.

D.L. Is there a florist's in the club?

WILSON. I'm afraid not miss, but there's one just on the corner we always use.

D.L. Good. I wonder if you could run *(WILSON reacts.)* well, walk down and get a nice bouquet of roses for the couple in room 13?

WILSON. Couple?

D.L. Yes.

WILSON. Room 13?

D.L. Yes.

WILSON. Roses?

D.L. Yes, I always think roses are so romantic, don't you?

WILSON Romantic?

D.L. Yes, they've managed to get away together for the weekend and I thought flowers would be nice.

WILSON. You want to send flowers to the couple in room 13? And I thought I'd seen it all. I don't believe it.

(Enter MRS. CARLSON from the office.)

MRS. C. Everything alright Mrs. Hutchison?

D.L. Yes, thank you. If it's alright, I've just asked Wilson to run out and get me some flowers.

WILSON. I don't run anywhere miss. You see I've got these flat feet and—

MRS. C. Of course it's alright. That's what we're here for, aren't we Wilson?

WILSON. Did I ever tell you I once got a carbuncle on my foot? The doctor said it could have been caused by running. Very painful it was. Funny thing, I had it for years, and then one morning it just wasn't there any more.

MRS. C. You know I could have lived my whole life without knowing that Wilson.

D.L. Here let me give you some money, *(She hands him bills out of her purse.)* and when you've got the flowers, would you bring them to my room please, I'd like to write a note and deliver them personally.

(Exits room 8.)

MRS. C. Did you hook this phone up?

WILSON. Yeah, just finished.

MRS. C. Well, does it work?

WILSON. I dunno. She told me to hook it up, not test it. Anyway there's wires all over the place down there. *(The counter phone rings.)* There you go, it's working.

MRS. C. *(Picks up the phone.)* Reception. Hello. You want to know what? How much weight is Golden Girl carrying? I wouldn't have thought it would have been any of your business. What? I don't care if you do want your usual on Love Goddess to show at 5 o'clock. You can't have it, not in my club. Good day sir. *(Slams the phone down.)* Wilson!

WILSON. I know, I know, the wires are crossed again.

(DAVID has come out of the bathroom of room 13, exited to the hallway, closed the door, and come down to the reception desk. He carries a putter and a golf ball.)

MRS. C. Everything alright Mr. McGachen?

DAVID. Just fine thank you. I noticed the putting green out front, and I thought I'd just get a little practice till Mr. Baker gets back.

WILSON. You going to be playing a round with Mr. Baker are you?

DAVID. Well we were going to but something came up.

(WILSON raises he eyes heavenward.)

MRS. C. What's wrong with you?

WILSON. Funny you should ask, you see I've got these shooting pains, they start in my kneecaps and—

MRS. C. Wilson! *(To DAVID.)* Don't pay any attention to him. *(To WILSON.)* Don't you have an errand to run?

WILSON. I've told you I don't run anywhere. *(MRS. C. opens her mouth to say something.)* Alright, alright. I'm going. *(He exits to the front entrance muttering to himself.)* Roses, for the couple in room 13, so romantic. I don't believe it—

DAVID. What on earth is he talking about?

MRS. C. Oh don't take any notice of him, he seems to be in one of his moods today. Excuse me.

(Exits to office. DAVID takes a step L. and practices a putting stroke, as D.L. enters from room 8. She turns, as if to go R. on the landing, sees DAVID and comes D. to his R.)

D.L. Ah Mr. McGachen. I hope you're not planning on playing golf without your wife.

DAVID. No, no. Definitely not! She's—er—still shopping. I thought I'd just wait for her on the putting green.

D.L. Good. I can't tell you how much I'm looking forward to meeting her.

(JOHN enters from the front entrance. He is carrying a box-like package and a large plastic shopping bag. D.L., who is facing L. and slightly D.S. of DAVID, does not see him. DAVID puts his L. hand out, palm forward towards JOHN, to signal him to stop and get out, which he does. D.L. looks strangely at DAVID, who then flips his hand backward and forward, as though examining his nails.)

DAVID. I simply must get a manicure, it's been far too long.

D.L. *(Frowning.)* Really? Well, I'll see you about six then.

(Exits R. on the landing. DAVID comes D.R. and signals to JOHN to come in.)

JOHN. Was that her?

DAVID. Yes. That was close. *(He goes up the steps and looks R. on the landing.)* O.K. come on, she's gone. Did you get everything?

JOHN. *(Follows him up.)* Yes, but are you sure you want me to do this?

(They both enter room 11.)

DAVID. I'm more convinced than ever. She's definitely going to

fire me if I don't produce a wife.

JOHN. O.K. but let's try to keep it short and sweet. I meet her, one drink and I'm gone.

(He picks up the suitcase from the bed and goes into the bathroom, leaving the door open.)

DAVID. That should do it.

JOHN. *(Off.)* I wonder what D.L. stands for?

DAVID. Dragon Lady I should think.

JOHN. *(Off.)* Remind me to tell her you said that.

DAVID. Sure. Listen, while you're getting ready, I'm going to move the car round and check out the pro shop. I haven't given up on golf yet.

JOHN. *(Off.)* Well I have. Just as soon as we've had one drink with the dragon lady, I'm out of here.

(DAVID exits room 11, closes the door, and goes R. as the phones on the counter and the table both ring. TINA enters from the office and picks up the phone on the counter.)

TINA. Oakfield Golf and Country Club—Little green man? No I can't—*(The table phone continues to ring.)* Oh good grief! *(DAVID has come down the steps, so she hands him the counter phone.)* Could you hold this for me for a second please? *(DAVID takes the phone and listens as TINA crosses L. and picks up the phone on the table.)* Oakfield Golf and Country Club, yes, oh—reservations. Just a moment please, I have to get to the computer. *(She heads R. to the office.)* You can hang that up, it's a wrong number.

(TINA exits to the office. DAVID hangs up the counter phone, but it rings again immediately. He picks it up.)

DAVID. Hello. Who is this? The Oakfield Golf and Country Club? Just a minute. *(He calls to the office door.)* Miss! *(TINA appears in the doorway with a phone to her ear.)* You've got another call.

TINA. I know, it's me.
DAVID. You mean—
TINA. We're talking to each other.

(She disappears for a moment into the office.)

DAVID. ... I thought you sounded familiar.

(TINA reappears and crosses L. to the table phone.)

TINA. One moment please madam. *(To DAVID.)* Here hold this.

(She hands him the table phone, reaching with it across the couch, and signals to DAVID to reach as far as he can with the other phone. The two cords fail to meet by about two feet. DAVID ends up stretched over the R. end of the couch, the table phone in his left hand, and the counter phone in his right. By leaning, first one way, and then the other, he can use both phones at once.)

DAVID. *(To table phone.)* We're checking your reservation now madam.

(TINA runs into the office and reappears immediately with the office phone to her ear. The cord is just long enough to enable her to be seen in the office doorway.)

TINA. *(Into the phone.)* May I have your name please?
DAVID. *(Leaning R.)* I'm David McGachen.
TINA. No, no, the other phone.
DAVID. Oh I see. *(Leaning L. to the table phone.)* May I have your name please? Mrs. Faraday.
TINA. What?
DAVID. *(Leaning R.)* Mrs. Faraday.
TINA. I need a date of arrival and the number of days she'll be staying.

(WILSON, unseen by TINA or DAVID, has entered from the front en-

trance. He is carrying a bouquet of roses in a vase. He stops dead in his tracks as he hears:)

DAVID. May I have a date Mrs. Faraday? *(WILSON, mouths the word "date" toward the audience and backs away R. to listen. He remains visible, extreme D.S.R. in the front entrance.)* Do I have a king size bed? *(WILSON reacts, DAVID looks at TINA who nods.)* Yes I do. I see, you want to start on the 14th and stay in the room for three weeks. *(WILSON reacts, TINA nods her approval.)* I'm sure I can manage that. You want to play a round every day? *(He looks questioningly at TINA who nods.)* No problem. Twice a day if you feel up to it. *(TINA nods again.)* Absolutely. Oh I agree. I like to get started early in the morning myself. *(WILSON continues to react.)* I'll look forward to having you on the fourteenth. Thank you Mrs. Faraday.

(He puts the table phone down on the couch, goes R. to hang up the counter phone then back L. to hang up the table phone. TINA goes into the office to hang up the office phone, but reappears immediately as WILSON enters.)

WILSON. I don't believe it! Three weeks, twice a day. I don't know where you get the staying power.

DAVID. What did you say?

WILSON. I said why don't you say it with flowers?

(He holds up the vase.)

TINA. Thanks for your help Mr. McGachen, you saved my life.

DAVID. You're welcome. See you later.

(Exits front entrance.)

TINA. These phones are still all screwed up. Can't you do anything?

WILSON. I don't think so. Let me get rid of these flowers and I'll give it another try.

(He goes up and knocks on the door of room 8.)

D.L. *(Opens the door.)* That was quick, oh they're beautiful. *(Takes the vase.)* Thank you Wilson, did you have enough money?

WILSON. Just barely.

D.L. I see. Just a minute.

(She goes back into room 8.)

TINA. You're terrible, you know that.

WILSON. I have to do it, it's all these doctor bills.

D.L. *(Reappears in the doorway with a bill in her hand which she gives to WILSON, and a card which she puts in the flowers.)* Here you are, thank you Wilson.

(She closes the door of room 8 and goes L. on the landing.)

WILSON. Thank you. *(He comes D. to TINA who is still behind the counter.)* There's another one of those old junction boxes in the office. Maybe I could have a look at that.

(Exits to the office, followed by TINA.
D.L. knocks on the door of room 13. JOHN comes out of the bathroom of room 11. He is wearing the wig and make-up, but is still in his regular clothes. He moves through the connecting door.)

JOHN. Who is it?

D.L. *(Off.)* It's me, D.L. Hutchison.

JOHN. *(Panics for a moment and starts back to room 11, realizes that won't work, comes back to room 13 and closes the connecting door.)* Just a minute. *(He looks frantically around for something to cover himself. He takes a cover from the bed and drapes it over himself, looks at his trouser bottoms and shoes, puts the cover back on the bed. Then, in desperation, jumps into bed and holds the covers up to his chin.)* Come in.

D.L. *(Enters holding the flowers.)* Oh, please forgive me. I didn't mean to disturb you. You must be Mrs. McGachen.

JOHN. *(In a high voice.)* Yes. Hello.
D.L. I'm D.L. Hutchison, your husband's new president.
JOHN. How do you do?

(He carefully manages to get one hand out from under the covers, and they shake hands.)

D.L. Does your husband know you're here? I think he's out front waiting for you.

JOHN. Oh, well you see I was simply exhausted from shopping, so I came straight to our room for a little nap.

D.L. Well, don't let me disturb you. I brought you two love birds some flowers, and I wrote a little note, just to let you know how the new Ashley Maureen Corporation feels about families who spend their leisure time together.

JOHN. *(Takes the flowers with one hand, using the other to keep the covers up to his chin, and puts them on the bedside table.)* Thank you very much. *(There is a pause, JOHN smiles sweetly at D.L. and primps his hair.)* So you're Miss Hutchison?

D.L. Mrs. actually, but please call me D.L. everyone does.

JOHN. O.K. D.L. it is. I'm Karly.

D.L. Well, perhaps I should let you rest Karly, we're all getting together for cocktails about six.

JOHN. I'll look forward to that.

D.L. Good. It's been so nice meeting you. I'll see you a little later then.

(She exits room 13, closes the door and goes into room 8.)

JOHN. *(Watches her go, then gets out of bed, looks at the flowers.)* Love birds!

(He goes into room 11, leaving the connecting door open, drops the wig on the bed, and exits to bathroom 11. The counter phone rings and MRS. CARLSON enters from the office to answer it.)

MRS. C. Good afternoon, Oakfield Golf and Country Club. What

do you mean "on the nose"? We don't have a little green man. *(The table phone rings, she pushes open the office door and calls in.)* Tina! *(TINA enters immediately and MRS. C. gestures to the other phone. TINA crosses L. to answer it.)* Just who is this please?

TINA. Good afternoon, Oakfield Golf and Country Club, what? Wilson? Where are you? *(WILSON appears in the doorway of the office with a phone to his ear.)* Oh!

WILSON. Sorry everyone. I'll try some different wires.

(He returns to the office as TINA hangs up.)

MRS. C. What do you mean, "can I get it on for you?" I haven't the remotest idea what you're talking about, but I feel supremely confident when I tell you that, not today, not tomorrow, not at any time can I "get it on for you". Good day sir! *(Hangs up the phone with a bang.)* These phones are driving me insane, can't Wilson do anything about them?

TINA. He's trying, but I wouldn't hold your breath if I were you.

MRS. C. Oh well. Tell you what, why don't you take off a little early. It seems pretty quiet.

TINA. Thank you. You sure you can manage?

MRS. C. I'm just fine. Wilson is on till 8 o'clock if I need any help.

TINA. O.K. Let me get my things, and I'm out of here.

(Exits to office. JOHN, in regular clothes and without make-up, has come out of the bathroom in room 11, and exited room 11 to the hallway. He comes D. towards the reception desk.)

MRS. C. Is everything alright Mr. Baker?

JOHN. Everything is just fine thank you. Have you seen Mr. McGachen?

MRS. C. Well, not since you checked in. *(Enter D.L. from room 8. She comes D.)* Ah, Mrs. Hutchison, *(JOHN hurriedly turns away so as not to be seen by D.L. then moves quickly L., sits in the chair and holds up the newspaper so D.L. can't see his face.)* Everything alright?

D.L. Fine thanks.

MRS. C. It's almost like an Ashley Maureen convention here this weekend.

D.L. What?

MRS. C. Well, there's you of course, and then there's Mr. McGachen in room 13 and Mr. Baker in room 11 here to play golf this weekend. *(The office phone rings.)* That's the office phone. Excuse me.

(Exits to office.)

D.L. *(Comes right up to JOHN.)* Mr. John Baker?

JOHN. *(Lowers the paper.)* Yes, that's me.

D.L. I'm D.L. Hutchison.

JOHN. *(Stands)* How do you do?

(They shake hands.)

D.L. You know, you look very familiar. Have we met before?

JOHN. I don't think so.

D.L. *(Frowning, and just a little hesitant.)* No, we couldn't have. Well I'm delighted to meet you now Mr. Baker.

JOHN. Oh the pleasure is all mine D.L.

D.L. Ah-ha! The files said you were a smooth talker.

JOHN. Files?

D.L. The personnel files.

JOHN. Oh, I see.

D.L. So, you're here to play golf with Mr. McGachen are you?

JOHN. *(Quickly.)* Yes, but my wife is here too.

D.L. She is?

JOHN. Oh yes. She went shopping, but now she's back.

D.L. Excellent, I just get such a good feeling about an executive who spends his time off with his wife. I'll look forward to meeting her.

JOHN. Meeting her?

D.L. Absolutely.

JOHN. Oh dear.

D.L. Pardon me?
JOHN. I said "she's here".

(TINA enters from the office, dressed as before, but wearing a suit type jacket and carrying a purse. She heads for the front entrance.)

D.L. Oh?
JOHN. Yes she's here. Right here. This is my wife, Tina.

(He crosses R., grabs TINA, and pushes her towards D.L., who puts out a hand.)

TINA. Who? What?
D.L. *(Grabs TINA's hand and shakes it.)* How do you do Mrs. Baker?
TINA. Mrs. Baker?
D.L. I'm delighted to meet you.
TINA. I'm not Mrs. Baker.
JOHN. *(Steps forward and puts his arm around TINA's shoulders.)* Of course you are my darling. Now that we're married your name is Baker. She hasn't got used to her new name. *(There is a brief pause as everyone looks at JOHN.)* You see we just got married today.
TINA. We did?
D.L. But the files said you've been married to Laura for nine years.
JOHN. Ah, yes, well—that was my first marriage.
D.L. First marriage?
JOHN. Yes.
D.L. What happened to your first wife?
JOHN. *(Quickly.)* She died.
D.L. I'm sorry. I didn't know. I guess the files really aren't up to date.
JOHN. Yes, that must be it. *(TINA pushes JOHN D.S.R. a little and opens her mouth to say something.)* Just go along with it please.
D.L. What did you say?

JOHN. I said my first wife got a disease.

D.L. Oh how terrible. What?

JOHN. What what?

D.L. What disease did she die of?

TINA. *(Aside to JOHN.)* You're nuts, you know that, and when the men in little white coats come to take you away I'll testify—

JOHN. That's it. Tsetse fly! She was bitten by a tsetse fly.

D.L. In Connecticut?

JOHN. Er—er—we were on vacation in Costa Rica.

D.L. How very sad. Still we mustn't dwell on the past, and as I won't be seeing you next week—

JOHN. Why won't you be seeing me next week?

D.L. Well, you're on your honeymoon.

JOHN. Ah, yes. But I'll be at work on Monday morning.

D.L. Really? Now that's what I call a company man. Alright then, why don't I meet you both here about six, we can have a drink before dinner and get to know each other.

JOHN. Couldn't it be earlier?

D.L. I really don't think we should be drinking cocktails before 6 o'clock. That's something I wouldn't like to see in my executives. I hope it's not a habit of yours.

JOHN. No, no of course not. Let's make it later then, a lot later.

D.L. No, six is good. Then we can all have dinner together. After all, you are on your honeymoon and we mustn't keep you up too late. Anyway, Mr. and Mrs. McGachen will be joining us. Well, I've got to go and arrange some golf lessons. See you all later.

(Exits U.L. on the landing.)

JOHN. *(Watches her go, then turns to TINA.)* Thank you.

TINA. Why did you tell her we were married?

JOHN. It's a long story.

TINA. Well make it short, I'm done for the day and I'm on my way home.

JOHN. Oh dear, you've just got to stay and see it through.

TINA. Mr. Baker, I have no idea what's going on here, but let me assure you of one thing, I haven't got to do anything.

JOHN. Of course not. I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that. It's just that I'm desperate. I really need you to pretend to be my wife for a little while.

TINA. For heaven's sake, why?

JOHN. Because if I don't produce a wife by six o'clock, the dragon lady will fire me.

TINA. Listen, I'd like to help, I really would, but you're not making any sense.

JOHN. Tell you what. How would you like a car full of Ashley Maureen cosmetic samples?

TINA. A car full?

JOHN. Two cars full—a lifetime supply.

TINA. What exactly would I have to do?

JOHN. Be my wife for about an hour. Now let's get the first of the samples out of my car while I tell you all about it. You see this D.L. Hutchison woman....

(They exit, talking, to the front entrance. The table phone rings. MRS. CARLSON enters from the office, crosses L. and picks it up.)

MRS. C. Oakfield Golf and Country Club. What? No. I don't care who you are, you may not put a big one on Love Goddess at five o'clock, and it is absolutely out of the question for you to roll anything over at five-thirty. *(She hangs up abruptly.)* Wilson!

(WILSON enters from the office as D.L. and DAVID enter from U.L. on the landing.)

D.L. I feel I'm getting to know you already. Ah, Mrs. Carlson, I wonder if I could get some room service please?

MRS. C. Of course. Our receptionist has left for the day, but Wilson will be happy to oblige. Won't you Wilson?

(WILSON raises his eyebrows to the heavens.)

D.L. Thank you. I'd like a bottle of your very best champagne sent to room 11 with my compliments.

DAVID. Room 11?

MRS. C. Room 11?

D.L. Yes, for the honeymooners.

DAVID. In Room 11?

MRS. C. Honeymooners?

D.L. Yes, why didn't you tell me Mr. and Mrs. Baker were here?

DAVID. Mrs. Baker?

MRS. C. Mrs. Baker?

D.L. Yes, she's such a pretty little thing don't you think?

WILSON. *(To no one in particular.)* I don't believe it. Now there's three of them. And I thought I'd seen it all.

MRS. C. Wilson, please try again with the phones. I'll get the champagne myself, Mrs. Hutchison.

(*WILSON exits to the office shaking his head. MRS. CARLSON exits to the front entrance.)*

DAVID. You've met Mr. Baker?

D.L. Yes, and Mrs. Baker. I've asked them to join us for cocktails at six.

DAVID. Us?

D.L. Yes, you and your wife. You do remember don't you?

DAVID. How could I ever forget?

D.L. You know I really am quite impressed with Mr. Baker.

DAVID. You are?

D.L. Yes, such devotion to duty. Just think, newly married, and he's planning on being at work on Monday morning— *(Enter JOHN and TINA from the front entrance.)* —and speaking of devotion here are the little love birds.

JOHN. Ah, D.L. You're still here. David! Nice to see you old buddy. You remember my wife, Tina, don't you? Of course you do, well we were just going up to our room to get changed before dinner. Weren't we my precious?

TINA. Room? Changed? You didn't say anything about that. I'm not sure—

JOHN. Bless her, she's a little shy. Come along my little turtle-dove.

TINA. I'm having second thoughts about this. I don't think —

JOHN. *(Takes TINA by the elbow and steers her U.S.)* Nothing's going to happen, come my angel. We'll see you about six D.L.

(JOHN and TINA exit U.L. then into room 11.)

D.L. Right. That's a good idea. I need to freshen up myself. I'll see you at six Mr. McGachen.

(Exits room 8. DAVID watches her go, then rushes U.L. as WILSON puts his head out of the office door. He has obviously been listening. He follows DAVID and exits U.L. on the landing.)

JOHN. *(Follows TINA into room 11 and closes the door.)* I can assure you I'm not here for any "hanky panky" as you put it. In half an hour or so, it'll all be over and you'll be on your way home.

TINA. O.K., O.K. I believe you. It was just that when you said we were going to our room to change, it sounded real kinky.

JOHN. I'm sorry.

TINA. It's O.K. Mind if I use the bathroom?

(Exits to bathroom.)

DAVID. *(Has now entered room 13, leaving the door open, and come into room 11.)* What the hell is going on here?

JOHN. Calm down, calm down. I can explain everything.

(WILSON is now seen in the doorway of room 13, listening.)

DAVID. Go right ahead "old buddy".

JOHN. Look David, everything is going to be alright. I bumped into D.L., and just like you, I had to produce a wife, and Tina sort of volunteered.

(WILSON takes a step into the room straining to hear.)

DAVID. She's your wife?

JOHN. And I'm her husband.

DAVID. But you can't be her husband. You're married to me!

(WILSON reacts, turns to the audience with eyes bulging, mouths the words "I don't believe it" then returns to the office.)

JOHN. I'm sorry, but it was all I could think of at the time.

DAVID. We're not dead yet. We've still got fifteen minutes to find another wife for me.

JOHN. Oh Lord!

DAVID. Now what?

JOHN. I'd forgotten. D.L. has already met your wife.

DAVID. You mean she's here?

JOHN. Not exactly.

DAVID. What are you talking about?

JOHN. *(Picks up the wig from the bed, puts it on, and in a high voice:)* "Hello D.L."

DAVID. She's seen you?

JOHN. *(Takes the wig off.)* I'm sorry David, it's over.

DAVID. It's not over till the fat lady sings. Let me think.

JOHN. If you say so, but to me it looks like the orchestra's playing and the fat lady is on her feet with her mouth wide open.

DAVID. I've got it!

JOHN. What?

DAVID. The fat lady has laryngitis. Listen to this. D.L. doesn't ever meet both of you at the same time.

JOHN. What?

DAVID. We can do it. We meet D.L. for drinks at six, just as we originally planned.

JOHN. Who's we?

DAVID. Me and you. That is me and my wife.

JOHN. What about me and my wife?

DAVID. You'll be late. After a few minutes as my wife, you excuse yourself to go to the bathroom, and a couple of minutes later Mr. and Mrs. Baker arrive.

JOHN. Then what?

DAVID. We chat for a while, then you excuse yourself and come

back as my wife.

JOHN. Just how long do you think we can keep that up?

DAVID. Yeah. That's right. Let me think.

JOHN. I hear the fat lady!

DAVID. Not yet you don't. At some point you—that is my wife—gets sick or something and has to make her excuses, then you can spend the rest of the evening as John Baker.

JOHN. I'm not that good David, it'll never work.

DAVID. I think you are that good, and I think we can get away with it. Now, what about Tina?

JOHN. What about her?

DAVID. Why is she doing this?

JOHN. I promised her a lifetime supply of Ashley Maureen cosmetics. I've just put all I had with me in her car.

DAVID. No, what I meant was *(Enter TINA from the bathroom.)* does she know you're going to be my wife?

TINA. Hold it right there you guys. This has gone far enough. I'm out of here.

(She comes D. to the foot of the bed and starts to cross L. DAVID and JOHN grab her and all three sit at the foot of the bed.)

JOHN. Please, it's not what you think. You know how I explained about D.L. and wives? Well it's the same thing for David here.

TINA. What?

DAVID. John, you've got to get changed. We've only got about five minutes. Tina, why don't you come with me. I've got a ton-load of samples in my car, and while we load them into yours, I'll explain about who my wife is.

TINA. O.K. But you'd better make it good.

DAVID. John, for heaven's sake, don't just stand there, get going.

(JOHN exits to the bathroom of room 11, taking the wig with him. DAVID and TINA exit room 11, closing the door, and go R. on the landing. Enter MRS. CARLSON from the front entrance, car-

rying a bottle of champagne, she heads for the office but stops just as she gets behind the counter.)

MRS. C. Oh good grief, look at all these wires.

(She puts the champagne down on the counter and bends down out of sight, as DAVID and TINA come down and make their way to the front entrance.)

DAVID. So you see, once she had seen him it was too late to swap wives, but as long as my wife and your husband are never in the same room together, we should be able to pull it off. Now here's how it will work. Half way through the evening, John will swap and become your husband for a while. Just remember, you're on your honeymoon in room 11, and we're in room 13. With a bit of luck she'll never know…

(They exit the front entrance.)

MRS. C. *(Stands up, her eyes bulging.)* We'll see about that, wife swapping indeed! Not in my club. Wilson!

WILSON. *(Enters from the office.)* Yeah?

MRS. C. Do you know who are in rooms 11 and 13?

WILSON. Those guys from the make-up company.

MRS. C. That's right. It was room 11 that Mrs. Hutchison ordered the champagne for. *(With a sudden realization.)* O-o-o-h! On their honeymoon! It's depraved, that's what it is. Champagne indeed! I think not. Wilson, *(She hands him the bottle.)* put this in the office, we cannot condone this sort of behavior.

WILSON. Oh, so you've found out about those two huh?

MRS. C. Indeed I have, and I intend to put a stop to it.

WILSON. Just how do you propose to do that?

MRS. C. I intend to catch them and demand that they leave this club. In the meantime, what I want you to do, is fix these wretched phones.

WILSON. I'm working on it, I'm working on it. I'd go faster but all this bending down is bad for my lumbago and —

MRS. C. Thank you Wilson.

(He exits to the office.
Enter D.L. from room 8, dressed as before, but without her suit jacket.)

D.L. Ah Mrs. Carlson, did you deliver the champagne to room 11?

(D.L. comes D.)

MRS. C. I most certainly did not.

D.L. I beg your pardon.

MRS. C. Mrs. Hutchison, are you aware of what is going on in room 11?

D.L. I'm not sure I know exactly what you mean.

MRS. C. It has come to my attention that there are sexual shenanigans taking place.

D.L. *(Laughing.)* Sexual shenanigans?

MRS. C. I don't see any reason for laughter.

D.L. Well isn't that what honeymoons are for?

MRS. C. Oh!

(She storms into the office.)
D.L. crosses L., sits in the chair and picks up the newspaper, as DAVID and TINA enter from the front entrance.)

DAVID. You should have at least a year's supply of pretty much everything—ah D.L., *(Looks at his watch.)* good heavens, it's almost six. I'll just go and see if Mrs. McGachen is ready.

D.L. Good. As a matter of fact, I would like to have a private word with Mrs. Baker.

TINA. You would?

D.L. Yes my dear, why don't you sit down?

(TINA looks at DAVID in panic.)

DAVID. I'll be as quick as I can.

D.L. Take your time. There's no hurry. *(DAVID goes U., exits L. on the landing, goes into room 11, closing the door, and into the bathroom. TINA sits on the sofa, D.L. is L. on the chair.)* Now my dear, I couldn't help but notice a little earlier how nervous you were about your wedding night. *(TINA opens her mouth to say something, but D.L. presses on.)* So I take it that you and Mr. Baker have—er—how do I put this delicately,—er—not—er—you know, haven't—

TINA. No we definitely haven't, and we're not going to either.

(JOHN, now in wig, dress, make-up, etc., and DAVID come out of the bathroom of room 11, exit room 11, closing the door, and go R. on the landing.)

D.L. Oh dear, you really are nervous about tonight aren't you. You know, I think I shall insist that your husband does not come to work on Monday. It's important that you two have a little more time together. *(JOHN and DAVID come down.)* Mrs. McGachen, how nice to see you again.

JOHN. Hello.

(They all sit. D.L. on the chair L. TINA on the couch L. end. JOHN on the couch R. end. DAVID on the couch R. arm. JOHN sits in an ungainly position with his legs and knees apart. His right ankle on his left knee. DAVID sees this and quickly pushes JOHN's right knee over to the left and down, so JOHN's legs are now crossed. This produces a silent scream and a look of excruciating pain on JOHN's face.)

DAVID. We were just chatting about how nice it is for both of us to have the opportunity to meet you informally like this D.L., before we all get down to work next week.

D.L. You're right of course, but I was just saying to Mrs. Baker that perhaps her husband shouldn't come in next week.

JOHN. Oh, why not?

TINA. She wants us to have a longer honeymoon.

D.L. The new marriage needs to get off on a solid foundation. I'm not sure if any of us can really understand what Mr. Baker must have

gone through at the time of the tragic death of his first wife.

DAVID. His first wife?

TINA. His first wife.

DAVID. Dead?

TINA. Dead.

JOHN. Yes dear, surely you remember?

TINA. Don't you remember, she got bitten by a tsetse fly.

DAVID. A tsetse fly?

JOHN. Yes.

DAVID. In Connecticut?

TINA. They were on vacation in Costa Rica.

DAVID. I've never heard of anything so—

JOHN. *(Jumping in, grabbing the front of his shirt, and glowering at DAVID.)* Tragic!

DAVID. What? Oh right. Tragic, very tragic.

D.L. So tell me a little about yourself Mrs. McGachen.

JOHN. Oh there's nothing to tell really, I lead a very ordinary life.

D.L. Oh come now, I'm sure there's something you could surprise me with.

WILSON. *(Enters from the office, with tools and wires in his hand, just in time to hear the last sentence.)* Oh he could surprise you alright.

D.L. What?

WILSON. I said it looks like these wires are too tight.

(Bends down out of sight.)

DAVID. My wife is right D.L. We don't get out much, our main interest is the company of course.

D.L. Of course.

JOHN. You know D.L., I'm sure that's true of John as well. David is always telling me that John's success is due to his total sincerity.

D.L. Really David? That's quite a compliment, coming from a fellow worker.

DAVID. Oh yes, he's always sincere, whether he means it or not,

but he's really a deeply superficial person.

JOHN. *(Interrupts quickly.)* Good heavens, its five after six already. I wonder where your husband is Tina. It's not like him to be late. As a matter of fact, one of John's greatest assets is his punctuality. If he's late, I bet it's because he's found a new sales rep or something. He never stops you know. He's a real company man. At least that's what David always tells me. *(DAVID is glaring at JOHN.)* Well, if you'll excuse me, I have to use the little girls room.

(WILSON stands up momentarily, raises his eyebrows, mouths the words "I don't believe it" to the audience, then bends down out of sight again. JOHN nudges TINA.)

TINA. Oh, right. Why don't I come with you, and I'll see if I can find my husband.

(JOHN and TINA exit U.L. on the landing, then into room 11. JOHN goes into the bathroom, hurriedly starting to change, as TINA sits on the bed.)

D.L. Your wife is very charming David. I wonder if perhaps she might be able to help the Bakers with their little problem.

DAVID. *(Sits on couch L. end.)* What problem is that D.L.?

D.L. Well, as you know, this is their wedding night and Mrs. Baker seems—er—how shall I put this—er—reluctant to perform her wifely duties.

DAVID. *(Laughing.)* Wifely duties?

D.L.. I see nothing humorous in this Mr. McGachen. We must all help to put her at ease. *(WILSON stands up fiddling with wires.)* The champagne will definitely help her to relax. *(Sees WILSON.)* Did we ever get that champagne Wilson?

WILSON. Yes, but Mrs. Carlson had me put it in the office.

D.L. Well, as soon as you've finished what you're doing, would you please deliver it to room 11.

WILSON. Just as soon as I've finished with these phones, and the muscle spasms in my back have quieted down, I'll be right on it.

D.L. Thank you Wilson. I've written a little card, would you de-

liver this with it please. *(She gets up, crosses R. to WILSON and hands him the card. He takes the card and exits to the office. D.L. returns to her chair. JOHN, now in regular clothes, has come out of the bathroom of room 11. He and TINA exit room 11, go R. on the landing and a moment later, come down and sit on the couch. TINA R. end, JOHN on the arm.)* Now, we can play our part too—

JOHN. Sorry I'm late D.L. I got a little tied up with the beauty parlor manager. I've just about convinced her to carry our products. I don't like to miss any opportunity. Yes ma'am that's me. On the job day and night. Isn't that right dear?

TINA. Oh yes, he never stops. He's a real company man alright.

D.L. I'm sure we all appreciate that John, but on your honeymoon?

JOHN. Sorry about that D.L., it's hard to break old habits you know.

D.L. Yes but now that you're married, and there's two of you again, you need to tread carefully to avoid hurting the feelings of your new bride.

DAVID. We all need to tread carefully to avoid stepping in all this stuff he's spreading around.

JOHN. I can honestly tell you D.L. that my first thought in the morning, and my last thought at night, is the company.

DAVID. Good God, we're up to our knees in it.

D.L. What was that?

JOHN. He meant the Company. We're very pleased with it.

D.L. Oh I see, good, good.

DAVID. Believe me, my friend here, from outer space, and I are delighted to be here.

D.L. Excellent. As soon as Mrs. McGachen gets back, I thought we might all have a drink on that lovely little terrace that overlooks the eighteenth green.

DAVID. Terrific idea D.L.

D.L. You know, I think I'll just get my jacket, it might be a little chilly out there.

(She gets up and exits to room 8. They all stand in silence and watch her go.)

JOHN. Now what?

DAVID. One more quick change and then you say you're not feeling well, and you've got to go to the room to lie down. That's the last anyone sees of you as my wife. The rest of the evening you're John Baker, and we're home free. Hurry now.

(John rushes U.L. on the landing, into room 11 and in to the bathroom.)

TINA. What about me?

DAVID. We need you to stay, at least for a little while, please.

TINA. She's going to start asking me questions. I know she is.

DAVID. Alright, listen. We'll go on the terrace and have a drink, and when John says he's not feeling well, and wants to go and lie down, you can say you'd better go with him, and then you can go home. How's that?

TINA. It's O.K. I guess, but I've just got a feeling something is going to go wrong. (*The counter phone rings. TINA picks it up.)* Reception, hello, hello.

(She presses buttons and suddenly a voice comes over the loud speakers.)

VOICE. Hello.

TINA. Oh dear!

(She's frantically pushing buttons.)

VOICE. Hello.

TINA. Hello, can I help you?

VOICE. I'm sure you can darling. I was told I could get some action at this number.

TINA. Could you speak a little more quietly please, everybody seems to be able to hear you.

VOICE. *(Confidentially.)* Sure, I understand. Now listen darling, what I want to know is this. Has there been any activity this afternoon on Baker's Man?

TINA. No, and there isn't going to be any either.

VOICE. That's funny. I had a hot tip that Baker's Man was getting ready to make a surprise move today.

TINA. Who told you that?

VOICE. I'm afraid that's a bit confidential darling.

TINA. Well let me tell you, that if he makes any sort of move, I'll be on him like a ton of bricks.

VOICE. That's the spirit. You know, you sound like my sort of girl. I could really go for you.

TINA. I'm sure I meet all your requirements. After all I am breathing.

VOICE. Don't be like that. Tell you what, I'm going to check the other runners and get back to you. Bye darling.

(TINA hangs up, as D.L. enters from room 8, now wearing her suit jacket. She comes D.)

D.L. Where is everyone?

TINA. My husband went to get some samples for the beauty parlor.

(She grins at DAVID, very proud of herself.)

DAVID. My wife went to get an aspirin, she's not feeling too well. *(JOHN, now in female attire again, comes out of bathroom 11, rushes out of room 11, leaving the door open, and comes D.)* Ah, here she is now. Feeling a little better darling?

JOHN. Yes, thank you darling.

D.L. We'd better not wait for Mr. Baker. I'm sure he'll find us on the terrace. Shall we?

(They all exit U.R. on the landing, as WILSON enters from the office. He carries the champagne in an ice bucket, two glasses and D. L.'s card on a small tray. He goes up to room 11. He taps on the open door, no one answers so he enters, puts the tray on the bedside table, props up the card, then comes D. and exits to the office as LAURA BAKER and KARLY McGACHEN enter from the

front entrance. LAURA is a pretty little thing in her mid-thirties. Not a very forceful character, as we shall see, she tends rather to "go with the flow" and cries at the drop of a hat. KARLY, age perhaps 40, is, on the other hand, much more the take charge type. Both are dressed smartly, but conservatively, and each carry two large shopping bags, and a small overnight case. They come up to the counter, dump all the bags on the floor, and KARLY rings the call bell. MRS. CARLSON enters immediately.)

MRS. C. Good evening, may I help you?

KARLY. Good evening. I'm Mrs. Karly McGachen and this is Mrs. Laura Baker. I believe our husbands have already checked in.

MRS. C. Mrs. McGachen?

KARLY. Yes.

MRS. C. And Mrs. Baker?

LAURA. Yes.

MRS. C. I see.

(*There is a slight pause.)*

KARLY. We'd like to join our husbands in their rooms please.

MRS. C. They booked two single rooms.

LAURA. Oh that's alright. They really weren't expecting us. We got kind of bored shopping and decided to surprise them. So you can just change the rooms to doubles.

MRS. C. I'm sure I can. You're lucky. We are very quiet this weekend. In addition to your—er—"husbands" we only have one other guest, a D.L. Hutchison, so you see I am able to provide you with separate rooms.

KARLY. Thank you, but we would prefer to be with our husbands.

MRS. C. I see. Very well, and which of you would be in which room?

LAURA. I beg your pardon.

MRS. C. Well now, let's see. Mr. McGachen is in room 13, and Mr. Baker is in room 11, though I don't suppose you care who is in

which room do you?

LAURA. What in heaven's name are you talking about?

KARLY. Oh come on. Have you got someone to carry our bags please?

MRS. C. *(Opens the office door a fraction and calls in.)* Wilson!

KARLY. Thank you.

(WILSON enters.)

MRS. C. Wilson, would you help these—er—*(She pauses and looks at them.)* ladies with their bags please.

WILSON. You know my arthritis is really playing up today, and at my age—

MRS. C. Wilson!

WILSON. I know, I know. What's the room numbers?

MRS. C. Eleven and thirteen.

(She hands him keys.)

WILSON. *(Stops dead in his tracks.)* Two more? You know, it's times like this when I feel I missed a whole generation somewhere.

(He picks up the two cases and heads U.)

KARLY. *(She and LAURA pick up the shopping bags.)* Come on, it's going to be so much fun to surprise them.

WILSON. *(Turns D.S.)* I don't think you've really got any idea just how much fun it's going to be!

MRS. C. I want you to know that this club enjoys a spotless reputation, and I consider it my duty to protect that reputation. I will not have anyone lowering those standards by raising their skirts. I will therefore be paying particular attention to making sure that nothing abnormal takes place this weekend.

(She wheels about, and exits to the office with a flourish.)

KARLY. The only abnormal thing about this place is her.

(WILSON has gone on ahead, and now appears in the doorway of room 11, holding LAURA's case. He is followed by LAURA.)

WILSON. Here you are Mrs. Baker.

(She reaches for the case, but WILSON, who is not about to surrender it until he has received a tip, simply clutches it more firmly.)

LAURA. Oh, I see. *(She gives him a tip.)* Thank you Wilson.

WILSON. Thank you ma-am. *(He gives her the case and turns to KARLY who is right behind him.)* Now you're right next door Mrs. McGachen.

(He closes the door of room 11, and they reappear momentarily in the door of room 13. He is once again carrying KARLY's case.)

KARLY. *(Steps past him into the room.)* Thank you Wilson. *(He just stands there.)* Oh!

(She searches in her purse and hands him a tip.)

WILSON. Thank you, ma'am.

(Puts the case down. He closes the door of room 13, goes R. on the landing, comes D., and exits to the office. LAURA puts her shopping bags in the bathroom, comes back out and closes the bathroom door. She then sees the champagne on the bedside table, picks up the note and reads it. KARLY puts her shopping bags in the bathroom, then returns to the room. She sees the flowers on the bedside table, takes the card from the holder and reads it. LAURA gives a long strangled moan and slumps onto the bed sobbing, as KARLY comes through the connecting door, leaving it open.)

KARLY. Whatever is the matter? *(LAURA just wails louder, then continues sobbing and waves the note in the air. KARLY takes the note from her and reads:)* "For John and his new love" signed D.L.

(LAURA wails even louder.) That's nothing, read this.

(She hands her card to LAURA.)

LAURA. *(Reading.)* "To my corporate love birds" signed D.L.
KARLY. I'll kill him.
LAURA. Who's this D.L.?
KARLY. Never mind who D.L. is. We'd better find our husbands and nip this little weekend in the bud before it gets started. *(She goes into room 13.)* Let's see if we can find out where they are.

(She has crossed L. to the phone, she dials and the phone on the counter rings.)

LAURA. *(By the connecting door.)* I can't believe they would do something like this. It's got to be that horrible D.L. person who's behind it all.

(Enter MRS. CARLSON from the office.)

MRS. C. *(Picks up the counter phone.)* Reception.

(The phone in room 11 rings. LAURA crosses R. to answer it.)

KARLY. This is Mrs. McGachen in room 13, do you happen to know where my husband is?

(The phone on the table rings.)

MRS. C. Just a moment please. *(She pushes open the office door.)* Wilson could you get the other phone please?

(WILSON enters and crosses to the table phone.)

LAURA. *(Picks up the phone in room 11.)* Hello.
MRS. C. No you may not have it each way at five o'clock.
WILSON. *(Has now picked up the table phone, but turns to MRS.*

CARLSON.) If you want it each way you'd better talk to that guy in room 13.

KARLY. But I'm in room 13.

LAURA. *(Calling through the connecting door to KARLY.)* Do we know anything about a little green man?

MRS. C. What do you mean, do I think he'll need to whip it?

WILSON. I meant the guy who *was* in room 13.

KARLY. That's my husband you nit-wit.

LAURA. Who's a nit-wit?

MRS. C. I said whip it, not nit-wit, you idiot.

WILSON. Who are you calling an idiot?

KARLY. Who is this?

LAURA. I think I must be the nit-wit.

MRS. C. No, no, you idiot.

WILSON. I told you, don't call me an idiot.

MRS. C. For heaven's sake, who is this?

LAURA. If I'm not the nit-wit, then I suppose I must be the idiot.

MRS. C. *(Yelling.)* STOP! *(There is a stunned silence as she continues in a low calm voice.)* Now, I want everyone, in every room in this club to hang up their phone on the count of three. One—two—three. *(Everyone hangs up.)* Now Wilson, if you don't fix these phones, I am personally going to do you grievous bodily harm, and you can start by changing the phone in room 13. That seems to be the one causing all the trouble, and while you're at it, change the wire that goes into the jack.

(Exits to office.)

KARLY. *(Crosses into room 11, leaving the connecting door open.)* Come on, they've got to be somewhere.

(KARLY and LAURA exit room 11. WILSON goes behind the counter, picks up the phone, listens for a second then bends down behind the counter as KARLY and LAURA come D.)

LAURA. Do you suppose they were in it together?

KARLY. I don't know about together, but I'll tell you one thing,

they are certainly in it now, and that D.L. person is definitely going to be made to pay.

(They exit to the front entrance.)

WILSON. *(Stands up.)* Pay! It's worse than I thought. I don't believe it!

(Exits to office. Enter D.L., JOHN, DAVID and TINA from U.R. on the landing. D.L. is supporting JOHN. DAVID and TINA follow a step or two behind. They pause on the landing.)

D.L. I'm so sorry you're not feeling well.
JOHN. I think I just need to lie down a bit that's all.
D.L. I'll help get you to bed.

(They head L. to room 13.)

TINA. I told you something would go wrong.
DAVID. Sh! we can still do it. Come on.

(They head L. on the landing. TINA goes into room 11. She sees the champagne, pours herself a glass, pulls down the covers a little, props up the pillows, and sits up on the bed sipping her champagne. Meanwhile, JOHN and D.L. have entered room 13, leaving the door ajar.)

D.L. *(Pulling the covers back on the bed.)* Perhaps you'd like to slip your dress off.
JOHN. *(A little too quickly.)* No. That is—er—I'm feeling quite faint. I think I'll just get right in.

(He takes off his shoes and gets into bed. DAVID has now entered room 13, leaving the door ajar.)

DAVID. She'll be just fine now. Thank you, D.L.
D.L. Good. I'll look in a little later. *(Notices TINA through the*

open connecting door, and goes into room 11.) I'm delighted to see you relaxing a bit Mrs. Baker. By the way, where's your husband?

(DAVID and JOHN react.)

TINA. He's—er—er—*(DAVID, just on the room 13 side of the connecting door, is frantically signaling behind D.L.'s back and pointing to the bathroom.)*—he's in the bathroom.

(DAVID signals to JOHN, who gets the dress and wig off and stuffs them under the pillow. DAVID steps into room 11, puts his arm round D.L.'s shoulders, and walks her a step or two D.S., as JOHN, now in undershirt and boxer shorts, tip-toes behind them, over the bed and into the bathroom.)

DAVID. You know D.L., I've noticed how very much you care about your staff. You seem to take a personal interest in every one of them. I'd be willing to bet that there's not much goes on behind your back that you're not aware of.

D.L. Well I do pride myself in always knowing what's going on around me.

(JOHN, still in his shorts, now appears in the doorway of the bathroom. D.L. turns and sees him. JOHN gives a little cry, then leaps into the bed, R. side and pulls the covers up. TINA reacts to this by getting out of the bed L. side.)

JOHN. Oh, excuse me D.L.

D.L. No, please excuse me. *(She then turns to TINA, takes her by the arm and coaxes her back onto the bed.)* It's alright, there's nothing to be afraid of. Just have a little more champagne. *(TINA gets back into bed, carefully keeping her distance from JOHN.)* There, that's better. Now, I think we should all leave the two little honeymooners alone. I'll just check on Mrs. McGachen.

DAVID. *(Moves quickly to block the connecting door, a look of panic on his face.)* I'm sure she's just fine D.L.

(At this point, JOHN is sitting up in the bed in room 11, R. side. TINA, still with a glass of champagne in her hand, is sitting up in the bed, L. side. DAVID blocks the connecting door with D.L. immediately to his R. The following happens in a very rapid sequence:

1. *D.L. turns to face DAVID, her back now to JOHN and TINA.*
2. *JOHN reaches over, grabs the champagne glass from TINA, spills the champagne all over the rear of D.L.'s skirt, and hands the glass back to TINA.*
3. *As D.L. twists and bends down facing D.S. to look at her skirt, JOHN leaps over TINA, moves L. behind D.L. and DAVID, leaps into the bed in room 13, puts on the wig and sits holding the covers up to his neck.*
4. *TINA leans over R. in the bed, as though embracing the unseen figure of JOHN.*
5. *DAVID follows JOHN into room 13, gets into the bed, R. side, puts his arm round JOHN and smiles at D.L. who has followed him into room 13.*

D.L. Excuse me, I just need to sponge my skirt.

(She crosses L. below the bed and exits to the bathroom. TINA gets out of bed, closes the connecting door and exits to bathroom 11, taking with her the champagne glass and bottle, as the door to room 13 starts to open. DAVID still has his arm round JOHN in the bed. KARLY and LAURA, having entered from the front door, now step into room 13.)

KARLY. David!
LAURA. John!

CURTAIN