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Don't Hug Me, We're Married

Book & Lyrics by Phil Olson

Music by Paul Olson

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

**SAMUEL
FRENCH**
FOUNDED 1830

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ISBN 978-0-573-70418-5

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DON'T HUG ME, WE'RE MARRIED was first produced at The Lonny Chapman Group Rep Theatre in Los Angeles, California, in October 2014. The artistic directors were Larry Eisenberg and Chris Winfield, the president was Bert Emmett, it was directed by Doug Engalla, the choreography was by Stan Mazin, the producer/backstage crew was Laura Coker, the assistant director/backstage crew/sound technician was Natalia Santamaria, the orchestrations were by Paul Olson, the set design and construction was by Chris Winfield, the lighting design was by J. Kent Inasy, the stage manager/light technician was Andre Jack, the sound technician was Ryan Albertson, the light technician was Erica Santamaria, the sound design was by Steve Shaw, the publicist was Nora Feldman, the costumes were by Jocelyn Finn and Cheryl Butler, the program was by Drina Durazo, the backstage crew was Sarah Denise Coker, and the cover art was by Doug Haverty. The cast, in order of appearance, was as follows:

CLARA Rebekah Dunn
GUNNER/TRIGGER Don Schlossman
KANUTE Bert Emmett
BERNICE Truett Jean Butler
AARVID Troy Whitaker

The understudies were Laurie Morgan (**CLARA**), Doug Haverty (**GUNNER/TRIGGER**), Chris Loprete (**KANUTE**), and Kathleen Chen (**BERNICE**).

CHARACTERS

CLARA JOHNSON – Gunner’s wife. Co-owner of a bar called “The Bunyan,” who’s been married to Gunner for a long time. Likeable. Playfully sarcastic, not mean spirited. Above all, she really does love Gunner.

GUNNER JOHNSON – Clara’s husband. Strong willed co-owner of The Bunyan. A north woods Archie Bunker.

BERNICE LUNDSTROM – Pretty, young, wholesome, innocent, waitress at The Bunyan. Dreams of going to Broadway.

KANUTE GUNDERSON – Oblivious, dense, harmless, full of himself business owner.

AARVID GISSELSSEN – Slick, fast-talking karaoke salesman. A north woods “Music Man.”

TRIGGER JOHNSON – Gunner’s twin sister. Played by Gunner. A forest ranger. Doesn’t get along with Gunner. Feminine, likes to hug, the opposite of Gunner. She desperately wants to find a man.

SETTING

Bunyan Bay, a small town in northern Minnesota.

ACT I

SCENE 1: Late June at The Bunyan, a little bar in a small northern Minnesota town called Bunyan Bay.

“The Greatest Love Song Ever” Gunner
“Marriage is Forever” Bernice, Kanute
“The Status Quo” Clara, Gunner
“What I’ll Do When We’re Married” Aarvid
“When Will I Find Love?” Kanute
“All I Ever Wanted” Trigger, Clara, Bernice
“Lower Expectations” Clara
“The Marriage Test” Bernice, Aarvid, Trigger

ACT II

SCENE 1: One hour later.

“I Love My Man” Trigger
“The Day that Bob Dylan Was Here” Gunner
“It’s All Comin’ Together” Bernice, Clara, Aarvid

SCENE 2: Four weeks later.

“We’re All Gonna Die” Kanute, Bernice, Clara
“Bunyan Bay High School Fight Song” Bernice
“I’m Gettin’ Hitched” Bernice, Aarvid
“We Are Gathered Here Today” Clara, Ensemble
“Forevermore” Gunner, Clara
“The Last Song” Ensemble

FOREWORD

I tend to follow the advice, “write what you know.” *Don’t Hug Me, We’re Married* is my seventh play (fifth musical) that takes place in a small town in northern Minnesota. I grew up in a Scandinavian household just outside of the Twin Cities. My great grandparents on both sides of the family came over from Norway. On my dad’s side they homesteaded a farm near Grand Forks, North Dakota. My mom’s family ended up in Virginia, Minnesota, the iron range. My parents were actually related to each other before they were married which was somewhat disturbing to hear until I found out they were second cousins removed and not a blood relationship. Big sigh of relief. But still.

Growing up in a Scandinavian household, I tend to write stories about the emotionally reserved nature of the people I grew up with. For instance, my play, *A Nice Family Gathering* (published by Samuel French), is a story about a man who loved his wife so much, he almost told her. I never actually heard my parents say they loved each other during the 44 years they were married. I’m sure they did love each other, they just didn’t say it out loud. It was understood. And the closest we got to hugging was that awkward, arms straight out, patting each other on the shoulders kind of hug. We were strict observers of the “don’t cross the bubble” rule. In the end my stories are about relationships, and how it’s okay to say I love you or to hug someone. Some people go to a therapist. I write about it. That’s my therapy.

Don’t Hug Me, We’re Married is the fifth in the *Don’t Hug Me* series of musicals. The first four are *Don’t Hug Me*, *A Don’t Hug Me Christmas Carol*, *A Don’t Hug Me County Fair* and *Don’t Hug Me, I’m Pregnant*. All five are stand alone musicals. You don’t have to see them in any particular order to fully enjoy them. With that being said, I hope everyone sees all five of them.

The original *Don’t Hug Me* opened in 2003 in Los Angeles where it won 4 Artistic Director Achievement Awards including Best Original Musical, and is currently playing in theatres all around the country.

The Christmas sequel, *A Don’t Hug Me Christmas Carol*, opened in 2006 in Los Angeles, where it was awarded Best Musical of 2006 by ReviewPlays.com. *A Don’t Hug Me Christmas Carol* is a spoof of Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*, set in a little bar in northern Minnesota. What’s really fun about spoofing *A Christmas Carol* is that most people know the story, and most of the story takes place in the dream sequence, the ghost of Christmas past, present and future. Anything can happen in a dream and it does in *A Don’t Hug Me Christmas Carol*, with our Minnesota version of Scrooge, Tiny Tim and the Grim Reaper.

A Don’t Hug Me County Fair opened in Los Angeles in February of 2009 to critical acclaim, winning four Artistic Director Achievement Awards including Best Author Original Musical. The story takes place during the county fair in Bunyan Bay, Minnesota. This year the Bunyan County Fair

means one thing to Gunner and Clara Johnson, owners of a little bar called The Bunyan; The Miss Walleye Queen Competition. Bernice, the pretty waitress, sees this as her big chance to win Miss Walleye Queen, to be discovered, and to have her face carved in butter at the State Fair. The trouble begins when Gunner's wife, Clara, decides she also wants to win Miss Walleye Queen, and when Gunner's estranged twin sister, Trigger, shows up to try to win the beauty pageant, things get real ugly. One of the things I love about *A Don't Hug Me County Fair* is the fun beauty pageant on stage and that Gunner's twin sister, Trigger, is played by Gunner.

Don't Hug Me, I'm Pregnant opened in Los Angeles in September of 2011, to critical acclaim, once again set in Bunyan Bay, Minnesota, in a little north woods bar called "The Bunyan," owned by Clara and Gunner Johnson. Clara is 8 1/2 months pregnant with their first child, and today she's looking forward to her baby shower, getting lots of presents, and taking a break from her raging hormones. Suddenly, a freak snow storm, a "tsnownami," hits Bunyan Bay and they find themselves snowed in. No one can get in or leave. Gunner's worst nightmare comes true when Clara goes into labor and he realizes he's going to have to deliver the baby in the bar. So many people can relate to the whole pregnancy ordeal and have been very complimentary of *Don't Hug Me, I'm Pregnant* saying they think it's the best out of the four.

Don't Hug Me, We're Married opened in Los Angeles in October of 2014. The reviews were, once again, terrific. Two weeks after it opened in Los Angeles, *Don't Hug Me, We're Married* opened to sold out houses at the Jon Hassler Theater in Plainview, Minnesota, making it the highest box office grossing play in the theater's 15 year history. Set in the same north woods bar as the other *Don't Hug Me's*, Gunner and Clara Johnson, owners of the bar, have been married "a long time," the romance has left the marriage, and Clara would like to get it back. When Gunner finds a pamphlet that Clara was hiding for "Divorce Fantasy Camp," he realizes he needs to do something to convince his wife he's a good husband.

At the same time, Bernice, the pretty waitress, gets engaged to Aarvid, a karaoke salesman. Gunner's twin sister, Trigger (played by Gunner) comes to town and proposes to Kanute, the local business icon. It's a double wedding and, of course, nothing goes as planned. What I like about *Don't Hug Me, We're Married* is that it's an examination of a married couple who have been together for 20 years and what they are going thru, compared to newlyweds who are looking to get married for the first time. The contrast between the two types of relationships is fun, and when we bring in the outrageous Trigger (Gunner's twin sister, played by Gunner), all bets are off. Trigger is hysterical and the audiences love her! She's my favorite character in the *Don't Hug Me* musicals. Once again, critics and audience members said this was the best of all the *Don't Hug Me* musicals. I'm happy to think I might be getting better at writing these.

I wrote all five *Don't Hug Me* musicals with my brother, Paul. I wrote the book and lyrics and my brother wrote the music. Paul is a Nephrologist (kidneys) in Chaska, Minnesota, and I live in Los Angeles. Because of the

distance, Paul writes the music first, then emails me a computer file of the lead sheets. I download the music file and write the lyrics to the music. Some people write the lyrics first, then the music. It works best for us to do it the other way.

Many thanks to Samuel French for all their support!

For more information about *Don't Hug Me, We're Married* and to see production photos, and song and video clips from the world premiere, please visit DontHugMe.com.

- Phil Olson
2014

ACT I

Scene One

(The play takes place in Bunyan Bay, a small town in northern Minnesota. The set is a local bar, "The Bunyan," complete with stuffed fish, deer heads, sports trophies, and beer signs on the walls. There's a small bar, stage right, with two bar stools, a table, center stage, and another table, stage left, with two chairs at each table.)

(On the bar is a telephone, a laptop computer and a radio. In the corner, stage left, is a large karaoke machine, the "LSS 562." The front door is up stage, center. The bathrooms are upstage left, the kitchen is upstage right, behind the bar. A whiteboard behind the bar has the daily special on it, "Walleye Platter Basket \$4.99.")

(Lights up on CLARA behind the bar, cleaning glasses. The music starts. GUNNER enters from the bathroom, singing to CLARA who thoroughly enjoys it.)

GUNNER. *(sings)*

OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH,
OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OOOOOOOOOOOOOOH!

I LOVE MY WIFE, I'LL DO ANYTHING FOR HER.
SHE'S PRETTY, SHE'S SMART AND SHE'S SEXY.
SHE COOKS SO WELL AND SHE'S LOST SOME WEIGHT,
BUT SHE'S DEFINITELY NOT ANOREXY.

AND WHEN I SEE SHE'S NEAR TO ME,
I WANT TO BE ALL I CAN BE,
SHE SMELLS LIKE CHERRY POTPOURRI,
AND I REALLY LIKE HER MOTHER.

SHE SINGS LIKE CHER, SHE CAN DANCE LIKE ASTAIRE,
 SHE'S SOMEONE I'LL ALWAYS COME BACK TO.
 SHE CAN HUNT AND FISH, COOK A MEAN HOTDISH,
 SHE'S COOL AND SHE'S GREAT IN THE SACK, TOO.

SHE'S REALLY STRONG, WE GET ALONG,
 SHE'S ALWAYS RIGHT AND NEVER WRONG,
 AND WHEN SHE SLIPS INTO HER THONG...

(GUNNER stares out.)

NGONG NGONG NGONG NGONG NGONG NGONG.

(GUNNER walks CLARA to the table where she sits in the chair)

AND WHEN THE MOONLIGHT HITS HER FACE,
 I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN STUNNED WITH MACE,
 I LOVE HER, YES, I LOVE HER.
 I LOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOVE HER.

(GUNNER passionately kisses CLARA, then dramatically turns and goes into the bathroom.)

(Sitting in the chair, CLARA closes her eyes, holding her arms out like she's still kissing GUNNER.)

GUNNER. *(coming out of the bathroom, back to his usual self)*
 Clara, have ya seen the plunger? We got a serious situation in the bathroom, there.

KANUTE. *(coming out of the kitchen)* It wasn't me this time.

(CLARA is talking in her sleep, eyes still closed.)

CLARA. Kiss me again, Gunner. Kiss me like ya just got outta prison.

GUNNER. Didn't we just kiss last Christmas?...

(realizing)

Oh, she's dreamin'. Clara?!

CLARA. *(waking up)* What? What?

GUNNER. You were havin' a bad dream.

CLARA. No, no, it was a good dream. You were romantic and ya serenaded me, and then we shopped for pillows. Okay, we didn't do that, but it was goin' in that direction.

(BERNICE enters. We hear the sound of mosquitoes when she opens the door.)

BERNICE. Oh, my gosh, the mosquitoes are outta control.

KANUTE. *(holding his arms out to hug her)* Hey, Bernice.

BERNICE. *(ignoring his hug attempt)* Hey, Kanute

(to CLARA and GUNNER)

Ya won't believe it! Ya won't believe it! Aarvid almost proposed to me!

KANUTE. What about us, Bernice? We have somethin' special.

BERNICE. *(endearing)* Oh, Kanute, you're so cute.

KANUTE. *(to GUNNER)* Was that condescending?

GUNNER. Yup.

CLARA. So, what happened? What did he do?

BERNICE. Okay, we were out at the lake, the stars were out, the loons were singin'.

(She does a Loon call, CLARA and KANUTE join in.)

GUNNER. *(groans)* Ohh!

BERNICE. Suddenly, fireworks went off on the dock that spelled out, "I Like You, Bernice"... He miss-spelled "Bernice" but that's okay. Then he sang a song to me, then he shampooed my hair.

GUNNER. That seems like a disconnect to me.

KANUTE. So, he didn't propose?

BERNICE. Not yet.

KANUTE. Still in the game!

BERNICE. No, you're not.

KANUTE. Agree to disagree.

GUNNER. Hasn't Aarvid proposed to ya like a dozen times?

BERNICE. Yah, but I wasn't ready before. I'm ready, now.

KANUTE. Okay, before ya do somethin' you'll regret for the rest of your life –

BERNICE. Like marry you?

KANUTE. Exactly. No! Ya know, we were engaged once.

BERNICE. I know, Kanute, and I'm not proud of that time in my life. I mean, you were the only single guy in town. Ya got all that money, all those campin', canoein', fishin' stores.

KANUTE. I got six stores now. "Mahk talk glock." That's six in Klingon. I'm takin' the Rosetta Stone.

BERNICE. (*consoling*) Oh, Kanute, don't take this the wrong way, but as far as marrying you, I'd rather pass a kidney stone.

(**KANUTE** *leans in to kiss her.*)

What are ya doin'?

KANUTE. Sorry, I misread that.

BERNICE. A little.

KANUTE. Oh, c'mon, he sells karaoke machines!

BERNICE. (*crossing to the karaoke machine*) It's not a karaoke machine, it's the "LSS Five sixty-two, Lifestyle System," featuring 82 songs by folk legend, Sven Yorgensen.

CLARA & BERNICE. (*swooning*) Sven Yorgensen.

GUNNER. Oh, jeez.

CLARA. With intuitive voice activation.

BERNICE. Just say a word from a song title and it...

CLARA & BERNICE. Starts to play just like magic.

GUNNER. Yup, I'm definitely gonna vomit.

CLARA. This machine saved our marriage four times by gettin' us to communicate. Today might be a fifth.

GUNNER. Yah, I could use a fifth right now.

KANUTE. The point is, Aarvid sells these machines for a living. A technology that's dyin'.

BERNICE. He doesn't just sell Lifestyle Systems. He's also managing my singin' career.

KANUTE. What singin' career? I thought you were a waitress.

BERNICE. Oh, my gosh, you're so encouraging. Yes, I will marry you.

KANUTE. Ya will? –

BERNICE. NO!

KANUTE. But Bernice, I know what ya need.

BERNICE. How do you know what I need?

KANUTE. I watch Kathie Lee and Hoda...Okay, here's the deal. I got a huge boat on Bunyan Bay. We'll start sellin' high-end cruises. You'll be the cruise director. It'll be like a Carnival Cruise without the sinking or the stomach virus.

BERNICE. Kanute, it's not the size of the boat that matters.

CLARA. I beg to differ.

GUNNER. Yah, I like big snow cones, too, but ya take what ya can get.

KANUTE. I own a deer petting farm with a cashmere goat.

(He makes a goat sound.)

Baaaah.

BERNICE. Marriage is not just about money.

(The music starts. Looks at the LSS 562, smiles.)

Intuitive voice activation.

(sings)

MARRIAGE IS FOREVER,
IT'S SOMETHING YOU ENDEAVOR
TO HAVE AND HOLD TILL DEATH DO US PART.

KANUTE. I'm with ya.

BERNICE.

AND WHEN YA FIND THE RIGHT ONE,
AND NOT SOMEONE WHO MIGHT RUN,
YA FOUND A LOVE THAT'S STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART.

KANUTE. Still with ya.

BERNICE.

LOVE IS KIND AND PATIENT,
NOT JEALOUS OR COMPLACENT,
NOT ARROGANT, BUT HAPPY AND TRUE.

KANUTE. Okay, two outta three.

BERNICE.

LOVE IS LIKE PRINCE CHARMING,
ENCHANTING AND DISARMING,
BUT MOSTLY LOVE IS NOT BEING WITH YOU.

GUNNER. Ouch.

KANUTE.

I OWN A CHAIN OF BAIT MART STORES,
I MAKE MONEY SELLING WORMS.
I'M SOMEONE THAT EVERYONE ADORES,
I'M RICH AND I HAVE NO GERMS. NOT MANY.

BERNICE.

HAPPY I AM FOR YOUR WORM STORE.

(KANUTE holds up six fingers and mouths "six.")

I'M HAPPY FOR YOUR BIG BOAT.

KANUTE. Thank you.

BERNICE.

BUT I NEED A MAN WHO LOVES ME MORE,
MUCH MORE THAN HE LOVES HIS GOAT.

CLARA. *(making goat sounds)* Baaaah.

KANUTE.

YOU USED TO LOVE THE WAY I KISSED.

BERNICE. No.

KANUTE.

I'M SOMEONE YOU LOOKED UP TO.

BERNICE. No again.

KANUTE.

DON'T FIGHT IT MY CHARMS YOU CAN'T RESIST.
I'M CASTING MY SPELL ON YOU.

(casts his "spell")

You love me.

BERNICE. *(ignoring his "spell")*

LOVE IS ALWAYS GIVING,
IT'S NOT ABOUT RELIVING,
MISTAKES WE MIGHT HAVE MADE IN THE PAST.

KANUTE. *(casting "spell" on BERNICE)* Love-me-ah-moose.

BERNICE.

THE TIME WE SPENT TOGETHER,
WAS KINDA LIKE BAD WEATHER,
BUT THANKFULLY THE STORM DIDN'T LAST.

KANUTE.

I'VE GOT LOTS OF MONEY,
I'M WELL GROOMED AND I'M FUNNY,
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO WORK ANYMORE.

AND IF YOU PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT,
I'LL BUY YOU A BIG SPOTLIGHT,
AND MAKE YOU A CELEB,
YOUR NAME IN LIGHTS, CELEB,
I'LL MAKE YOU A CELEB SHORE TO SHORE...
IN BUNYAN BAY.

CLARA. (*ignoring KANUTE*) So, where's Aarvid?

BERNICE. Oh, well, I kinda gave him some things to do so
he'll know me better. Ya know, what to expect if he
proposes.

KANUTE. You gave him an assignment?

BERNICE. He calls it a test.

GUNNER. A test? Isn't marriage enough of a test? I mean,
why torture him *before* you're married?

CLARA. (*Raising her hand. Calmly.*) I have a question.

(*to GUNNER*)

Where are ya gonna sleep tonight?

GUNNER. I'm not talkin' about us, hon. I'm talkin' about
every other marriage in the universe. But not ours.

CLARA. Uh huh.

BERNICE. (*to CLARA*) So, do ya think Aarvid's the right one
for me?

KANUTE. No.

CLARA. Ya better ask Gunner. Gunner has much better taste
in choosin' a partner than I do.

GUNNER. That's right. Wait.

(*ponders that*)

BERNICE. I just think marriage is the most wonderful thing
in the world. I look at you and Gunner and see how
happy you are-okay, that's not a good example... I
mean, there must be somethin' ya like about marriage.

CLARA. When you're in love it's the most glorious two and a half hours of your life.

GUNNER. Okay, ya know what, I think we have a good marriage.

CLARA. Yah, we do. You're a loving man who always does the right thing.

(laughs)

I almost had it. I was this close.

GUNNER. Okay, when have I not done the right thing?

CLARA. Ya mean, like, today, or over the course of our marriage?

GUNNER. Today.

CLARA. Before noon or after noon?

GUNNER. The first thing you can think of.

CLARA. Okay. I asked ya to take out the garbage.

(to BERNICE)

He sees how long he can ignore the garbage in the kitchen by puttin' stuff on top of the pile like he's building the great pyramid.

GUNNER. Okay, okay, ya took out the garbage. Thank you.

CLARA. Ya know, I'm not askin' for a lot, okay. Just simple stuff, ya know, like bringin' me flowers for no reason.

GUNNER. Okay, when a man brings his wife flowers for no reason, there's a reason. Yah. And believe me, I've never had a reason to bring ya flowers.

(catches himself)

That sounded better in my head.

CLARA. Whenever Gunner brings me flowers, I have to spread my legs for a week.

KANUTE. *(thinks)* Don't ya have a vase?

(Everyone shoots a look at KANUTE.)

BERNICE. *(to KANUTE)* You need counseling.

GUNNER. *(to BERNICE)* If it wasn't for marriage, men would spend their lives thinkin' they had no faults at all.

CLARA. Well, according to you, I have a lot more faults than you do.

GUNNER. How's that, now?

CLARA. (*takes out a notepad from behind the bar*) I found this last week.

BERNICE. (*takes it from CLARA*) What is it?

(*looking at it*)

It looks like a score card. Yah, someone's keepin' score of the arguments between Gunner and Clara. Who did this?

CLARA. It's Gunner's handwriting.

GUNNER. Circumstantial.

KANUTE. (*looking over BERNICE's shoulder; reading it*) "Who won the most arguments. Gunner, six hundred and twelve, to Clara, two."

BERNICE. I didn't know ya argued so much.

CLARA. I didn't either.

GUNNER. Okay, they're not, like, big arguments, okay. They're just, ya know, small arguments.

CLARA. For example?

GUNNER. Okay... Last week ya said opening day for fishin' was May 1st, but it was May 11th. I disagreed and I was right.

CLARA. I said opening day for *spear* fishin' was May 1st.

KANUTE. She's right.

GUNNER. (*sheepish*) Okay, one more for you.

(*KANUTE marks a point for CLARA.*)

CLARA. Maybe if ya listened.

GUNNER. Oh, now I have to listen.

BERNICE. Who keeps score in a marriage?

GUNNER. I like sports, okay? I'm competitive. It's just somethin' to pass the time. It doesn't mean anything.

CLARA. It just seems like we're on two different planets.

GUNNER. Yah, well, you're not so perfect, either, ya know. Admit it.

CLARA. Okay, I admit that sometimes I wake up grumpy.

GUNNER. See?

CLARA. Other times, I let him sleep.

(We hear a snare drum rimshot from the karaoke machine.)

I'll be here all week. Try the veal.

GUNNER. Yah, well, at least I don't wanna divorce, okay. I took the vows and I will abide by them. More than I can say for you.

CLARA. What are ya talkin' about?

GUNNER. Oh, okay, what's this?

(He pulls out a brochure from behind the bar.)

CLARA. *(lying)* I don't know.

GUNNER. Hogwash.

KANUTE. *(taking it from GUNNER)* It's a brochure for "Divorce Fantasy Camp."

BERNICE. What's that?

GUNNER. *(to CLARA)* Would you like to tell 'em?

KANUTE. *(reads)* Does your husband never bring ya flowers? Or compliment you, or hug you. Does he float air biscuits in bed?" Sounds like Gunner. "Here at Divorce Fantasy Camp we'll match you with an ideal husband that will take care of all your needs."

BERNICE. What does *that* mean?

KANUTE. *(continues)* "But don't worry, there will be no hanky panky. Unless ya pay extra."

BERNICE. What do ya do there?

KANUTE. *(reads)* Okay, day one; he makes ya breakfast in bed, then he picks up his dirty clothes, then he compliments your hair, then he shares his inner most feelings...and then he cries!

CLARA. Someone gave it to me as a joke.

KANUTE. That night, your fantasy husband brings ya flowers, then takes ya to a fancy restaurant with cloth napkins where ya order anything, even if it says "market price!"

BERNICE. No way!

(looking at the brochure)

KANUTE. *(reading)* And during dinner he'll ask ya about your day...and then he'll listen!... It's lady porn.

GUNNER. See what ya did, Bernice? Things were great in our marriage, and then ya come in here with all that love and romance talk, and now Clara's questioning how great she has it.

CLARA. No, I was questioning all that before.

BERNICE. I think you should go see a marriage counselor and talk about your feelings.

CLARA. I'll make an appointment.

GUNNER. No, no, don't do that. Okay, bottom line, I don't wanna lose ya, okay, so what is the least amount of affection I can give ya...and still keep ya as my wife?

CLARA. Wow. How should I answer that?

(to the LSS 562)

Status quo.

(The music starts.)

GUNNER. Oh, no, ya don't have to sing –

CLARA. Oh, yah, I do.

GUNNER. *(groans)* Ohh!

CLARA. *(sings)*

I'D LIKE LOVE AND HARMONY,
JUST THE WAY WE USED TO BE.
LET'S START OVER LIKE WE'RE NEWLYWED.

REMEMBER ON OUR HONEYMOON,
WE KISSED LIKE A WILD RACCOON,
NOW WE POUND OUR FISTS INSTEAD.

(holds her fist up)

GUNNER. *(sings)*

LET'S POUND IT.

(touches her fist with his)

CLARA.

WE USED TO SIT AROUND THE CAMPFIRE AND HUG.
NOW WE SIT AT THE BAR AND TOUCH BEER MUGS.

(They clink their beer mugs together.)

GUNNER.

LET'S KEEP THE STATUS QUO,
DON'T ROCK THE BOAT YA KNOW,
TIP THE CANOE YOU'LL GO OVER.

CLARA.

I DON'T WANT THE STATUS QUO,
I WANT US TO FEEL AGLOW.
HOLD ME CLOSE AND SWEEP ME OFF MY FEET.

LET'S SING AND DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY,
HOLD HANDS, BUY ME LINGERIE.
LET'S MAKE OUT IN THE BACK SEAT.

GUNNER. *(sings)*

BUT HONEY –

CLARA.

HE USED TO BE ROMANTIC, BOUGHT ME BON BONS.

KANUTE. “Bon bons?”

CLARA.

NOW ALL I GET FROM HIM ARE SEX COUPONS.

(CLARA holds up a bunch of coupons.)

KANUTE. Can I see ‘em?

(He takes them from her.)

CLARA.

NOW OUR LOVE IS LOSING GRIP,
JUST LIKE ON A SINKING SHIP
WE'LL BOTH DROWN IF WE DON'T MEND THE BOW.

KANUTE. *(looking at coupons)* These are expired.

CLARA.

SO, LET'S NOT BID OUR LOVE ADIEU,
YOU CAN MAKE MY DREAM COME TRUE,
START BY SAYING YOU LOVE ME, NOW.

(The song ends. She holds her arms out to GUNNER. He doesn't move.)

GUNNER. Oh, come on, Clara. I told ya I loved ya when we got married... If anything changes, I'll let ya know.

CLARA. *(She starts to leave)* I'll be at my mother's.

GUNNER. Okay, okay, fine, fine. I accept your challenge.

CLARA. Why is it a challenge?

GUNNER. I will bet you that I can be a better husband than you.

(He ponders that.)

KANUTE. That didn't even make sense to me.

GUNNER. What I mean is, I bet I can be better at bein' a husband than you can at bein' a wife.

CLARA. How did we go from showin' love to betting?

GUNNER. Bernice is testin' Aarvid. This is our test, okay. I mean, do ya want me to be a better husband or not?

CLARA. Okay, fine, it's a start. What are the stakes?

GUNNER. Okay, if you win, you can, umm –

BERNICE. If she wins, Clara can go to Divorce Fantasy Camp.

GUNNER. Oh, no, pick somethin' else.

(KANUTE makes chicken clucking noises. BERNICE does too.)

Knock it off, Colonel Sanders and Chicken Little. Okay, fine. Divorce Fantasy Camp. And if I win, I, umm –
(thinks)

KANUTE. Then Gunner gets the weekend special at the Musky Lounge.

CLARA. Oh, no. Not the Musky Lounge.

BERNICE. What's the Musky Lounge?

KANUTE. Bunyan Bay's exclusive Gentleman's Club.

BERNICE. When did Bunyan Bay get a gentleman?

CLARA. Last week. Nothin' good happens at the Musky Lounge. It's like one big orgy. (*"Orgy" is pronounced with hard "G."*)

KANUTE. That's an exaggeration. (*"Exaggeration" is pronounced with hard "G."*)

I'm tellin' ya, nothin' questionable happens there.

(*He laughs.*)

Yah, I couldn't land it.

CLARA. Not gonna happen.

KANUTE. It's either The Musky Lounge, or he goes to the "Fishing Pole."

BERNICE. What's the Fishing Pole?

KANUTE. It's a pole dancing club in Duluth.

CLARA. Duluth. The devil's playground.

BERNICE. How do you know about the Fishing Pole?

KANUTE. (*lying*) I read about it in Pole Dancing Monthly... Which I saw at the grocery store checkout line.

CLARA. (*to KANUTE*) Have ya ever been there?

KANUTE. They took me there for my stag party when I was engaged to Bernice.

BERNICE. You told me ya went to a sports bar.

KANUTE. Pole dancing is a sport. They're gonna have it in the next Olympics. Gunner was there. Tell her.

GUNNER. (*Busted. Groans.*) Ohh.

CLARA. (*to GUNNER*) You went to the Fishing Pole?! I know when you're lyin'. Your eyes blink. Tell me.

GUNNER. (*Scared. His eyes blink several times.*) Mayday, mayday.

CLARA. Ya did. You called me and told me you were goin' fishin'.

GUNNER. Well, I, umm...

(*to KANUTE*)

Little help.

KANUTE. He lied.

GUNNER. Thanks!

KANUTE. He told ya over the phone so ya wouldn't see his eyes blink.

CLARA. I thought we were honest with each other.

GUNNER. I was tryin' to preserve the peace, okay. The only way ya can stay married is to lie sometimes.

CLARA. Oh, yah? What else do ya lie about?

GUNNER. Nothin'.

CLARA. Is my sister prettier than me?

GUNNER. No.

(His eyes blink several times.)

Allergies.

CLARA. Here's a lesson, Bernice. The key to a good marriage is honest communication.

GUNNER. *(to BERNICE)* Horse muffins. When ya communicate, ya just get in trouble, okay. The less ya say, the fewer mistakes you're gonna make. So keep it in, bottle it up, and no one gets hurt. You're welcome.

CLARA. That's horrible advice.

BERNICE. This is really uncomfortable.

CLARA. Okay, then, let's get back to the bet. Who's a better spouse?

GUNNER. Okay, what are the ground rules?

CLARA. The person who does the most for the marriage wins. We'll score it on a point system. One point for every good deed or positive gesture. We'll keep score on the whiteboard.

KANUTE. And when Gunner wins, he goes to the Musky Lounge.

BERNICE. And when Clara wins, she goes to Divorce Fantasy Camp.

GUNNER. We'll have an impartial judge. Kanute.

CLARA. No. Bernice.

KANUTE. We'll both be judges.

(KANUTE goes to the whiteboard behind the bar, erases the daily special, and puts GUNNER's and CLARA's names at the top, making it the score board.)

CLARA. You can start by doin' the dishes.

GUNNER. Oh, Clara, isn't there somethin' manly I can do?
I mean, ya got the manly duties that men are better at,
okay, and womanly duties that women are better at.

CLARA. Oh, okay. What can you do better than me?

GUNNER. Fishin' for example.

KANUTE. Clara beat ya in the county fair fishin' contest,
remember?

GUNNER. There will be no more talkin' from you.

CLARA. Gunner, there hasn't been "womanly duties" since
1964. At what point do you get that?

GUNNER. Well, if *you're* doin' the manly duties, then what do
ya need *me* for?

CLARA. *(thinks for a few beats)* Is that a trick question?

KANUTE. You're lobbin' softballs today, Gunner.

GUNNER. I'm just sayin' that *I* wear the pants in the family,
okay?

KANUTE. And Clara controls the zipper.

(AARVID enters. We hear mosquitoes when he opens the door.)

AARVID. Holy, moly, what's the deal with the mosquitoes?

EVERYONE. Hey, Aarvid.

AARVID. Hey, everyone. There she is.

(Arms out, AARVID walks toward BERNICE. BERNICE puts her arms out thinking he's going to hug her, but instead he walks past BERNICE to the karaoke machine.)

(patting the machine)

The LSS-Five sixty-two, featuring the musical stylings of
Sven Yorgensen.

BERNICE & CLARA. *(swooning)* Sven Yorgensen!

GUNNER. Oh, come on!

AARVID. Bringin' more love and romance into your lives thru the magic of karaoke.

GUNNER. Ya can lay off the sales pitch, there, Harold Hill. We already bought the darn thing.

AARVID. Today's your lucky day, Gunner. It's Christmas in Bunyan Bay, cause guess what? I got a free upgrade for the LSS-Five sixty-two. That's right. What is it, you ask?

GUNNER. Don't care.

AARVID. (*Takes out a floppy disk*) "Intuitive *thought* activation." Just *think* of a song and it starts to play, just like magic.

(*goes to the LSS 562 and "inserts" the disk in it*)

CLARA. Well, how in the cheese souffle does it know what you're thinkin'?

AARVID. It reads your email.

CLARA. Oh.

KANUTE. It doesn't know what *I'm* thinkin'.

AARVID. Sure it does. Try it.

KANUTE. Okay.

(KANUTE *puts his index fingers to his temples to think.*
The music plays, "The Stripper.")

It does know what I'm thinkin'.

AARVID. (*to BERNICE*) Hi, honey.

BERNICE. Hi, lambchop.

(*They do a very cheesy Eskimo nose kiss with sound effects, "mew, mew, mew, mew, mew."*)

KANUTE. Oh, crap.

AARVID. I'm makin' progress on the test.

KANUTE. You're gonna fail, cream puff.

AARVID. I don't think so, "Bait Mart."

KANUTE. Good come back. So, ya got enough money to support Bernice?

AARVID. I'm workin' on it.

BERNICE. So, where are ya with everything?

AARVID. Okay,

(takes out a notepad, looks at a list)

I made a birthday cake, even though it's not your birthday, German Chocolate.

BERNICE. My favorite.

AARVID. With your name on it, spelled correctly. And I memorized your entire family tree.

BERNICE. What's the name of my great uncle on my dad's side?

AARVID. Clifford.

BERNICE. He's right. What's next?

AARVID. *(looks at the list)* Let's see... "watch every Julia Roberts movie."

GUNNER. Ohh! How about if he just cuts off his little finger? Be less painful.

(GUNNER goes behind the bar and starts fixing the tap.)

AARVID. Oh, no, I'm happy to jump thru hoops for my little lambchop. And I'm gonna do more. Are ya ready for this? Are ya ready? Are ya ready? Okay, I'm gonna get Bernice on the TV. Oh, yah. Bernice is gonna be a celebrity, a star. I got connections, ya know, thru Sven Yorgensen.

BERNICE & CLARA. *(swooning)* Sven Yorgensen!

GUNNER. *(fixing the tap)* It's like they're in heat.

CLARA. *(to GUNNER)* What are ya doin'?

GUNNER. Bein' a good husband and fixin' the tap.

(to AARVID)

We're testin' each other to see who's the better spouse. If I lose, she gets a divorce.

CLARA. I don't get a divorce. I just go to Divorce Fantasy Camp.

GUNNER. Where she pretends she's divorced.

CLARA. Yah.

AARVID. Sounds like you two need a marriage tune up.

CLARA. More like a complete overhaul.

(She exits to the bathroom.)

AARVID. Ya gotta do somethin' special for your lady, there, Gunner. Somethin' unexpected. Surprise her.

GUNNER. You could surprise me by shuttin' your pie hole.

BERNICE. I think Aarvid has a cute pie hole.

(to KANUTE)

He's talkin' about his mouth, right?

AARVID. You're so sweet. Oh, and one more thing. I have a little surprise.

BERNICE. What is it?!

AARVID. Let's call it a pledge. Are ya ready?

BERNICE. You betcha!

(AARVID looks at the LSS 562, puts his index fingers to his temples, thinking. The music starts.)

Oh, it worked! It worked!

(CLARA pops her head out of the bathroom, wearing rubber gloves and holding a plunger. She watches AARVID sing.)

AARVID. *(sings)*

I WILL TELL YOU HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU,

SHARE MY FEELINGS INSIDE.

FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELT.

JOIN ME ON A LOVE RIDE.

LOVE THIS STRONG JUST CANNOT BE DENIED.

WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS THE LOVE I FEEL FOR YOU,

IF WE EVER MARRY, THIS I'LL DO.

I WILL BUY YOU FLOWERS, HUG YOU EVERY DAY.

TAKE YOU OUT TO DINNER. AND I'LL PAY.

I'LL TAKE YOU TO A DRIVE IN MOVIE,

BUY POPCORN FOR YOU.

I'LL DO THE CHORES IF YOU APPROVE ME.

AND WHEN I'M WRONG I'LL TELL YOU THAT I'M SORRY, TOO.

GUNNER. Oh, you're killin' me.

AARVID.

I WILL BE ROMANTIC,
CAN'T WAIT TO BEGIN.
COMPLIMENT YOU DAILY.
YOU LOOK THIN.

I WILL TAKE YOU DANCIN',
MOVIN' TO THE BEAT.
WHEN THE NIGHT IS OVER I'LL
RUB YOUR FEET.

GUNNER. (*groans*) Ohh. **CLARA.** (*sighs*) Ohh.

AARVID.

I'LL MAKE YOU BREAKFAST IN THE MORNIN',
OMELETTE DU FROMAGE.

BERNICE. (*swooning*) French.

AARVID.

YOU KNOW WITH ME THERE'LL BE NO SCORNIN',
AND WHEN YOUR BACK IS SORE I'LL GIVE YOU A MASSAGE.

GUNNER. (*groans*) Ohh. **CLARA.** (*sighs*) Ohh.

AARVID.

I WILL BE ATTENTIVE, GIVE YOU ALL YA NEED.
I'LL DO MORE THAN GUNNER, GUARANTEED.

I WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY, EVERY SINGLE DAY.
I WILL TREAT YOU TO MY LOVE BUFFET.

TELL ME THAT YOU LOVE ME. WON'T YOU SAY I DO.
GOT TO KNOW RIGHT NOW. SAY "YES, I WILL MARRY YOU!"

(*channeling Elvis*)

Thank you. Thank you very much.

(*on his knee, to BERNICE*)

So, what do ya say?

CLARA. I'll marry ya.

GUNNER. You're already married.

CLARA. Shh. Don't spoil it.

BERNICE. Oh, my gosh! Oh, my gosh! He just proposed!

AARVID. Well?

BERNICE. Ya know, we should perform together, like Sonny and Cher.

KANUTE. Yah, how'd that work out?

AARVID. Ya know, I used to dream about performin', but you're my dream now, lamb chop. So, what do ya say, hon? Will ya marry me?

BERNICE. Do ya have a ring, or...

AARVID. It's on layaway.

KANUTE. Impressive.

BERNICE. Okay, just one more thing before I say, "yes," not including the Julia Roberts movies.

GUNNER. There's always somethin' else.

(CLARA goes back into the bathroom.)

AARVID. *(to BERNICE)* That's okay, cause you are the sunshine of my life. You're like a bridge over troubled water. The first time ever I saw your face, I knew there ain't no mountain high enough.

GUNNER. He's just sayin' song titles.

BERNICE. *(looking at the LSS 562)* Why doesn't it play when ya say the song title?

AARVID. Copyright law.

BERNICE. Oh.

AARVID. So, what else would ya like me to do, lambchop? Anything for you.

(BERNICE hands AARVID a note. He looks at it.)

Oh, crap.

KANUTE. What does it say?

BERNICE. No, ya can't tell anyone.

KANUTE. *(to AARVID)* Why would ya put yourself thru this?

(CLARA comes back out of the bathroom without the gloves or plunger.)

AARVID. Because love is a many splendored thing.

(The Music starts playing Love is a Many Splendored Thing. AARVID looks at the LSS-562, gives it the "cut" sign.)

No!

(The music stops.)

Gunner and Clara know. They've been married for 20 years. Think of all the love that they have for each other-okay, that's a bad example.

GUNNER. There. I fixed the tap. That's one for me.

(KANUTE marks one on the whiteboard for GUNNER.)

CLARA. I just fixed the situation in the bathroom. That's one for me.

(BERNICE marks one on the whiteboard for CLARA.)

KANUTE. After two events, the score is tied one to one.

CLARA. Honey, will you be a good husband and run down to Harold's and get some more pretzels? Oh, and we need napkins and...oh, wait, here's a list.

(She hands him a list.)

GUNNER. Oh, c'mon, Clara, I just fixed the tap, and C.S.I. Duluth is on in 10 minutes.

KANUTE. C'mon, Gunner, it's an easy point. Ya don't want Clara to win, now, do ya?

GUNNER. Fine. I'll go to Harold's.

(to AARVID, re: the list)

This is called a honey-do list. When does it end? When ya die. Yah. You'll find out.

(as he leaves, muttering)

Honey do this, honey do that...

(GUNNER leaves. We hear mosquitoes as he leaves.)

KANUTE. I'll tell ya, Gunner's not gonna lose. I know him. And if he does, there's no way he'll stick around if Clara goes to Divorce Fantasy Camp. Sorry, Clara, ya might wanna throw this one.

CLARA. I think the horse has already left the barn.

KANUTE. Yah, speaking of farm animals, (*to BERNICE*) why Aarvid? Seriously. I mean, he's such a tool.

AARVID. He knows I'm right here, doesn't he?

KANUTE. What about *me*? What about *my* needs?

BERNICE. Kanute, you'll find love when ya least expect it.

KANUTE. When? My biological man-clock is ticking.

(*The music starts. KANUTE looks at the LSS 562.*)

BERNICE. Did he say, "man-clock?"

KANUTE. (*sings*)

WHEN WILL I FIND LOVE?

WILL IT BE TODAY?

WILL MY LOVE COME THRU THAT DOOR,

AND CARRY ME AWAY?

WILL MY WISH COME TRUE?

I DON'T ASK A LOT.

JUST FOR SOMEONE WHO LOVES ME,

WHO'S ALSO SMOKIN' HOT.

I DON'T ASK FOR MUCH IN LIFE

I JUST WANT EVERYTHING.

A WOMAN WHO CAN HUNT AND FISH

AND TREATS ME LIKE I'M HER KING.

SOMEONE WHO CAN CLEAN,

CAN FIELD DRESS A MOOSE.

WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE A BEAUTY QUEEN,

CAN COOK AND SHE'S LOOSE.

I DON'T ASK FOR MUCH.

SOMEONE THIN AND LEAN.

WHO DRESSES FOR ME LIKE A

FRENCH MAID ON HALLOWEEN.

I'M A HUMBLE MAN

WITH HUMBLE WISHES FOR MY LIFE.

TO FIND MYSELF THE PERFECT MATE

TO BE MY NEW STEPFORD WIFE.

WHEN WILL I FIND LOVE?

WILL IT BE TODAY?

WILL MY LOVE COME THRU THAT DOOR,

AND CARRY ME AWAY?

(TRIGGER enters wearing a forest ranger outfit with a hat, patches on her khaki top, and a long skirt. We hear mosquitoes as she enters.)

TRIGGER. I'm baaaaaack!

KANUTE. Oh, no.

EVERYONE. Hey, Trigger, you're back, how's it goin', etc.

TRIGGER. *(sees CLARA)* Oh, hey there, Clara. Come here, you.

(She hugs CLARA lifting her off the ground.)

CLARA. Hey, Trigger. How's my favorite sister-in-law?

TRIGGER. Outstanding!

(She turns and looks at AARVID.)

Oh, look, it's rainin' men.

(sings, dancing seductively)

IT'S RAININ' MEN. HALLELUJAH!

KANUTE. I will never un-see that.

TRIGGER. *(to AARVID)* Hey there, Skipper.

(to KANUTE)

Hey Gilligan. Wanna go on a three hour tour? All aboard! Toot, toot!

KANUTE. We're gonna need a bigger boat.

CLARA. Ya just missed Gunner.

TRIGGER. So, where is old butt face?

BERNICE. He's out runnin' errands so Clara doesn't divorce him.

TRIGGER. Oh, well, he wasn't a very good brother, either.

BERNICE. I thought twins got along.

TRIGGER. He never hugged me. Not even once.

KANUTE. Maybe that's cause he couldn't get his arms around ya.

TRIGGER. (*seductively walks toward KANUTE*) I'm gonna get my arms around you and give ya a big bear hug and then smother ya with sloppy kisses all over your face muscles.

KANUTE. (*leaning back*) Little help.

CLARA. Ya know, you're lookin' more and more like Gunner every year.

TRIGGER. Yah, I don't see it.

KANUTE. Not even close. Trigger's got a heavier beard.

CLARA. So, you and Gunner haven't made up, yet?

TRIGGER. No. He's still mad at me.

BERNICE. Why is he mad at ya? I forget.

TRIGGER. Oh, it was nothin'. I blew up his pontoon boat.

CLARA. That was the last time I saw you and Gunner together.

BERNICE. How did ya blow up his pontoon boat?

TRIGGER. Oh, I put my lit cigar on the gas can. I thought it was an ash tray.

BERNICE. Easy mistake.

CLARA. Well, that's Gunner's problem. Why don't you two just get in the same room and work it out.

TRIGGER. Well, that is not gonna happen.

CLARA. Why not?

TRIGGER. I think you know.

(*The phone rings.*)

CLARA. (*answering*) The Bunyan. Oh, hey Gunner.

TRIGGER. Speak of the devil.

CLARA. No, get the regular pretzels. Oh, hey, there's someone here I want ya to talk to. Here.

(*hands phone to TRIGGER*)

TRIGGER. No, no.

(*takes phone*)

Oh, jeez.

(*into phone*)

Gunner, hi, it's Trigger. Now don't go flyin' off the handle. Listen, it's time we put aside our differences and talk it out in the same room and hug...ya don't?... never?...ever?... never, ever?... How about Tuesday?... Okay, well, same to you, fish face!

(She hangs up. Calmly smiles, like nothing happened.)

Gunner says hello.

CLARA. He'll come around.

TRIGGER. I hope so. Cause we're family. And there's nothin' stronger than family. Except the material they make bowling balls out of.

BERNICE. Amen.

TRIGGER. *(to AARVID)* Hey there, sailor. Buy a girl a drink?

CLARA. Aarvid might be off the market.

TRIGGER. Oh, fudgecakes.

CLARA. Yah, he proposed to Bernice.

TRIGGER. *(to AARVID)* Well, spank my fanny and call me a cab. And to think Aarvid coulda been mine.

AARVID. Yeah, I'm not sure about that.

TRIGGER. Oh, we had a thing once.

AARVID. We did?

TRIGGER. Oh, yah.

(to CLARA)

We made out like they do in France.

AARVID. Yah, I don't remember that.

TRIGGER. You were asleep.

BERNICE. Ewe.

TRIGGER. It was right after the Bunyan Beer Fest. Aarvid had a little too much to drink. Got a little tipsy. I gotta say, Aarvid, you are good kisser. But that's about it.

AARVID. I think I'm gonna be sick.

TRIGGER. Don't worry, Bernice. I won't take your man. I'm really here for someone else.

(moves close to KANUTE)

Hey, there, sweet cheeks. Ya wanna check me for woodticks?

KANUTE. No, thank you.

CLARA. Can I get you a beer?

TRIGGER. Yes!

KANUTE. Yes!

(TRIGGER hurries to the bar. KANUTE stays. CLARA pours a beer for TRIGGER, then stays behind the bar and works on the computer, updating the bookkeeping.)

KANUTE. *(to AARVID)* Her breath is like a weapon of mass destruction.

AARVID. Kanute really missed ya, Trigger.

(AARVID smiles as KANUTE shoots him a look.)

TRIGGER. And I missed you, Kanutey patootie. Come here and kiss me like a monkey eating a grape.

(KANUTE dashes for the door. TRIGGER jumps in front of him.)

What's your hurry, ya big meat wagon. Giddyup.

(She makes a bullwhip sound.)

KANUTE. Ya need more exits in here.

TRIGGER. Unbuckle your seat belt, buster, and lift up your tray table, cause you just arrived at your boarding gate, and I'm wavin' ya in.

(makes flashlight signals like she's waving in an airplane)

KANUTE. That's a big tarmac.

TRIGGER. It's been awhile, but I think you know why I'm back.

KANUTE. Free beer?

TRIGGER. No, silly. To finish what we started. To get married.

KANUTE. Oh, wow, yah, about that –

TRIGGER. Ya know ya did propose to me.

KANUTE. I propose to everyone.

BERNICE. He does.

TRIGGER. And I said "yes." We were gonna get married.

KANUTE. As you may recall, I only proposed to make Bernice jealous so she would dump dork face, here, and come back to me. In fact, it was your idea to do that.

TRIGGER. C'mon, sugar buns, don't question your feelings. Ya know we have somethin'.

KANUTE. Not really.

TRIGGER. Well, then let's get reacquainted. Hi, I'm Trigger. I'm a forest ranger, I like long walks in the woods, Yager shots and men that can fog a mirror.

(She breathes into KANUTE's face, like fogging a mirror.)

KANUTE *gags from her breath.*)

CLARA. You're an actual forest ranger, now?

AARVID. I thought they arrested ya for *impersonating* a forest ranger.

TRIGGER. That was just a misunderstanding.

CLARA. How did ya get out of it?

TRIGGER. I did a lot of work for Charity.

CLARA. Oh, that's nice.

TRIGGER. Charity is the local stripper.

CLARA. Oh.

TRIGGER. She's married to the Police Chief. Yah. She performs on weekends at the Musky Lounge.

CLARA. *(to KANUTE)* Nothin' goes on there, huh?

TRIGGER. *(to KANUTE)* They let me carry a stun gun. Here, I'll show ya.

(She takes out a stun gun.)

Ya just turn it on here, and –

(She stuns herself, convulsing.)

Gak, gak, gak, gak, gak, gak, gak.

(She stops.)

I'm just messin' with ya. A little stun gun humor. I'll tell ya, it's a good way to get men.

(to KANUTE)

Ya wanna little jolt, there? A little pick me up? It's better than Red Bull.

KANUTE. I'm good.

TRIGGER. And I carry a Glock in my bloomers. Seventeen in the clip.

KANUTE. Do people still wear bloomers?

TRIGGER. I do. They're strawberry. Ya wanna bite? A little appe-teaser. They come in three flavors, strawberry, chocolate chip and "hello there."

KANUTE. Ya know, I'm kinda freakin' out right now.

AARVID. Ya know, you two make a great couple, there. Yah, ya do. And I'm gonna let you two love birds get reacquainted there and rekindle the flames of passion, while I do my final test for Bernice. I'll see ya soon, lamb chop. I'm gonna miss ya.

BERNICE. I'll miss you, too, honey bear.

(They do a sappy Eskimo nose kiss, "mew, mew, mew, mew, mew.")

KANUTE. *(as they do the Eskimo kiss)* Would ya stop with the *(mimicking them)* "mew, mew, mew, mew, mew!"

(AARVID leaves. We hear mosquitoes as he leaves.)

TRIGGER. Well, I guess there's only one available man in town, now.

(looks at KANUTE)

Bingo.

KANUTE. There's Mayor Swensen.

CLARA. He's 94 years old. The man is not right in the head.

TRIGGER. Ya know, when there's chemistry like we have goin' on right now, wild horses can't stop it. Can ya feel the wild horses?

KANUTE. Nay.

TRIGGER. I have manly needs. I mean, womanly needs. What I mean is, for a woman I have manly needs. And I need 'em fulfilled.

(The music starts. TRIGGER looks at the LSS 562.)

Oh, that's my cue.

KANUTE. Oh, no.

TRIGGER. *(sings, dancing around KANUTE)*

ALL I EVER WANTED WAS A MAN OF PASSION,
SOMEONE WHO CAN PAY THE RENT.

BERNICE & CLARA. *(singing, echoing TRIGGER)*

PAY THE RENT.

TRIGGER.

SOMEONE WHO'S A FAN OF FOREST RANGER FASHION,
SOMEONE WHO CAN PITCH A TENT.

BERNICE & CLARA.

PITCH A TENT.

TRIGGER.

I THINK I HAVE FOUND THE ONE FOR ME.

BERNICE & CLARA.

ONE FOR ME.

TRIGGER.

YOU'RE MY BREAD OF LIFE, AND GLUTEN FREE.

BERNICE & CLARA.

GLUTEN FREE.

TRIGGER.

WE WILL CAMP TOGETHER, RIDIN' ON MY SKIDOO,
BUILD A FIRE DOWN BELOW.

BERNICE & CLARA.

DOWN BELOW.

TRIGGER.

I CAN DO SOME THINGS THAT OTHER WOMEN CAN'T DO.
I CAN WRITE MY NAME IN SNOW. Dot.

(“Dotting the I”)

(BERNICE and CLARA decide not to join in on this one.)

I CAN GIVE YOU LOVE, THE KIND YOU SEEK.

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