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SF PERUSALS

4 Beekman

by Ron Clark

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH

FOUNDED 1830

NEW YORK HOLLYWOOD LONDON TORONTO

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Music and Lyrics written by Ron Clark,
Augustus Music Publishing

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

DEANNE PETRIDGE

ROBERT PETRIDGE

IINTERCOM VOICE

BORIS

LOUELLA HARTLEY

SKIP DAY

JEANNINE

JOVAN

INGA

AVI KAPLAN

GINA

MR. CHIU

SETTING

The play takes place in the Living Room of an upscale apartment in Manhattan. The time is the present.

ACT I

Scene 1

(MUSIC CUE #1. The large living room is empty. There is no furniture, no carpeting and nothing on the walls. Upstage is the front door. Doors to a large closet are stage right, next to front door. Stage left also has a door. It leads to guest bathroom. Downstage right is a hallway leading to O.S. Dining room, kitchen, master bedroom, guest rooms and more bathrooms. We hear the sound of laughter and jiggling of keys emanating from the other side of front door.)

DEANNE *(O.S., giggling)* Where are we? What are you doing?

ROBERT *(O.S.)* Just hold tight, darling. I believe this is the correct key.

(Sound of key in door. The front door opens as ROBERT PETRIDGE ENTERS carrying his new bride over the threshold. ROBERT is British and has the accent to prove it. He's in his mid to late fifties, handsome, greying at the temples, wearing a conservative suit. ROBERT is on the

serious side. He's a little tentative as he staggers in with her. DEANNE DAY PETRIDGE, wearing a blindfold over her eyes, is in her early thirties, American and quite attractive.

DEANNE. *(Trying to remove her blindfold.)* Hurry, I want to see.

(ROBERT deposits her gently on her feet then staggers some more and breathes deeply.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D)* Are you Alright?

ROBERT. *(Catching his breath.)* I'm fine, darling, I'm fine.

(He regains his balance, helps her remove her blindfold. She looks around, excitedly. Goes to "windows" downstage.)

DEANNE. I love it! I just love it! It's so big and airy.

ROBERT. The furniture was supposed to be here by now. I called the storage place yesterday from Tahiti. I'm terribly sorry. I apologize for that.

DEANNE. *(Indicates stage left door.)* What's in there?

ROBERT. *(As he follows her.)* I believe that's the guest bathroom.

(DEANNE opens door, looks in.)

DEANNE. Nice.

(She walks by him, strokes his cheek, on her way to hallway, downstage right.)

ROBERT. I hope you're not angry at me for cutting our honeymoon short.

DEANNE. That's what I get for marrying...

(She's disappeared into hallway.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D, O.S.)*...a high profile businessman.

ROBERT. *(Calls out to her.)* I apologize for that! Not for being a high profile businessman...The master bedroom is at the end of the hallway! How do you like the size of the kitchen? Pretty substantial for a New York apartment, wouldn't you say? There's also a delightful room for your studio! *(To himself.)* Assuming you still want to go on with your work. *(Resumes calling out to her.)* And there's another room for the little one when the time comes!

(As ROBERT starts toward hallway to join her, DEANNE returns. She's ashen.)

DEANNE. Where are we?

ROBERT. *(Confused)* What do you mean?

DEANNE. What street are we on?

ROBERT. Beekman, Beekman Place.

DEANNE. *(Looking for a place to sit.)* What address?

ROBERT. Four. Why?

DEANNE. *(As she sits on floor.)* Four, Beekman?

ROBERT. *(As he kneels down, next to her.)* It's a premium address. It's a marvellous building. What about that river view from the master bedroom? Surely, you like *that.*

DEANNE. What floor are we on?

ROBERT. Twenty second, why?

DEANNE. Is this apartment 22A?

ROBERT. I believe it is.

(ROBERT rushes to front door, opens it, goes out to corridor, returns, closes door and nods sheepishly.)

DEANNE. We're going to have to move.

ROBERT. We haven't even moved in yet.

DEANNE. Good. It'll make it easier.

ROBERT. What are you talking about, darling? I thought you'd love this apartment.

DEANNE. I do.

ROBERT. Then what's the problem?

DEANNE. *(Exhales deeply.)* This is where I lived with Skip.

ROBERT. Who's Skip?

DEANNE. Thomas, Skip, Day, my husband.

ROBERT. *I'm* your husband.

DEANNE. My ex.

ROBERT. I never heard you refer to him as Skip.

DEANNE. *Everybody* called him Skip

ROBERT. *I* didn't.

DEANNE. Everybody who knew him. He hated the way Thomas Day sounded. He said it sounded like some sort of yoga prayer. *(Says it very quickly.)* ThomasDay. *(As she gets up.)* We're moving.

ROBERT. Don't be ridiculous, darling *(With exaggerated enthusiasm.)* It'll be wonderful. I'll bet you'll feel right at horne when your furniture arrives.

DEANNE. I'm sure I will, and that's precisely why I can't stay here. *(A beat.)* Didn't you recognize the name when

you signed the papers?

ROBERT. I didn't pay any attention. My real estate brokers took care of all that. I don't even remember meeting the man. If that picture hadn't slipped out of your purse going through customs I still wouldn't know what he looks like.

DEANNE. That was an accident. It was stuck to the back of my MOMA card.

ROBERT. What about you? Didn't you recognize *my* name on the deed?

DEANNE. I left it to Skip to take care of everything. That was our arrangement. I got all the furniture...except for that stupid piano of his...and he got to handle the sale.

ROBERT. Well, he did a masterful job. Didn't you once tell me what an inept businessman he was? He sure wasn't in this case. You know he refused to corne down a single penny from his asking price.

DEANNE. I'll reimburse you for my part of the sale.

(Sound of INTERCOM buzzing.)

ROBERT. That won't be necessary, darling.

(He rushes to intercom on wall, next to front door.)

ROBERT. *(CONT'D, into intercom.)* Yes?

(The INTERCOM VOICE belongs to a gentleman of German extraction with matching accent.)

INTERCOM VOICE. Your furniture is here.

ROBERT. Oh good, send them right up. *(Hangs up, returns to DEANNE.)* They're here. I can't wait to see it. Did

you have any of it at your mother's?

DEANNE. No, it was all in storage.

ROBERT. Let's hope it all fits.

DEANNE Of course it'll fit. It was here before.

ROBERT. Yes, that's right, what am I saying?

DEANNE. I should have known he'd pull something like this. The whole thing is so...it's so...Skip. He's an immature, callow, infantile baby.

ROBERT *(Trying to lighten the moment.)* Most babies are infantile.

DEANNE. Don't make fun of me.

ROBERT. I'm not. *(Holds her hands.)* I just want us to be happy in our new home. I swear, Dee, I'll make you forget you ever lived here and I'll make you forget he ever existed.

DEANNE. He *doesn't* exist. Unfortunately he *is* alive.

ROBERT. Ah, don't talk like that, darling. What's done is done and what is, is. Give it a month, please? For me? If you're not happy after a month we'll move into the Carlyle. You liked my apartment there, didn't you?

DEANNE. I told you I don't like living in hotels. That's why I moved in with my mother after the divorce.

ROBERT. *(Jokingly)* And I thought you did it to take care of your Mum.

(A slight smile crosses her lips.)

ROBERT. *(CONT'D)* One month, that's all I ask.

(She stares at him.)

ROBERT. *(CONT'D)* A week? A day.

DEANNE. *(Relinquishes)* Okay, one day.
ROBERT. And one night.

(He embraces her. DOORBELL.)

ROBERT. *(CONT'D)* Coming!

(He opens front door. Standing there is BORIS, the mover. A husky, slightly overweight man in his early twenties. He speaks with a Russian accent. BORIS likes to use American slang.)

BORIS. What a bummer! Partner not show up today. They say they send replacement. They lie. One king-size mattress coming in!

(He rolls in a large upright mattress on a dolly.)

ROBERT. Where's the bed frame?
BORIS. Maybe in next load. *(Indicates hallway.)* Bedroom?
ROBERT. Yes.
DEANNE. No, wait a minute. Put it in here, please.
ROBERT. But this is the living room.
DEANNE. Sorry, but I'm not sleeping in that room.
ROBERT. *(A little embarrassed.)* What are you saying?
DEANNE. I don't want the bed in the bedroom.

(BORIS doesn't quite know what to do. He just stands there waiting for his instructions.)

ROBERT. Why don't we let this nice young man put the mattress in the bedroom for now and you and I can discuss it later.

DEANNE. There's no discussing.

ROBERT. *(To BORIS.)* Why don't you put the mattress in here for now?

BORIS. Very smart. Never argue with daughter.

ROBERT. But she's not my...

BORIS. *(Interrupting)* Please, you help Boris?

(He motions to ROBERT to grab one end of the mattress as he grabs the other end.)

BORIS. *(CONT'D, to DEANNE.)* Where we put?

DEANNE. How about over here?

(ROBERT and BORIS tilt mattress and maneuver it toward stage left wall.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D)* No, maybe it's better over here.

(She indicates stage right wall. ROBERT and BORIS struggle with the large mattress. They place it on the floor, stage right, next to hallway.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D)* That's good, right there.

BORIS. I go get more.

(He EXITS, pulling empty dolly. Closes door.)

ROBERT. Don't you think you're being a little...?

DEANNE. I'm not being a little. I just don't want to be reminded of Thomas.

ROBERT. I thought everybody called him Skip.

DEANNE. Not when you're mad at him.

ROBERT. How can you still be mad at him? You've been divorced for two years.

DEANNE. Three.

ROBERT. How is it going to look, having our bedroom in here and our living room in there?

DEANNE. *(Playfully)* It's going to look 'different'.

ROBERT. I suppose that's what I get for marrying someone half my age.

DEANNE. You're right. That's what you get...and a lot more.

(She kisses him on the cheek, then walks around the room figuring out where the furniture might go.)

ROBERT. I was thinking, once the furniture's all here, you and I might want to, as you say, 'grab a bite' with the Talbots this evening.

DEANNE. Please, not the Talbots.

ROBERT. I thought you liked them.

DEANNE. They're so *old.*

ROBERT. They're my age.

DEANNE. *(Quickly)* I mean in attitude. All they do is talk money.

ROBERT. Well, they're both bankers...

(DOORBELL. Robert quickly goes to door and opens it. BORIS now has a sofa on his dolly. He starts in with it.)

BORIS. Where you want this?

DEANNE. You can take it through there into the master bedroom...I mean the living room.

BORIS. *(Gives her a thumbs-up.)* Hip and happening.

(He rolls dolly into hallway and out of view.
Sound of CELL PHONE. DEANNE and ROBERT each reach for their phone. It's ROBERT'S.)

ROBERT. *(Into phone.)* Petridge here...Already? I thought his flight wasn't due until late tonigh...I'll be right over. *(Hangs up.)* I'm afraid I have to hop over to the office for a little while. It's that Chinese chap I was telling you about. You know, the potential mega China deal?

DEANNE. You mean the one who cut short our honeymoon?

ROBERT. I'm terribly sorry, darling. I apologize for that.

DEANNE. I'm kidding.

ROBERT. It seems the chap came in a day early. You're not angry, are you?

DEANNE. Of course not.

ROBERT. I'll be back as soon as I can. I'm terribly sorry. I apologize.

(Kisses her on the cheek and EXITS.)

DEANNE. *(To the heavens.)* Please stop apologizing!

(She walks around the room contemplating where her belongings will go. She opens the door to large closet next to front door then closes it. She retrieves her cell

phone and dials.)

DEANNE. *(Into phone.)* Avi Kaplan, please...Who's this? ...Oh, you're the new receptionist...Well, tell him it's Deanne and that I'm back...Avi!...Thank you, thank you very much... what can I say? He didn't want a big wedding. He's been a bachelor his whole life. He doesn't know from weddings...

(BORIS returns with empty dolly.)

BORIS. Excuse please?

DEANNE. *(Into phone.)* Can you hold on a second, Avi?

BORIS. I place sofa so you see river. From bed you would see even better.

(He EXITS with the empty dolly.)

DEANNE. Don't shut the door.

(BORIS shuts the door.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D, back to phone.)* Sorry, Avi...Yes, I'm back a few days early but I'd like to use those few days to settle in...No, please don't send Jovan over. Besides you don't have my new address...How did you know I was back in my oId apartment? *(Incredulous)* Skip Day called you!!! *(Stunned)* That man is impossible!...Avi, I'm not ready to work yet...Avi?...Avi?...*(She hangs up, discouraged. She holds her head in her hands.)* Do I need this?

(DOORBELL)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D, as she goes to door, annoyed.)* Please leave the door open next time.

(She opens door. It's not BORIS, it's her mother, LOUELLA. LOUELLA is a handsome woman in her fifties, full of energy and a bit of a scatter brain. She holds a gift wrapped box.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D, surprised.)* Mother!

(LOUELLA ENTERS. DEANNE leaves the door ajar.)

LOUELLA. I swear to God, I'm never going on a cruise again. I was the only one on board without a walker. And that included the captain.

DEANNE. How did you know where I was? Don't tell me, Skip?

(LOUELLA nods as she presents DEANNE with the gift box.)

LOUELLA. Didn't the two of you live somewhere in this area before? *(She goes to windows and looks out.)*

DEANNE. Yes, *exactly* in this area.

LOUELLA. Was it the building across the street?

DEANNE. *(Trying to be very patient.)* No.

LOUELLA. Was it the building next door?

DEANNE. No.

LOUELLA. Don't tell me it was *this* building.

DEANNE. Okay, I won't tell you it was this building.

LOUELLA. It was, wasn't it? How crazy is *that? (Hesitantly)* Was it on the same floor?

DEANNE. Yes.

LOUELLA. The same apartment?

(She jumps up and down with excitement.)

DEANNE. You're not on a Game Show, Mother. Yes, it's the exact same *floor and* the *exact* same *apartment.*

LOUELLA. How do you like that!

DEANNE. I don't.

(DEANNE is opening LOUELLA'S gift.)

LOUELLA. So how was Fiji?

DEANNE. *(Correcting her.)* Tahiti.

LOUELLA. Who cares? As long as they have Mai Tais.

(DEANNE has opened the gift.)

DEANNE. Bagels?

LOUELLA. Yes, from H & H Bagels. You don't have that on the East Side. *(Looks around.)* Where's your new husband? I just realized something. Your new husband is older than your old husband. *(Laughs)*

DEANNE. Mother, don't start.

LOUELLA. I'll bet, had your father not run out on us when you were two, your need for a father figure would have been greatly diminished.

DEANNE. And I'll bet, had you not taken that Pseudo Psychology class at The New School your need to butt in

would have been totally eliminated.

LOUELLA. *(Notices mattress.)* How quaint. Reminds me of my hippie days. I suppose this was *his* idea. The moment he comes in from work he can jump right into bed with you.

DEANNE. Mother!

LOUELLA. Pretty good for an old guy.

DEANNE. He's *not* an old guy. He's a year younger than *you*, for heaven's sake.

LOUELLA. Personally, I've always preferred younger men.

DEANNE. I know, but did you have to marry all of them?

LOUELLA. I only married three. Not counting your father, of course. Wasn't Skip younger than you?

DEANNE. By a month.

LOUELLA. Well, it's a start. *(Looks at her watch.)* I really should be going. I have matinee tickets to some new Mamet play. *(A beat.)* Do you think they use that language in the afternoon?

DEANNE. *(Stares at her mother.)* How did you get past the doorman downstairs?

LOUELLA. It wasn't easy. I told him he reminded me of the son I never had. Then I clicked my heels and saluted him.

(KNOCK at door.)

DEANNE. *(Calls off.)* You don't have to knock each time.

(Door pushes open. BORIS is there with several lamps and a

dressmaker's 'female-form' mannequin on his dolly.)

BORIS. *(Indicates mannequin.)* Where do you want hot babe to sleep?

DEANNE. You can put that in the back room.

BORIS. And this? *(Indicates lamps.)* Here or living room? *(Points to stage right hallway.)*

DEANNE. You can leave them in here, one on each side of the *bed.*

(BORIS places lamps on each side of mattress.)

LOUELLA. Aren't you going to introduce us?

DEANNE. Boris, this is my mother. Mother, this is Boris.

BORIS. Pleasure. I already meet father.

(LOUELLA stifles a laugh. BORIS grabs the mannequin and EXITS through stage right hallway.)

LOUELLA. Let me get this straight. This is going to be your permanent bedroom?

DEANNE. That's right.

LOUELLA. Because?

DEANNE. Because it's none of your business.

(There's a KNOCK at the door and it opens slowly. Standing there is SKIP DAY, bouquet of flowers in hand. SKIP is in his late thirties, good looking, casually dressed and somewhat immature.)

SKIP. It's your Neighborhood Welcome Wagonl Without the wagon but with some marked down roses instead.

LOUELLA. Hey, if it isn't husband number one!

SKIP. Hi Mrs. Hartley. Still playing the ponies?

LOUELLA. Only when they're running. Unfortunately, the ones I bet on tend to stroll. *(Shares laugh with SKIP.)*

DEANNE. *(Confused, to SKIP.)* What are *you* doing here?

SKIP. I was in the neighborhood and I thought I'd come by, see how the honeymoon went, see if you're still married, see if you like your new home.

(BORIS walks back in, notices SKIP.)

BORIS. *(To DEANNE.)* This your bro?

SKIP. Close enough.

BORIS. *(Impressed)* Very cool family. I be right back.

(He EXITS with the empty dolly.)

DEANNE. *(To SKIP.)* How could you?

SKIP. How could I what?

LOUELLA. Yeah, how could he what?

DEANNE. Mother, please! *(To SKIP.)* How could you sell this place to my husband knowing full well that he was my husband?

SKIP. You're the one who said I could handle everything. Besides, he made us an offer I couldn't refuse.

LOUELLA. How much?

DEANNE. Mother! *(To SKIP.)* You put me in a terrible position.

SKIP. Aren't you going to take my flowers?

LOUELLA. Yes, take the flowers, dear.

(DEANNE gives her mother a dirty look and reluctantly takes flowers.)

LOUELLA. *(CONT'D, staring at the two of them.)* I always liked the way you two looked together.

(DEANNE steps away from SKIP and searches for something to put flowers in.)

DEANNE. I have nothing to put them in. Here, take them back. *(Shoving flowers back in his hands.)*

SKIP. You know what my mother used to do when she got flowers from my dad? Which was very rarely.

DEANNE. You're not putting them in the toilet bowl.

SKIP. Why not? They'll keep for days. *(He makes his way to guest bathroom and continues speaking O.S.)* Providing you use the other bathrooms, of course.

LOUELLA. He's so youthful, don't you think?

DEANNE. Adolescent is more like it.

SKIP. *(Returns)* Don't you just love the layout of this apartment? To tell you the truth I was sorry we decided to sell it.

DEANNE. Is that why you overcharged the poor man?

SKIP. *(Incredulous)* Poor man? *(A beat.)* Where is Bob, by the way?

DEANNE. It's not Bob, it's Robert.

LOUELLA. Yeah, what's the matter with you? Bob is not a name you give to an important businessman like Bob. You need a serious name like *Robert* when you're a serious

person.

DEANNE. Robert is not serious. In fact he has a nifty sense of humor. It's just that he's a *mature* person. *(Pointedly, to SKIP.)* Not a *child.*

LOUELLA. *(To SKIP.)* How would you like to go see a Mamet play right now?

SKIP. They do Mamet in the afternoon?

LOUELLA. *(To DEANNE.)* See?

SKIP. Thanks, but I have things to do.

DEANNE. *(To LOUELLA.)* What happened to the person you were supposed to go with?

LOUELLA. I wasn't suppose to go with *anybody.*

DEANNE. Then why did you get two tickets?

LOUELLA. I always buy two tickets. You never know who you're going to run into.

SKIP. I admire your attitude Mrs. Hartley. I always did.

LOUELLA. Didn't you used to call me Louella?

SKIP. I used to call you 'Mom' but that was when I was your son-in-law.

LOUELLA. As far as I'm concerned you're *still* my son-in-law.

DEANNE. Are you two finished?

(The front door opens and in ENTERS BORIS with another load on his dolly.)

BORIS. One living room chair and one empty bird cage.

SKIP. *(Looks at DEANNE.)* The bird cage, huh?

DEANNE. I was going to throw it out but Robert told me he likes birds. He's thinking of getting us a parakeet.

SKIP. But you *hate* birds!

DEANNE. I don't *hate* birds. It's just that I like their cages better.

BORIS. I go place chair in living room. (*Pushes dolly toward hallway.)* I wing it with bird cage. *(Laughs as he EXITS.)* Wing it.

LOUELLA. *(To DEANNE.)* You have to admit, that was a pretty original way to give someone an engagement ring, nestled at the bottom of the feeder.

DEANNE. Yes, he was original...*(Turning to SKIP.)* if nothing else.

SKIP. I wrote pretty good songs too.

DEANNE. *(Reluctantly)* Sometimes.

LOUELLA. I liked his songs.

DEANNE. Mom, you're not in this.

SKIP. *(To DEANNE, lovingly.)* I wrote a pretty good one for *you.*

DEANNE. And then you went and sold it to that airline for a stupid TV commercial.

SKIP. It got us this apartment, didn't it?

LOUELLA. I loved the one you wrote for Volvo and the one you wrote for Gillette and the one you came up with for Dove soap. How did it go again?

(Sings)

I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT YOU,
COME SHARE MY LOVE
I NEED YOU NOW,
COME SHARE MY DOVE...

DEANNE. Mother, please.

(BORIS returns with his empty dolly.)

BORIS. I put bird cage in baby's room. Be right back.

(He EXITS with dolly.)

SKIP & LOUELLA. *(In unison.)* Baby's room?

DEANNE. He's just assuming.

LOUELLA. Who, Robert?

DEANNE. No, Boris.

SKIP. Who's Boris?

LOUELLA. The mover.

SKIP. *(To DEANNE.)* Are you pregnant? Is that why you had to marry Robert so fast?

DEANNE. How dare you? And what if I was pregnant? What's it to you?

SKIP. Well, I'd like to know if there's going to be a baby crying next door.

DEANNE. *(Stunned)* What did you just say?

SKIP. I said...

DEANNE. I know what you said, but what did you say?

SKIP. *(Timidly)* Well, with my half of the money I made from Mr. Petridge I was able to pay off my debts, put a few dollars aside for a rainy day and buy a smaller place next door. Mind you, I don't have a river view.

DEANNE. You know what you are? You're despicable. You're worse than despicable, you're...

SKIP. *(To LOUELLA)* There's something worse than despicable?

(LOUELLA shrugs.)

DEANNE. *(To SKIP.)* Get out! Get out, right now!

LOUELLA. You're not being very neighborly.

DEANNE. You too, out!

(Front door opens. JEANNINE, a very sexy French model-type, sticks her head in, followed by the rest of her body. She has flaming red hair and speaks with a French. accent.
Please note: there are three sexy model-types in the play and could all be played by the same actress. The only difference is the clothing, the hair and the accent.)

JEANNINE. *(To SKIP.)* How am I supposed to learn to sing if you are not home to teach me how to sing? *(To LOUELLA.)* Are you, per chance, the ex?

LOUELLA. Thank you but no, *she* is.

(DEANNE looks at SKIP and just shakes her head.)

SKIP. Well, if you ever need anything...sugar, butter, bird seeds...You know where to find me.

JEANNINE. *(To DEANNE.)* A pleasure meeting you, madame. *(She EXITS with SKIP.)*

DEANNE. Did she just call me a madam?

LOUELLA. *(Confidentially)* Are you going to tell Robert that your ex lives nest door?

DEANNE. Out!

LOUELLA. You know where to find me also.

(She EXITS. DEANNE reaches for her cell phone and dials.)

DEANNE. *(On phone.)* This is Deanne Petridge...Thank you very much. Would you tell Mr. Petridge that his wife

called and to please call her as soon as possible?

(Hangs up.
INTERCOM. An annoyed DEANNE goes to it.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D)* What?

INTERCOM VOICE. A young man by the name of Joe Van is here to see you. Shall I send him up?

DEANNE. It's Jovan and the answer is no. I mean, yes. Whatever.

(She hangs up. DOORBELL rings.)

DEANNE. *(CONT'D)* So fast?

(She opens the door. It's BORIS. He ENTERS with another load. This time his dolly holds several small tables.)

BORIS. Where I put this?

DEANNE. Who cares?

BORIS. You don't want to see where Boris put things?

DEANNE. *(Firmly)* No!

BORIS. I am very sorry you have bad day. You know what Boris do when he have bad day? He drink cold beer. If you like I run to corner and bring back ice cold six-pack.

DEANNE. That's very sweet of you, Boris but that won't be necessary. What a nice gesture. I mean...

BORIS. *(Raises hand to stop her.)* Chill.

(He EXITS through stage right hallway.
MUSIC CUE #2.

Sound of PIANO and female VOICE doing the scales can be heard O.S. These sounds continue faintly throughout the following.)

DEANNE. What have I done to deserve this?

DOORBELL. She turns and starts toward partially open door. It pushes open slowly. Jovan, a nineteen year old Jamaican who is all gay-energy, runs over to Deanne and kisses her on both cheeks. He's holding a large envelope. He speaks with a Jamaican accent.

JOVAN. Welcome home, Mrs. Petridge.

DEANNE. It's okay, you can still call me Deanne.

JOVAN. We all missed you so much, Deanne. Mr. Kaplan was going crazy with you gone away like that.

DEANNE. I was only gone two weeks. Less than two weeks.

JOVAN. Two weeks without your sketches, the House of Kaplan almost became the House of Cards.

DEANNE. But I left a bunch of designs before I went away.

JOVAN. Apparently they were stolen.

DEANNE. What?

JOVAN. Yes, and they know who *did* it.

(DEANNE looks at JOVAN inquisitively.)

JOVAN. *(CONT'D)* Mrs. Kaplan. You see, the Kaplans are in the middle of a nasty divorce. She wants to start her own place and compete with him. It's driving him crazy. I can't take it anymore.

DEANNE. You shouldn't let it get to you, Jovan. It's not

your problem.

JOVAN. It is my problem when I am asked to choose sides.

DEANNE. What do you mean?

JOVAN. She is offering me employment. And she wants to give me more money.

DEANNE. So, is that what you're going to do?

JOVAN. If I go work for her then I will not be working with you anymore. Unless, of course, you decide to go work for her also.

DEANNE. I can't do that, Jovan. Avi Kaplan's been good to me. He lets me work at home. He lets me take time off to get married.

JOVAN. How frequently do you do that?

DEANNE. Twice. But that's not the point. He's already told me he's going to give me all the time off I want, to have a baby.

JOVAN. You are having a baby?

DEANNE. Well, eventually. Besides I don't like switching around. I don't like changes.

JOVAN. *(As he walks around, looks out at window.)* Is that why you are living in the exact same apartment you did when you were married to Skippy?

DEANNE. *(Laughs)* If he heard you call him that.

JOVAN. *(Suddenly realizing there's piano and singing in the b.g.)* You have a vocal teacher next door?

DEANNE. Let's put it this way. Something is being taught next door. We're not sure what exactly.

JOVAN. *(A beat.)* That is too complicated for my head. *(Back to business.)* So what do you suggest I do concerning my situation?

(BORIS appears from hallway with his empty dolly.)

BORIS. *(To JOVAN.)* Are you replacement for missing partner?

JOVAN. *(Disappointed)* Oh, you have a partner?

DEANNE. *(Coming to the rescue.)* He means a partner on his truck.

JOVAN. *(Impressed)* Oh, you have a truck?

DEANNE. Jovan, let the man work. Go ahead, Boris. Just bring up some more things.

(BORIS starts to go.)

JOVAN. Hurry back!

(BORIS EXITS.)

DEANNE. Stop that. The guy is totally straight.

JOVAN. So was I, once.

DEANNE. I don't believe you.

JOVAN. You're right. *(Beat)* Oh, I almost forgot. *(Hands her envelope.)* These are some of your old sketches. Mr. Kaplan believes the skirts should be significantly shorter.

DEANNE. Mr. Kaplan believes all skirts should be shorter. *(Opens envelope, looks at content.)*

JOVAN. He says, this season, he wants to 'corner' the youth market.

DEANNE. Yeah, the way he corners his secretaries?

JOVAN. You know me...*(Covering his eyes then his ears.)* See no evil, hear no evil.

DEANNE. *(Takes the sketches from him.)* I'll see what I can do.

JOVAN. I have also included a few of my own in there. Did I mention to you that I may be doing the costumes for an off-off-off Broadway production?

DEANNE. That's fabulous. How off is it?

JOVAN. It's in New Jersey. The southern tip of New Jersey.

DEANNE. So what? It's a start.

JOVAN. I would appreciate your opinion on the sketches.

DEANNE. Sure, I'll look them over.

JOVAN. Maybe some weekend you and your new husband can drive down to see the show. I'll get you, what they call 'comps'. It will be like a second honeymoon for you. Ciao!

(He EXITS. The music and singing has stopped next door. CELL PHONE rings.)

DEANNE. Hello...Oh hi, Robert. I'm glad you called. There's something you should know about our neighbor next door...You what?...I don't think so, Robert. The mover is still here and I want to start putting things away. Maybe I can meet Mr.Chiu some other time. We'll have him over for saki...You're right, I forgot, he's Chinese...No, you go ahead and have yourself a wonderful dinner. We'll talk later. See you when you get home...I love you too. Bye.

(Hangs up.

KNOCK on door. BORIS ENTERS with another load. This time the dolly supports a large flat TV screen and a number of large cardboard boxes.)

DEANNE. *(Noticing boxes.)* Oh good, clothing and dishes.

BORIS. *(Looks around.)* Prince Charming still on the scene?

DEANNE. No, he left. I assure you he's harmless.

BORIS. You want TV here or in back room?

DEANNE. That's a good question. Mr. Petridge and I haven't really discussed that.

BORIS. You call husband Mister Petridge?

DEANNE. No, of course not. I'm just calling him that in front of you. *(Looks over boxes.)* This one is for the dining room. You can take it in there. I guess the TV can stay in here.

BORIS. Radical. Me and girlfriend have TV in bedroom also. Late at night, soft porn come in handy. *(Unloads screen and rests it against wall, opposite mattress.)* I got cousin who hook this up for you. I call him.

DEANNE. That won't be necessary. I'm sure my husband has someone.

BORIS. Is okay I use toilet?

DEANNE. Sure, go ahead.

(BORIS opens door to guest bathroom and starts to ENTER. He immediately steps out gain.)

BORIS. Whoa! Flowers growing in there. *(Shakes head.)* Only in America.

DEANNE. I forgot about that. Use one of the other ones.

(BORIS crosses and heads for hallway.)

BORIS. Cannot wait to tell my woman about that.

(He EXITS still shaking his head. There's a KNOCK at the front door, followed by it opening slowly. It's SKIP.)

SKIP. Anybody home?

DEANNE. Short lesson today?

SKIP. Well, you don't want to give them too much at first.

DEANNE. I'll bet.

SKIP. Believe it or not, Jeannine has a pretty good voice.

DEANNE. Why not? She has the lungs for it. Is this it from now on, you dropping in every half hour? I don't think Robert's going to be too thrilled with that.

SKIP. What about you?

DEANNE. Skip, are you crazy! Didn't your lawyer give you a copy of our divorce papers?

SKIP. Don't remind me. Biggest mistake I ever made.

DEANNE. *You* didn't make it, I divorced *you!*

SKIP. I'll be honest with you, Dee, I didn't think you'd go through with it. I also didn't think you'd marry again so fast.

DEANNE. I guess you didn't know me very well.

(BORIS RE-ENTERS, sees SKIP.)

BORIS. Oh, big brother back! Is nice when family pitch in. *(Retrieves his dolly. To DEANNE.)* Is okay I take break now? Maybe grab some lunch.

DEANNE. No, go ahead.

SKIP. I'll help my 'sister' unpack.

BORIS. *(To DEANNE.)* You lucky woman. I have brother don't do squat for me. *(He EXITS.)*

DEANNE. You are, without a doubt, the most impertinent, impudent, shameless, narcissistic person I have ever met.

SKIP. And yet you fell in love with me once.

DEANNE. You were different then.

SKIP. How so?

DEANNE. Well, for one thing, you had ambition when I met you. You were going to write the great American Musical, not those inane jingles for tooth paste whiteners.

SKIP. Maybe that's my calling in life. Besides, that's not why you left me.

DEANNE. It's one of the *many* reasons.

SKIP. It's more because I wasn't ready to have a child.

DEANNE. Why would you want a child? You *are* a child. God, you didn't even want to *talk* about it.

SKIP. What can I tell you, I don't think this is a fit world in which to raise children.

DEANNE. What if your parents had said that.

SKIP. My parents didn't say anything. they were Republicans.

DEANNE. Always the smart-ass comeback.

SKIP. Look, Dee, I'm not here to start trouble. I just want you to know that...I'm here for you.

DEANNE. *(Incredulous)* What?

SKIP. *(Awkwardly)* I don't mean here like *here...I* guess what I'm trying to say is, if you ever need me for *anything,* just knock on the wall. I'll be over before you can say...

DEANNE. Goodbye Skip.

(He starts to go as front door opens and in walks INGA, another model-type. This time she's a blonde and looks a lot like JEANNINE. INGA speaks with a Scandinavian accent.)

INGA. There you are. How is Inga supposed to learn piano if piano teacher missing?

(SKIP gives DEANNE an embarrassed look.)

SKIP. *(To INGA.)* How did you get upstairs?

INGA. The doorman fell in love with my boots.

(They EXIT. BORIS ENTERS without his dolly, looks back at INGA.)

BORIS. Your brother sure know how to pick'em. *(Beat)* Boris have bad news.

DEANNE. Some furniture's missing?

BORIS. No, no, everything cool. Well, maybe not so cool.

DEANNE. what is it?

BORIS. Water main on street bummed out. Have to move truck. I come back tomorrow morning. Maybe partner back then. Is good with you?

DEANNE. I don't think Mr. Petridge will be too happy.

BORIS. *(Glances at mattress.)* Not to worry. Mr. Petridge will be plenty happy. See you in AM.

(He EXITS, closing door behind him. DEANNE walks over to

one of the cardboard boxes and starts opening it.
MUSIC CUE #3.
Sound of bad PIANO playing next door. DEANNE reacts, grasps her head with both hands.)

DEANNE. Oh, nooooooooo!

END OF SCENE

Scene 2

(That night. The two boxes are no longer there. The mattress now has sheets and a bedspread on it. The lamps, on either side of bed, are on low. The guest bathroom door opens and out steps ROBERT. He wears a silk bathrobe over a pair of neatly pressed pajamas. He goes to right side of the bed, removes his bathrobe, carefully folding it. He then deposits it on the night table, He picks up a copy of Business Week magazine, turns up his light and gets into bed. A moment later, DEANNE ENTERS from hallway, wearing a negligee under a sheer robe. As she approaches bed, she slips off her robe.)

ROBERT. *(Looks at her and smiles.)* Maybe I won't read tonight. *(Turns his light off and meticulously puts magazine away.)*

DEANNE. *(As she gets into bed.)* Aren't you tired after that four hour meal you had with Mr. Chiu?

ROBERT. You mean Sun Yun. We're on a first name basis now. I can't wait for you to meet him. He's like me, he loves the smell of a deal. The chaps at the club are going to like this

guy. You know, I'm beginning to think that communists make the best capitalists.

(MUSIC CUE #4.
Sound of PIANO playing from next door.)

DEANNE. *(Reacting to piano.)* Oh, God.
ROBERT. What's wrong?
DEANNE. Don't you hear it?

(ROBERT listens. The piano is playing a beautiful, melodic ballad.)

ROBERT. It's pretty. Sounds familiar.
DEANNE. It sounds familiar because you heard it a thousand times on a television commercial.
ROBERT. *(Doubtful)* A pretty song like that? They wouldn't turn it into a commercial.
DEANNE. Is that so?
(Sings. Sample #5 on Disc.)
COME MEET THE WORLD,
COME FLY AMERICAN...

ROBERT. You're right. What a shame. You'd think the person who wrote that would do something more with it.

(The piano is getting louder.)

DEANNE. *(Annoyed)* Is he going to play that thing all night?
ROBERT. Is it really bothering you, darling?
DEANNE. *(Firmly)* Yes!

ROBERT. I apologize for that. *(As he rises.)* I'll put an end to it.

DEANNE. What are you going to do?

(ROBERT goes to wall opposite their mattress and knocks three times. The music immediately stops.)

DEANNE. I wish you hadn't done that.

ROBERT. *(As he returns to bed.)* It worked.

(He gets back into bed and snuggles up to her.)

DEANNE. I'm really not in the mood now.

ROBERT. I understand. Forgive me. I apoligize. *(Kisses her gently on the cheek then turns away.)* Goodnight, dear.

DEANNE. Goodnight.

(Reaches up and turns her light off. The room is dark. We can barely see the 'bed'. There's a KNOCK at the door.)

ROBERT. Who in the world would come by at this hour? And what happened to our doorman?

(Turns his light on and gets up.)

DEANNE. *(Jokingly)* Maybe it's Mr. Chiu. Maybe he threw some money at the doorman.

ROBERT. It can't be Sun Yun. *(As he makes his way to front door.)* Unless, of course, he's mixed up with the time change. *(At the door.)* Who is it?

SKIP. *(0. S.)* Your neighbor.

(DEANNE immediately gets up, grabs her robe and rushes to hallway.)

ROBERT. What are you doing?

(He opens front door as DEANNE disappears through hallway.)

SKIP. I just wanted to apologize for the piano. I didn't realize it was so late.

ROBERT. Come in, come in. *(Looking SKIP over.)* Have we met before?

SKIP. Well, sort of.

(SKIP ENTERS tentatively.)

ROBERT. *(Feeling obliged to explain the mattress.)* My wife and I are sleeping in here for a few days until...uh...until the rest of the furniture arrives. *(Keeps eyeing SKIP.)* Where would we have met? *(Suddenly)* Now I know who you are! You're the young man in my wife's wallet.

SKIP. I am?

ROBERT. That means that my wife was *your* wife. *(Calls out.)* Honey, it's your ex! *(To SKIP.)* Talk about a small world.

SKIP. I just wanted to say I'm sorry for the piano. I apologize.

ROBERT. I do that all day long, apologize. Terrible habit. *(Confidentially)* I think it's starting to get on Deanne's nerves.

SKIP. Well, I really should be going.

ROBERT. I understand you work for American Airlines.

SKIP. No, I don't work for them, I just wrote this one song for their advertising campaign.

ROBERT. Don't let anybody fool you, they're a good solid company. I was just reading about them in Business Week. They expect to break even in the next twenty years. *(A beat.)* So you live next door.

SKIP. I'm afraid so.

ROBERT. *(Inquisitively)* Let me ask you something. When you sold me this place were you already living next door?

SKIP. *(Uneasy)* I really should go and let you sleep. *(Starts toward door.)* I promise I won't play the piano after eleven at night. Or, if you prefer, ten *(At the door.)* Sorry I woke you. Goodnight.

(He EXITS. ROBERT closes the door and returns to bed.)

ROBERT. *(Calls out.)* You can come out now! The coast is clear! *(DEANNE RETURNS.)*

DEANNE. That's it, we're moving.

ROBERT. Why? Just because your ex happens to live next door?

DEANNE. Really, Robert, did you have to ask him in?

(They both get back into bed.)

ROBERT. Were you aware that he resided next door?

DEANNE. I heard a rumor earlier today.

ROBERT. The man must love this building. I mean, enough to want to move back in.

DEANNE. Can we go to sleep now?

ROBERT. Sure, sure. I'm sorry.

(Reaches up to turn light off. The stage is practically dark.)

ROBERT. *(CONT'D)* Well, goodnight, darling.
DEANNE. Goodnight, Robert.
ROBERT. *(A beat.)* So that's Skip.
DEANNE. *(Quietly correcting him.)* Thomas.

END OF SCENE

Scene 3

(The next day. The 'bed' has been made. The front door is slightly ajar. It opens. BORIS, the mover, is rolling in another load of furniture. This time his dolly holds several stuffed chairs, end tables, lamps, etc. He starts toward hallway and runs into DEANNE. She's all dressed, ready to go out.)

DEANNE. I hope you don't mind but I have things to do. We'll figure out where it all goes later. In the meantime, you just keep bringing the furniture up.
BORIS. S.P.C.A.
DEANNE. It's A.S.A.P.

(INTERCOM. DEANNE goes to it, picks it up.)

DEANNE. *(CONT ' D)* Yes?
INTERCOM VOICE. A Mr. Kaplan is here.

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