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Flamingo Court

LIFE IN THREE CONDOS

by Luigi Creatore

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



**SAMUEL
FRENCH**

FOUNDED 1830

NEW YORK HOLLYWOOD LONDON TORONTO

SAMUELFRENCH.COM

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NEW WORLD STAGES

340 West 50th Street

Theatre 21
Carolyn Rossi Copeland
present

Jamie Farr Anita Gillette

Flamingo Court

**Life in
Three Condos**

By
Luigi Creatore

with

Lucy Martin Herbert Rubens Joe Vincent

Set Design
**James
Youmans**

Lighting Design
**Herrick
Goldman**

Costume Design
**Carol
Sherry**

Sound Design
**David A.
Arnold**

Press
**Keith Sherman
& Associates**

Casting
Mark Simon

Production Manager
**Aduro
Productions**

Advertising
Eliran Murphy Group

Production Stage Manager
Eileen F. Haggerty

General Management
**CRC Productions/
Robert E. Schneider**

Directed by
Steven Yuhasz

CHARACTERS

ACT I

“ANGELINA”

Apartment 104

ANGELINA. Italian, caring, moved a year ago from Brooklyn.

MARIE. A matchmaker, nosey, abrupt, a trouble maker, says what she thinks. Angelina’s neighbor and best friend.

DOMINIC. Italian. Sensitive, gullible. A man of honor. Romantic.

INTERMISSION

ACT II

“CLARA”

Apartment 204

CLARA. Gentle, firm, opinionated. She has early stage dementia.

ARTHUR. Her husband. To the point, strong direction, knows what he wants.

ACT III

“HARRY”

Apartment 304

HARRY ROSOFF. Celebrating his eighty-ninth birthday. Determined, feisty, crusty character.

MARK SEAGAL. A hearing-aid salesman. Polite, honest, intelligent.

CHARITY PIPICK. Harry’s daughter. Pushy, overbearing, controlling.

WALTER PIPICK. Charity’s husband. A lawyer. Spineless, completely dominated by his wife.

CHI CHI. A hooker.

NOTE ON CASTING: Characters ages range from 60s to 89. 5 to 10 Actors may be used (depends on whether you want to double or triple roles or not)

SETTING

The time is the present; all of the action of the plays takes place in a three-story apartment complex in South Florida. Not a retirement village, but many retirees live there.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Flamingo Court was the name given to these three one act plays as a way to tie them together and clarify that all of these characters were residence of the same senior condo complex. We felt that by doing this the audience would be able to connect each of the stories of the plays, yet the plays would stand on their own. This “Life In Three Condos” is mostly the funny side of their lives, but also a moment to reflect as life changes. Each of these plays are to be approached in their style: “Angelina” is a sitcom, “Clara” is a realistic vignette and “Harry” is sketch comedy. Keep the moments and acting in each of these real, honest; the comedy will come from that.

The technical requirements can be as simple or sophisticated as your budget allows. The set was designed as the script requires; each play take place in a separate apartment. This allowed us to keep the same overall design and change the furniture and set dressing in between each of the acts to give a different feel. It also allowed for relatively fast changes between to the plays that were placed back to back.

Approaching the lighting differently in each of the acts helped in achieving a feeling of the varied environments of the occupants. Angelina’s furniture was new, the room was bright with all of the action taking place during the day. For Clara and Arthur most everything in the condo was removed and it was very sparse, the action took place late in the afternoon during a thunder storm adding to the dim lighting and pulling the lighting to the center of the stage to focus on them. Arthur’s apartment was a bachelor pad...he was 89; he had lived alone for many years. Piles of magazines, newspapers, sink full of dishes, golf clubs, fishing gear and trophies were dressed around the set.

Casting will also impact your set and costume designs, which depend on the number of actors that you cast in the show. There are ten different characters in the three plays, but the show can be done, as was done Off Broadway, with five actors. You can use between five and ten actors. With five actors we had the challenge of quick set and costume changes; this will affect your running crew size. In casting if you use five actors, two of those actors have to change from Clara and Arthur to whatever character you assign them in “Harry.” Also, to note there are no specific actor tracks, so depending on your casting choices, role assignments are based on your talent.

From the moment I approached “Clara” conceptually I wanted to create a family photo album, a side show, projections of the memories of the lives of these two people. By doing this before the lights came up on them dancing for the last time, before the dialogue started, the audience had a sense or a connection with these two people as someone they could relate to or knew.

For the set change from “Clara” to “Harry” we needed time to cover for the set change. We had created for the original production “The Flamingo Court Flapper” which was a series of bulletin board announcements. The “Flapper” was also projected with instrumental music underscoring, and moved it at the top of the set change. The one last thing we did was to use the song “Old Is In,” written by our playwright, Luigi Creatore, as the Flamingo Court theme song; you will find this at the end of the script. This was recorded with all the cast members and used as a prerecorded voice over. This plays following the “Flapper” and was done as an audience sing along with them following the bouncing flamingo as the words flashed on the screen. In addition, since we had a screen that we flew in and out, we used it as a show emblem at the top of the show and intermission with “Flamingo Court” on it, then at the top of each of the sections we projected “Angelina,” “Clara” and the “Harry” to further clarify to the audience that these were separate plays and not just a new scene. This all worked very effectively.

In addition, music played for transitions was a big part in the overall tone of the show; we selected classic vocalist recordings of the era of the lives of these people, from the 40’s to the present. The music was all very upbeat and had lush orchestrations which provided a nostalgic familiarity for the audience, but also songs were picked for their lyric content and themes that introduced or tied up scenes or the acts and characters.

Have fun...laugh. It’s good for you!

Steven Yuhasz
Off Broadway Director

ACT I

“Angelina”

Scene One

(Apartment 104. Angelina's one-bedroom apartment. The front door is stage right. Downstage right, there is a dining table and chairs and behind that a counter which separates the open kitchen from the dining area. Upstage center, there is a sofa facing upstage and two small chairs facing the sofa to create a seating area. Stage Left, the living room area is furnished with two comfortable chairs facing down stage. Two other doors are on the Stage Left wall. The Upstage door leads to the bedroom. The Downstage door leads to a closet. As the lights come up, ANGELINA is in the kitchen watching a counter top TV while stirring a pot of soup on the stove. The “Soap” dialogue in a VOICE OVER is heard by the audience and is as follows:)

PHILLIP. Don't stop me now, Marian. I've tried to tell you before...and now I've found the courage... you must let me go.

MARIAN. No, no, Phillip. It mustn't end like this.

PHILLIP. Listen to me, Marian...We both knew it had to end.

ANGELINA. *(not buying it)* Sure, now you say that...after you got what you wanted.

MARIAN. If Edna won't give you the divorce, then we'll find another way...

PHILLIP. That doesn't sound like you.

ANGELINA. *(to TV)* You stink!

MARIAN. I don't care. I don't care anymore.

ANGELINA. See what you are doing to her?

PHILLIP. I'm sorry, Marian, I'm sorry.

MARIAN. No, no!

PHILLIP. I must leave you.

(MUSIC comes up.)

ANGELINA. Don't you worry, sweetheart. He's not leaving.

(As the episode ends, ANGELINA turns off the TV and crosses to the table with placemats. MARIE enters without knocking and crosses to the counter.)

MARIE. Do you think Phillip is going to leave Marian?

ANGELINA. No.

MARIE. But he just said so. Weren't you watching?

ANGELINA. Of course I was watching. Would you put the dishes on the table, please?

(MARIE takes dishes and silver from the counter and sets the table with three places.)

ANGELINA. Phillip has said this before. It has been my experience that if a person keeps saying the same thing, they never do it. *(handing MARIE a platter)* Here's the bread. It's already sliced.

(DOMINIC enters without knocking.)

DOMINIC. Do you think Phillip is going to leave Marian?

ANGELINA. No.

MARIE. Tell him why.

ANGELINA. Well, my experience has been that if a person keeps saying he's going to do something, he never does it.

DOMINIC. Ah, you are so right, Angelina. I can see it now. He is absolutely not going to leave because he says he is. That is clear. *(beat)* On the other hand, if he keeps saying it, one day we may find out he really means it. I brought plum jam for the bread.

ANGELINA. That's very nice of you Dominic. It's my favorite. But you really shouldn't. You do too much. Yesterday it was chocolates, the day before it was bonbons.

(DOMINIC takes a seat at the table.)

MARIE. I didn't get any bonbons.

ANGELINA. We don't need all that, do we Marie?

(ANGELINA sets a bowl of soup on a tray and carries it to the table.)

MARIE. Why ask me? He brings all that stuff for you.

ANGELINA. Don't be silly, it's for all of us.

(ANGELINA crosses to the counter and picks up an ornate peppermill.)

DOMINIC. (tastes the soup) Needs salt. (adds a bit of salt)

MARIE. Maybe he can't have salt. Angie, can Frank have salt?

(ANGELINA crosses to table and grinds a bit of pepper into the soup.)

ANGELINA. I don't think it would hurt him. I do know he likes a bit of pepper.

DOMINIC. How is poor Frank today?

MARIE. Yes, how is your husband today?

ANGELINA. Well, he had a quiet night. That's about as much as I can say. (She picks up tray with soup and crosses to bedroom door.) I'd better bring him his soup before he gets restless. Later I'll make him a little pastina. Something he can digest easily.

(She exits into the bedroom with the soup.)

DOMINIC. Isn't she wonderful? So caring....you might say noble.

MARIE. And beautiful.

DOMINIC. Ahhh, beautiful! Yes, beautiful, beautiful!

MARIE. I don't think she's that beautiful.

DOMINIC. That's because you don't see her as a man does. When she walks across the room, standing proud and lovely, swaying just a bit...did I say swaying?...undulating! I tell you she can set a man on fire.

MARIE. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. I see you making goo-goo eyes at her, and bringing little presents, and running errands for her. The whole building's been talking about it.

DOMINIC. They're just gossips.

MARIE. Sure, and with you running after a woman whose husband has been sick in bed since the day she moved in, you've handed them a real spicy meatball to chew on.

DOMINIC. I can't help it, Marie. I've tried to suppress my feelings for this...for this angel, but I can't. After my wife died I thought I'd never feel this way about another woman. I don't know what to do.

MARIE. (*pouring coffee for both*) Have some coffee.

DOMINIC. Advise me, Marie.

MARIE. Have some bread and forget about it. That's my advice.

(**DOMINIC** *picks up a slice of bread and smells it.*)

DOMINIC. Ah, it's wonderful. And light. And beautiful, just the way she is. You know Angelina makes the bread with her own hands?

MARIE. Because she wants her husband, Frank, to have fresh bread.

DOMINIC. Don't torture me like this.

MARIE. Oh my, you are in bad shape.

DOMINIC. You don't know the half of it. The other night I dreamt I killed him.

MARIE. Killed who?

DOMINIC. (*pointing to bedroom*) Him. Him, in there. Frank. I dreamt I killed him. I woke up in a sweat...my whole body trembling. I didn't know this head could have such thoughts.

MARIE. Be careful, those are the kind of thoughts God punishes.

DOMINIC. I know...and I want to fall on my knees and beg God forgiveness for these terrible ideas that come into

my mind. On the other hand...God gave me my mind, it is He who makes it function. So He must bear some of the responsibility for my thoughts.

MARIE. I've never heard such a crock.

DOMINIC. A crock? Then you're saying that you don't believe me? I'm a liar? You're calling me, Dominic Sevanti, a liar?

(ANGELINA enters with the tray and soup bowl, now empty, and places it on the kitchen counter.)

DOMINIC. I would like to announce here and now, that I am not a liar, I don't respect liars, I don't and would not associate with anyone who is a liar and that's for now and always!

ANGELINA. You mustn't get so excited, Dominic. It's bad for your health. Now...I want you to calm down, take a deep breath,...and think pleasant thoughts.

(DOMINIC takes a deep breath and exhales, making a lover's sigh)

DOMINIC. Ahhhhh, Angelina, you know exactly how to calm me down.

MARIE. That's not the way I heard it.

ANGELINA. *(to DOMINIC)* May I pour you some more coffee?

DOMINIC. No thank you. But allow me to pour for you. *(He does so.)*

MARIE. *(looking around)* Did you get the paper today, Angie?

DOMINIC. Please don't call her Angie. Her name is Angelina. It means little angel. Angie sounds like a heart condition.

MARIE. Did you get the paper?

ANGELINA. No. And today's the second day they didn't deliver. I don't know what's the matter with them. I'm lost without my paper.

DOMINIC. Why didn't you say something? *(rising)* I'll go out immediately and get you your newspaper.

ANGELINA. You don't have to bother. Besides, the nearest place is all the way to Military.

DOMINIC. It's not that far. I'll walk. It does me good to walk. Keeps the old body trim.

ANGELINA. Well, thank you Dominic. You're very kind.

DOMINIC. Ta, ta.

ANGELINA. Ta, ta.

(DOMINIC *exits.*)

MARIE. (*after DOMINIC is gone*) Ta, ta. Ta, ta. What kind of way is that for grown people to talk? What's going on here?

ANGELINA. There's nothing "going on."

MARIE. (*mocking again*) Ta ta, ta ta?

ANGELINA. Well...there may be an attraction...of sorts. But, under the circumstances....

MARIE. Reminds me of a rooster pecking around a nice juicy hen.

ANGELINA. What do you know about roosters and hens?

MARIE. I spent one summer on a farm when I was little. I remember watching this rooster circling and pecking around this hen. Now the hen makes out like she doesn't know he's there. Only...once in a while she gives him a look...And all of a sudden this big rooster pounces, and bang! – they're making eggs.

ANGELINA. Marie, I have to talk to you...

MARIE. Uh huh.

ANGELINA. There's something I have to tell you...

MARIE. Uh huh.

ANGELINA. But first I have to swear you to secrecy.

MARIE. I swear.

ANGELINA. Too easy. I want you to mean it.

MARIE. I mean it.

ANGELINA. Raise your right hand.

(MARIE *raises hand.*)

I swear I will never reveal –

MARIE. I swear I will never reveal –

ANGELINA....what my dear friend, Angelina, is about to tell me.

MARIE....what my dear friend Angie – Angelina is about to tell me.

ANGELINA. Let me see your left hand.

(MARIE brings it up to eye level.)

Your fingers are crossed.

MARIE. That's just in case of an emergency. I swear to you I won't tell. (*holding up both hands*) Look, both hands.

ANGELINA. All right, I'm going to trust you. But...this is very difficult for me –

MARIE. (*guesses*) You did it! You did it already! And, behind my back!

ANGELINA. What are you talking about? Did what?

MARIE. (*tapping the first finger of each hand together*) You and the rooster...you know.

ANGELINA. No, I *don't* know. You're talking nonsense.

MARIE. Oh, am I? You said yourself you were attracted to him.

ANGELINA. Well, I am. But that's not what I want to talk to you about. I want to talk to you about...about Frank.

MARIE. Your husband?

ANGELINA. My husband, Frank. Yes. Marie, I don't know any other way to say this but to...to just say it...

MARIE. Well, go ahead already, I can't stand it.

ANGELINA. Frank is dead.

MARIE. Frank is dead. Frank is dead. When did this happen?

ANGELINA. Two years ago.

MARIE. Two years. You mean before you moved here?

ANGELINA. Oh yes. Well before I moved here.

MARIE. Well, who's in the bedroom?

ANGELINA. There's nobody in the bedroom.

MARIE. Nobody?

ANGELINA. Nobody.

(MARIE exits into bedroom and re-appears almost immediately.)

MARIE. There's nobody in the bedroom! Would you tell me – what the hell's going on here?

ANGELINA. That's what I'm trying to do. Sit down, Marie.

(MARIE sits as ANGELINA paces and tells the story.)

ANGELINA. Frank died two years ago in Brooklyn. I went through a funeral you wouldn't believe. Relatives came from all over. Friends stayed with me, held my hand, fed me...they couldn't do enough for me. The minute the funeral was over so was all the attention and the promises.

MARIE. I know. I've been through it.

ANGELINA. And there I was all alone in this big house – we never had children, you know. I was getting to know the meaning of lonely. That's when I sold the house and moved down here.

MARIE. To get a new start.

ANGELINA. Yes. To make new friends and get a new start.

MARIE. (indicating the bedroom) So how did this happen?

ANGELINA. It was my first day in Florida. I hadn't even unpacked...and I went down to the pool for my first swim. Well, I met Mrs. Rittman – you know her –

MARIE. Yeah, big mouth Rittman.

ANGELINA. So she's sitting there *with* her husband – since Frank died it seems everyone has a husband but me – and she says, "Welcome to Paradise," and I say, "Thank you," and then she says, "Are you alone?" And, I don't know why, but I said, "No, I'm with my husband." And she says, "Oh, is he going to join us for a swim?" And I said, "No, he's sick. He's in bed." It was a stupid thing to say, but I said it. And before I knew it, Rittman was telling everyone about the "new couple" in 104.

MARIE. Some buildings have little newspapers they put out. We've got big mouth Rittman.

ANGELINA. Then the word got out that Frank was terminally ill and I was being brave.

MARIE. I remember that.

ANGELINA. Yes, that's when you came around – God bless you – and offered your help. I knew you'd be my friend.

MARIE. Some friend. I helped you baby-sit an empty room.
(*suddenly remembering*) The soup!

ANGELINA. What about the soup?

MARIE. What do you do with it?

ANGELINA. Throw it in the toilet.

MARIE. And you put a pinch of pepper in it every day?

ANGELINA. Yes, I thought it was a nice touch.

MARIE. There's a lot I don't know about you.

ANGELINA. Then one day you brought Dominic to share our coffee.

MARIE. Oh my God, Dominic!

ANGELINA. What about Dominic?

MARIE. Wait till he finds out!

ANGELINA. Dominic is not going to find out, because I'm not going to tell him. And you are sworn to secrecy.

MARIE. Ayi, I knew I shouldn't have put up both hands.

ANGELINA. Besides, Dominic would not take this very well.
He is a man of honor. He hates liars. Give me advice.

MARIE. All right. My advice is...let's tell him!

ANGELINA. I say no.

MARIE. I can't wait to see his face. I say tell him.

ANGELINA. I say no.

MARIE. I say yes.

ANGELINA. You swore – with both hands.

(*DOMINIC enters with newspaper*)

DOMINIC. There you are Angelina. Now you won't be lost.
So...what are we talking about?

MARIE & ANGELINA. (*exchange a look*) Nothing.

(*BLACKOUT*)

Scene Two

(The next day. The television is on, volume is turned up.)

PHILLIP. I don't know how you can be so good to me.
I must have done something wonderful in
another life to deserve someone like you.

ANGELINA. Here we go again!

MARIAN. Phillip, when two people love each other the
way we do, there is nothing...no force on earth
that can keep us apart.

ANGELINA. But you can't trust him. I told you that.

PHILLIP. And to think I lied to you. The one thing I
can't forgive myself is for having lied to you.

ANGELINA. Give me a break!

MARIAN. Well, if *you* can't forgive yourself, I can.

PHILLIP. You are wonderful, my darling, but, my chil-
dren are the innocent victims of all this. It's the
children I have to think about.

ANGELINA. Why didn't you think about that before you
unzipped your pants, big shot!

(Music up and out as ANGELINA turns the TV off.

MARIE enters without knocking.)

MARIE. That Marian is going to be the death of me. Why
should she take Phillip back after the way he acted?

ANGELINA. I told you he wouldn't leave. And she's taking
him back, the way I see it, because she's in an impos-
sible situation. I knew this would happen.

MARIE. Speaking of people who paint themselves into cor-
ners – what's *your* next move.

ANGELINA. I don't know. I've been thinking – but I just
don't know. I seem to have the answers to the Soap all
right. But when it comes to my own life...

MARIE. Listen, Angie, why don't you tell Dominic the truth?

ANGELINA. I can't do that.

MARIE. Yes you can.

ANGELINA. No I can't. Did you tell him? Did you say something to him?

MARIE. Hey, I'm sworn! I can't do a thing. But I think you should tell him. And you know what? I'll bet he would understand.

ANGELINA. You think so?

MARIE. Sure I think so.

(DOMINIC enters without knocking.)

DOMINIC. Can you imagine Marian taking Phillip back like that?

MARIE. Angelina said she would.

DOMINIC. *(to ANGELINA)* How would you figure that? Phillip lied to her. How could she ever trust him again?

ANGELINA. He had to...to tell her a few falsehoods. But I don't think he lied that much...

DOMINIC. Ah, my dear Angelina, how could you know about such things? You are so pure and honest...not a deceitful thought would enter your mind. That's why I...I respect you so much. But that Phillip...I tell you he is a liar. And I...*hate*...liars.

ANGELINA. Yes. Well...thank goodness it's only a television story, eh? Now sit down and have some coffee.

(DOMINIC and MARIE sit at the table as ANGELINA pours coffee.)

DOMINIC. I didn't bring anything today. I'm sorry.

ANGELINA. Don't be silly. I told you, you do too much for me...us. I have some of the plum jam from yesterday, if you'd like.

MARIE. How about some of those chocolates Dom brought the day before.

ANGELINA. I don't think there are any more.

MARIE. But we must have left half the box.

ANGELINA. Frank ate them.

(ANGELINA crosses to get the pepper mill and soup tray. DOMINIC puts dash of salt in the soup as she puts pepper in the soup.)

MARIE. How did Frank like them?

ANGELINA. He liked them just fine. Let me just bring him his soup so he doesn't get nervous.

(She exits into the bedroom with the soup.)

DOMINIC. God bless that Frank. He's got a good appetite. You know, I love that man in there. I never met him, and yet I love him. You know why? Because she loves him. That's why I love him. On the other hand, I hate him! He stands between me and my Angelina. He causes me sleepless nights – and pain...oh the pain. And then, I want to kill him – actually kill him...put poison in his soup. Is that terrible of me, Marie?

(Long pause as MARIE stares into space.)

Marie?

MARIE. I'm thinking, I'm thinking.

DOMINIC. What is there to think about – I'm a terrible person.

MARIE. Don't be so hard on yourself – nobody's perfect.

DOMINIC. Perhaps you're right. We all have our flaws, our little peccadillos. That is, with the exception of Angelina.

MARIE. Not so fast, Dominic.

DOMINIC. What do you mean?

MARIE. I mean, nobody's perfect. And that includes your precious Angelina.

DOMINIC. You're just jealous of her. You can't point out one imperfection, one flaw in that good lady's character.

MARIE. Oh, no?

DOMINIC. No.

MARIE. Well, what if I were to tell you that Frank – that Frank didn't eat the chocolates. Angelina did.

DOMINIC. So what if she shared a few chocolates with Frank?

MARIE. And what about the cannoli? She knew they were my favorite. And she says Frank ate them.

DOMINIC. I don't understand.

MARIE. He didn't eat them. She ate them.

DOMINIC. What are you talking about?

MARIE. I'm not at liberty to say.

DOMINIC. This is nonsense.

MARIE. It's not nonsense.

DOMINIC. It's nonsense and it's ridiculous.

(ANGELINA enters and crosses to place tray with empty soup bowl on kitchen counter, then sits at table.)

ANGELINA. What's ridiculous?

DOMINIC. We were talking about the Soap. You know it gets more ridiculous every day. I don't know why we watch it.

ANGELINA. I suppose it fills an hour of our lives – and gives us something to talk about.

DOMINIC. I can think of other things to talk about.

MARIE. Let's talk about Frank.

ANGELINA. I'd rather not.

MARIE. Why not?

ANGELINA. This is the only time I have to relax – when I sit down with my friends and have a cup of coffee and I really don't want to talk about – the sickness.

DOMINIC. *(to MARIE)* She's right. Now, may we respect the lady's wishes?

MARIE. You respect her wishes, I have to go. *(She crosses to front door.)*

ANGELINA. Oh? Where are you going?

MARIE. I'm meeting the girls and we're going Mall hopping and shopping. Ta, ta!

(MARIE exits.)

DOMINIC. She's some gem, that one.

ANGELINA. Oh, but she's a good soul.

DOMINIC. Sometimes she carries on like she's demented. She doesn't make any sense.

ANGELINA. But with it all, she's a good soul.

DOMINIC. You know what she told me? She told me you don't give Frank any chocolates or pastry. She says you eat them all yourself.

ANGELINA. She said that?

DOMINIC. And when I asked her why she would think such a thing, she says, "I'm not a liberty to say."

Oh, and I didn't tell you – the other day I passed her apartment and her door was open and she was sitting there actually talking to the television.

ANGELINA. No!

DOMINIC. Yes. Sometimes I think she's going crazy. And you sit – so generous, so kind – calling her a good soul.

ANGELINA. Well, maybe we're both right – she's a good soul who is going crazy. And under those circumstances, you can't believe anything she says.

DOMINIC. Exactly. And then, there's this obsession she's developing to continually talk about Frank. I know – everybody knows – how devoted you are to Frank. But even an angel of mercy has a right to relax.

(DOMINIC rises and crosses behind ANGELINA's chair placing his hands on her shoulders and massages her.)

DOMINIC. How's that?

ANGELINA. Oh, that's nice. Very nice.

DOMINIC. First your body relaxes, then your mind relaxes. Someday, my dear Angelina, these troubles will be over, and I'm going to take you with me.

ANGELINA. Oh? And where are you going to take me?

DOMINIC. To Italy. To Roma. Did I tell you I was born in Rome? Of course, we came to America when I was only a child. Still, I feel I'm a Roman.

ANGELINA. I was born here. But my parents came from Naples.

DOMINIC. Ah, you can see it. The warmth...the heart...the devotion to family – that's Neapolitan. And I'm going to take you to Naples too. But first, we go to my Roma.

(DOMINIC extends his hand. ANGELINA takes it, and they walk downstage.)

DOMINIC. Come, come. Here we are strolling down the Via Veneto. There are people from all over the world strolling ahead of us – behind us. The sidewalk tables are full of couples...most of them people-watching. See, they are watching us just as we are watching them. It's a favorite Roman pastime. That couple over there – they have eyes only for each other.

ANGELINA. They're young and they're in love.

DOMINIC. Ah, you can see that. And look – over there – isn't that the Italian movie star...a...what's-his-name?

ANGELINA. Mastroiani.

DOMINIC. That's him.

ANGELINA. I thought he died.

DOMINIC. In Italy, old actors never die – they just hang around the Via Veneto sipping coffee. *(waves)* Hey, Marcello!

ANGELINA. He's waving back at you.

DOMINIC. That's because he sees you. He still has an eye for a pretty lady.

ANGELINA. What an eye – he's looking at an old lady...

DOMINIC. No, no, no. He sees you as I do. You're a pretty lady. Here, you with the flowers – a rose for La Signora.

(DOMINIC mimes buying a flower from a vendor and presents it to ANGELINA.)

DOMINIC. For you – and the rose blushes with shame to be in your presence.

ANGELINA. Oh my, are you always so romantic?

DOMINIC. When I'm in Rome – well, I can't help myself. Ah, here we are at Doney's Café. To my mind, the best on the Veneto. Wait till you taste their coffee laced with Belgian chocolate. Waiter – a table for two please. No, not out here with the tourists....we'll have a settee in one of the private booths. Away from the noise, if you don't mind. Ah, this is perfect.

(DOMINIC leads ANGELINA to the couch.)

DOMINIC. This is what I want for you. I want – someday – to take you away from all your cares. Tell me there is hope – tell me.

ANGELINA. Hush. We can't talk like this. What would you think of me if I did answer you?

DOMINIC. What do you mean, my sweet?

ANGELINA. I mean you wouldn't think very much of me if I engaged in this conversation with you with Frank in the next –

DOMINIC. No, no, no. We are in Rome. There is no Frank.

ANGELINA. But we are not in Rome.

DOMINIC. Angelina, please hold still one little minute.

(He puts his hands on her cheek, draws closer to her.)

With your permission. (He kisses her.)

ANGELINA. That was not with my permission. I want you to understand that.

DOMINIC. Yes, I understand. No permission. (He kisses her again.)

ANGELINA. That's enough now. I said enough! Stop with the hands.

DOMINIC. No...no. Nothing is enough! It's impossible to get enough of you.

(He presses towards her.)

ANGELINA. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. With my husband lying in the next room.

DOMINIC. I know, I know.

ANGELINA. Maybe on his death bed.

DOMINIC. You're right. I am ashamed. So ashamed...On the other hand, I can't help myself.

(DOMINIC and ANGELINA sink down on the couch.)

I tell you Angelina, I haven't felt this way in years...and years...and years...

(MARIE enters hurriedly from the front door, getting a full view of the couple on the couch.)

MARIE. Oh I forgot that –

DOMINIC. (*overlapping*) Oh Angelina!

ANGELINA. Oh Dominic!

MARIE. Oh my God – they're making eggs!

(MARIE exits, slamming door. ANGELINA and DOMINIC re-appear by sitting up on sofa, then cross downstage.)

ANGELINA. Marie! What do we do now?

DOMINIC. Angelina.

ANGELINA. She saw us!

DOMINIC. We have to talk.

ANGELINA. I can't talk now. I know what I have to do. (*crosses toward kitchen*) I have to put the bread in the oven.

DOMINIC. (*following her*) Let me help you.

ANGELINA. I don't need your help. You'll only get in my way. I still have to take care of this house. I still have to take care of my husband.

DOMINIC. And I want to take care of you. Listen to me, Angelina. I love you.

(*They stop and stare at each other for a beat.*)

Yes I do. And I can change your life and mine –

ANGELINA. But how? What –

DOMINIC. Shh...I *will* change your life and mine, if you say the word. You must tell me if there is hope – hope, you understand – that you may love me too.

ANGELINA. There is...more than hope.

DOMINIC. Oh, you make me happy. Happy, happy, happy.

ANGELINA. (*picking up pan with dough*) Let's not talk about it anymore. I need time to think. Right now I have to put the bread in to bake.

DOMINIC. (*taking the pan*) Here, I said I'd help.

ANGELINA. All right, but don't burn yourself. I'll hold the oven door open and you put the pan on the middle shelf. Do it right away, I don't want to lose the heat.

(ANGELINA bends over and opens the oven door as the front door opens and MARIE enters. MARIE cannot see ANGELINA and DOMINIC.)

MARIE. Is it safe to come in?

ANGELINA. Hurry up, Dominic. Stick it in.

(MARIE exits, slamming door, as ANGELINA and DOMINIC reappear, looking toward door.)

(BLACKOUT)

Scene 3

(It is the next afternoon. ANGELINA is at kitchen counter. There is a knock on the door.)

ANGELINA. Come in.

(MARIE enters, looking around.)

ANGELINA. Since when do you knock?

MARIE. Since yesterday at three thirty-six P.M.

ANGELINA. You noticed the exact time?

MARIE. I didn't have anything else to do.

ANGELINA. How was the Mall hopping and shopping?

MARIE. I didn't go. There was a hellava lot more action right here. Is there anything you want to tell me?

ANGELINA. There is nothing to tell. I really don't want to talk about this.

MARIE. Alright, we won't talk about this. Let's talk about the soap. Do you think Marian's pregnant?

ANGELINA. I don't know –

(DOMINIC enters. DOMINIC and ANGELINA have eye contact for a beat, then break.)

ANGELINA. ...ask Dominic what he thinks...I have to go give Frank his pill.

(She exits into the bedroom.)

DOMINIC. Ask Dominic what?

MARIE. About the Soap.

DOMINIC. I didn't watch today. I didn't sleep a moment last night. And then this morning I was busy making certain purchases. This isn't easy, but it must be done. I don't care what price I may have to pay – *(looking up)* later.

MARIE. What are you talking about?

DOMINIC. Better you don't know. I can only say this – There is a tide in the affairs of men which, when taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

MARIE. What the hell is that?

(ANGELINA enters, crosses to kitchen, brings tray with soup to table and crosses to get pepper mill.)

ANGELINA. That's Shakespeare. I didn't know you were a student of Shakespeare, Dominic.

DOMINIC. One of my many hidden qualities.

DOMINIC. *(to MARIE)* Would you get the bread please?

(As MARIE crosses to counter, DOMINIC takes a small bottle out of his pocket and pours a dark liquid into the soup. ANGELINA does not see this. MARIE turns in time to see the action. Reacts by looking towards the bedroom turning to say something to ANGELINA but stopping herself - finally sitting at table.)

ANGELINA. *(putting pepper into soup)* One, two, three. Mustn't put too much in.

MARIE. We wouldn't want to upset Frank's stomach, would we?

ANGELINA. No we wouldn't.

(ANGELINA picks up tray and exits into bedroom.)

MARIE. *(pouring coffee)* So what did you put in Frank's soup today – Soy Sauce?

DOMINIC. *(very nervous)* I don't know what you are talking about.

MARIE. I saw you.

DOMINIC. Ah, the Soy Sauce. Yes, I thought a dash of Soy Sauce...instead of salt you know. Too much salt is bad for the liver.

MARIE. I know what you did.

DOMINIC. You do?

MARIE. You put poison in the soup.

DOMINIC. Don't say that.

MARIE. What did you use?

DOMINIC. Rat and weed killer. Are you going to turn me in?

MARIE. No. Strange as it may seem, Dominic – I'm on your side.

DOMINIC. You are? Then help me get through this. I think I'm going to explode right here.

MARIE. Drink some coffee.

DOMINIC. You're such a friend, Marie. Such a friend. I'll never say another word against you as long as I live. How long do you think it'll take Frank to finish his soup?

(DOMINIC picks up his cup, rattling it, then sipping.)

MARIE. About as long as it takes you to finish your coffee.

DOMINIC. *(noisily putting the cup down)* I don't think I can stay.

MARIE. You'll stay. I'm not going to go through this alone.

DOMINIC. But *you* didn't do anything.

MARIE. Are you kidding? I'm the accomplice.

DOMINIC. Ah yes, and a wonderful accomplice. I'm surrounded by wonderful people...you, Angelina –

MARIE. Frank.

DOMINIC. Yes, Frank. He is wonderful. I've said that myself. What was I thinking of? We can't do this, Marie.

MARIE. We already did it, Dominic.

DOMINIC. *(rising and crossing toward bedroom door)* Maybe it's not too late. I've got to stop it.

MARIE. I wouldn't do that if I were you.

DOMINIC. I've got to try.

(ANGELINA enters from bedroom carrying tray with empty bowl, collides with DOMINIC and drops tray.)

DOMINIC. Oh, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Let me –

ANGELINA. *(picking up bowl and tray)* That's alright. I've got it.

DOMINIC. Did I get any on you?

ANGELINA. No, the bowl is empty. See?

DOMINIC. Then he finished it all?

ANGELINA. Yes, of course.

MARIE. How did he like it?

ANGELINA. He liked it fine. What's all this interest in Frank's soup?

MARIE. Dominic added a dash of Soy Sauce to it – instead of salt he says.

ANGELINA. Well, thank you Dominic. That's very sweet of you. Yes, Frank seemed to like it particularly well today.

DOMINIC. I have to go. *(to MARIE)* Is it alright if I go now?

ANGELINA. What are you asking her for?

DOMINIC. I don't know.

ANGELINA. But we haven't had our visit yet. Have you had your coffee?

DOMINIC. Have to go. Sick. That's it, I'm sick.

(DOMINIC exits quickly.)

ANGELINA. What's the matter with him?

MARIE. I didn't notice anything.

ANGELINA. Do you suppose he's nervous about – about yesterday?

MARIE. I think he's nervous about today.

ANGELINA. Marie, you're my best friend. You know everything about me. You're the only one I can turn to. I don't know what to do. I don't know what's going to happen next.

MARIE. I'll tell you what's going to happen next. Tonight, Frank is going to die.

(BLACKOUT)

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