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The Lone Star Love Potion

An American Farce

by Michael Parker

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



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THE LONE STAR LOVE POTION was first produced at the Delray Beach Playhouse, Delray Beach, Florida, on July 17, 1996, with the following cast

MELODY	Diane DuMar-Nelson
JARVIS	Michael Parker
PATRICE LEADLEY	Charlotte Sherman
MICHAEL LEADLY	Marc Streeter
MR OAKFIELD	Charles Newman
TAMMY-JO HARPER	Marjorie Hines-Gagnon
MARY-LOU WINSTON	Carolyn Gordon

Directed by Randolph DelLago
Designed by Ann Cadaret

The action of the play takes place in the main house of the L P Circle Ranch in Texas, owned by the late Mr Edward Stancliffe

Time The Present
ACT I A late afternoon in spring
ACT II Later the same evening

CHARACTERS

MELODY (age 20-30) The late Mr Stanchiffe's maid is, in fact, in the one profession she should not have chosen. She drops things, she breaks things. If there's a wrong way to do something, she'll find it! Pursued throughout the play by Michael, she resists his advances in a variety of ingenious and hilarious ways. She is an endearing character loved by audiences.

A natural comedienne, young, perky, sexy

JARVIS (age 50+) The late Mr Stanchiffe's butler. He can be English or American, but should not be Texan. A pivotal character who is deeply involved in the mystery of the love potion and around whom most of the circumstantial humor seems to evolve. He remains throughout the quintessential butler, always calm, always in control.

Suave and serious, but with a sparkling dry wit.

PATRICE (age 30-50) The late Mr Stanchiffe's niece and heiress to his estate. She has suffered through her husband Michael's infidelities for many years. In a surprising turn of events, she too becomes involved in the "affair" of the love potion and reveals a romantic and passionate side of herself.

Elegant, attractive, sophisticated

MICHAEL (age 30-50) Patrice's husband and an inveterate lecher. He sets his sights on Melody (and any other female that is breathing) but is repeatedly rebuffed and struck "where it hurts most." A comic character who is at the center of most of the visual sequences.

Brash, loud, self-centered. Not very likeable.

MR. OAKFIELD (age 40+) A short, balding, overweight lawyer who gives the impression of a quiet, mild-mannered man until he too is caught up in the excitement of the love potion. He

spends most of ACT II trying (unsuccessfully) to find a vacant bathroom in a series of classic comedic sequences which leave the audience roaring

A typical lawyer, perhaps a little officious and pompous

TAMMY-JO (age 25-40) The neighbor from across the creek, surprisingly mentioned in Mr Stancliffe's will Deeply involved in the love potion plot, she appears to be a fairly straight character for most of the play, but later has her "moment in the sun" as she turns into a sensuous temptress

Very Texan, very beautiful

MARY-LOU (age 30-50) A serious, matronly ornithologist doing research on the ranch Her character of the drab, dowdy, unattractive woman in blue jeans, boots, poncho etc is changed by the love potion into a voluptuous seductress in black lace teddy, fishnet hose, high heels etc The fact that she has no idea how to play this role puts her in the middle of some of the funniest sequences

Plain, then glamorous Conservative, then sexy Shy, then outrageous

ACT I

(The curtain rises on an empty set. It is the living room and study of the Texas ranch home of the late Edward Stancliffe. We see a bedroom R, and a living room L. The wall between is cut out except for the U.S. connecting door, which has a light switch below it on the R side. The room is, in fact, a study with wood paneled walls that has been turned into a bedroom. It is small, and contains only a double bed against the R wall, with a nightstand and bedside light below it. Above the bed, on the R wall, is the door to the powder room. There is a window in the center of the U.S. wall.)

(The living room is typical of a Texas ranch, with cow skins on the floor and animal heads on every wall. U.S. center is a small stairway to a landing which runs the length of the living room. The U.S. wall on the landing contains three doors: R is bedroom 1, center the bathroom, and L is bedroom 2. The landing continues off stage L to the west wing bedrooms. U.S. on the L wall is a double hinged door to the kitchen, with a light switch below it, and D.L. a double front door with a light switch on the wall above it. L.C. is a couch with a low coffee table below it, and a reading lamp behind it against the L wall. R.C. are two low backed easy chairs with a small table between them.)

(The landing rail has bric-a-brac fastened to it, branding irons, firearms and an enormous pair of iron tongs on the R side of the steps. Below the landing, to the R side of the stairs, is a

table which serves as a bar It is totally cluttered with glasses, bottles, etc L of the stairs is a low bookcase which has among its books a set of encyclopedias Every spare inch of wall has something on it, old cowboy paintings, guns in frames, horse trappings, etc It almost looks more like a museum than a home)

(After a few moments, MELODY enters from the kitchen Age 25-35, she is pretty, attractive, and is immediately recognizable as the maid She is wearing a black, pencil, wrap-around skirt with a small white apron, a white blouse, black hose and high heeled pumps She is carrying a tray containing six glasses, a small vase of flowers and some silverware She crosses R towards the drinks table and as she comes just below the stairs she trips over one of the cow skins She staggers R, then D S a little, desperately trying to maintain her balance With the tray held precariously above her head, she eventually falls backwards over one of the low backed chairs, and ends up lying on her back with her legs in the air, but the tray still balanced Breathing a sigh of relief, she manages to return to a standing position, and carries the tray to the drinks table She tries to find room to put it down, but the table is too cluttered with glasses, bottles, etc She tries to clear a space with one elbow, but to no avail Eventually she raises one leg, and by holding the tray with one hand and balancing it on her knee, she manages to free the other hand As she starts to clear a space on the table with the free hand, she wobbles on the one leg, the tray tilts dangerously and starts to fall She tries desperately to save it, but the tray falls, she falls, everything goes with a tremendous clatter Amazingly, nothing breaks, as everything on the tray is made of plastic)

(JARVIS, hearing the noise, enters from the kitchen He is the epitome of the English butler Age perhaps 50, graying, ramrod straight, serious, rarely smiling and always very formal He wears dark pinstripe pants, a long sleeve white shirt with French cuffs and a dark vest and tie He has a dish towel in his hand)

JARVIS *(Crosses R and helps MELODY to her feet)* Melody my dear, are you alright?

MELODY *(Gets up and straightens her clothes)* I'm O K thanks, but I'm afraid I've done it again

JARVIS Never mind Come on, I'll help you *(He starts to pick up glasses, etc)* At least nothing got broken

MELODY *(Picks up the tray)* That's because you only ever let me carry plastic things

JARVIS We both know that's a very sensible rule for you Melody Now come on, Mr & Mrs Leadley will be here any minute and we can't let them see this mess

(As MELODY picks up each glass she gives it a cursory wipe with her apron and puts it on the table JARVIS picks each one up and gives it a thorough polish with his towel before replacing it on the table, exactly positioning each one in line)

MELODY Oh Jarvis, I'm so sorry about this, it's just that I'm very nervous

JARVIS I've told you before, there's nothing to be nervous about

MELODY That's easy for you to say, Mr Stancliffe always promised to take care of you when he died, but by this time tomorrow, I might have no job, and no home

JARVIS *(Stops clearing up, and takes MELODY's hands in his)* Melody, haven't I promised to take care of you? *(She nods)* Well then, there's nothing for you to worry about

MELODY When will we find out?

JARVIS Today in fact Mr Stancliffe's lawyer is coming here to read the will He should be here any minute

MELODY You know, Mr Stancliffe probably left everything to Mrs Leadley She is his only living relative

JARVIS You forget that Mr Stancliffe was a very wealthy man He had lots of assets besides this ranch and the twenty-thousand acres I'm sure he didn't forget us, so stop worrying Just remember, we agreed, you leave everything to me Now, have you finished

getting the west wing suite ready?

MELODY It's all done Clean sheets, towels, everything

JARVIS Good, we need to make sure Mr & Mrs Leadley are comfortable We want them to feel right at home

MELODY By now it probably is their home

JARVIS Melody, please don't say things like that Until we've seen the will, we just don't know I was Mr Stancliffe's butler for 29 years and we were very close He knew that my dream was to own this place one day, and I have absolute faith he did the right thing

MELODY Right for who? You or Mrs Leadley?

JARVIS We'll see, in any event I have a feeling it's going to be an interesting day Ah, there's a car *(He heads toward the front door)* They're here Bring the coffee in will you

(MELODY exits to the kitchen with the empty tray as JARVIS opens the front door and looks out It is raining heavily as PATRICE dashes in She is an attractive woman in her middle thirties, wearing a two piece suit, blouse, conservative accessories and high heeled shoes She has a raincoat draped over her shoulders and a newspaper held over her head She carries a purse which she puts on the coffee table)

PATRICE Hello Jarvis Boy, it's really coming down now

JARVIS Good afternoon Mrs Leadley Welcome to the L P Circle Ranch *(He takes the raincoat and newspaper from her)*

PATRICE Thank you Jarvis

(Enter MICHAEL, age 40-50, he is a nondescript looking man, whose appearance belies what he really is, a lecher with the morals of a soap opera leading man He is wearing gray pants, a blue blazer, shirt and tie, and a raincoat He carries two suitcases which he puts down just inside the door)

JARVIS *(Closes the door)* Good afternoon, Mr Leadley

MICHAEL Oh, hi Jarvis *(He takes off his raincoat which he hands to JARVIS)* Boy-o-boy! I'm telling you, when it rains in Texas,

it really rains

JARVIS I think I'll just hang these things in the laundry room
If you'll excuse me for a moment, I'll be right back and show you to
your rooms *(Exit to kitchen)*

PATRICE Thank you Jarvis *(Wandering around the room)*
You know this room looks exactly the same as it did when I was a
kid I don't think Uncle Edward moved anything in thirty years

MICHAEL Well it gives me the creeps, when it's ours I want to
get rid of all these dead animals

PATRICE Michael, you don't know Uncle Edward left us the
ranch

MICHAEL Of course he did, you're his only relative, who else
would he leave it to?

PATRICE *(Opens the study door and looks in)* Well, that's
strange, they put a bed in the study

JARVIS *(Who has returned from the kitchen and overheard the
last remark)* Yes madam For some time before Mr Stanchiffe went
into the hospital, he was having trouble negotiating steps, so we
turned his study into a bedroom, and I just haven't had time yet to
move the bed out and put back the furniture *(He comes D L to pick
up the suitcases and moves up the steps to the landing)* If you would
follow me madam, I've put you in the suite of rooms in the west
wing. This way please

*(PATRICE follows him leaving the center door ajar MICHAEL
follows PATRICE JARVIS and PATRICE exit to the west wing,
but just before MICHAEL exits, MELODY enters from the
kitchen, so MICHAEL stands U L on the landing and watches
her She is carrying a tray with a coffee pot and mugs As she
negotiates the swing door from the kitchen, her skirt is caught in
it She twists and turns, and the wrap-around skirt comes right
off, held firmly by the door She is now seen to be wearing black
lace tap pants, garter belt and stockings She comes D to the
coffee table and bends down to put the tray on it MICHAEL,
unseen by MELODY, creeps down behind her, and as she bends,
he grabs her derriere MELODY shrieks and jumps away)*

JARVIS *(Who has returned from the west wing just in time to see this)* Feeling a little left behind are we sir?

MICHAEL I - er - she - er - I was just helping her

JARVIS *(Looking down his nose)* Yes sir So I see Perhaps you should go and "help" Mrs Leadley sir

MICHAEL Right - good idea - yes I'll go right away She'll need some help with the bags Yes - good idea -

(He moves up the steps, past JARVIS and exits to the west wing)

JARVIS What in heaven's name happened this time?

MELODY My skirt got caught in the kitchen door

JARVIS *(Retrieving the skirt and bringing it to her)* I honestly don't know how you do it

MELODY *(Putting on the skirt)* Well, at least I didn't spill the coffee

JARVIS I suppose we should be thankful for that

MELODY You know, when they were here last time he tried to grab me One of these days I'm going to punch him in the "you know whats" He's a dirty old man

JARVIS Nevertheless, he does seem to have some success with members of the opposite sex

MELODY Oh sure If you shoot at everything that moves, you're bound to hit something Someone needs to teach him a lesson

JARVIS That may be so my dear, but he is Mrs Leadley's husband, so, until we know what's in the will, and where we all stand, let's just keep the peace shall we *(There is the sound of a car outside)* Ah, there's another car That'll be the lawyer, Mr Oakfield *(Crosses D L to the front door)* Would you tell the others he's here please Melody

(MELODY exits to the west wing JARVIS opens the front door It is still raining Enter MR OAKFIELD He is a middle aged, balding, slightly overweight, and wears glasses He is carrying a briefcase and an umbrella, which he closes in the doorway He is wearing a hat and a raincoat over a dark business suit, etc

JARVIS takes the umbrella and hat and closes the door)

JARVIS Mr Oakfield Good afternoon sir

OAKFIELD Good afternoon Jarvis, right?

JARVIS Yes sir *(Helps him off with the raincoat)* Here, let me have that

OAKFIELD What a day Are Mr and Mrs Leadley here yet?

JARVIS They arrived about five minutes ago sir

OAKFIELD Good, and Miss Harper?

JARVIS I beg your pardon sir?

OAKFIELD Miss Harper from the Circle-Cross ranch across the creek Surely you know her?

JARVIS Indeed I know her very well sir I just didn't know she was expected here today

OAKFIELD Yes, of course Well, I asked her to be here at four o'clock

JARVIS I see But no, she's not here yet *(Enter MICHAEL and PATRICE from the west wing They come D S They are followed by MELODY who stays U S just below the steps)* Ah Mrs Leadley, do you know Mr Oakfield?

PATRICE Yes, in fact we've met several times How are you Mr Oakfield? *(They shake hands)* Do you remember my husband?

OAKFIELD Of course How are you Mr Leadley?

MICHAEL I'm fine thank you *(They shake hands)*

JARVIS Right If you'll excuse me, I'll just get these wet things put away There's fresh coffee on the table *(He moves U S towards the kitchen, stops and turns)* I hope you don't mind plastic mugs, it's - er - a sort of tradition in this house

PATRICE Thank you Jarvis *(They all sit OAKFIELD L end of the couch, PATRICE the L chair and MICHAEL the R chair)* Melody, perhaps you'd like to pour the coffee

(MELODY takes a step forward, then stops and looks at JARVIS who is by now in the kitchen door)

JARVIS *(Turns abruptly)* That's probably not a good idea

madam *(Patrice frowns at him and starts to say something)* Just trust me please madam

(PATRICE shrugs, gets up, crosses to the coffee table and pours JARVIS signals to MELODY to follow him and they both exit to the kitchen)

PATRICE How do you like it?

OAKFIELD Black please *(She hands him a mug)*

MICHAEL What's all the secret about the will? I thought you only had, you know — “the reading of the will” in mystery novels and theatrical productions

(PATRICE pours two further mugs, gives one to MICHAEL, takes one herself, then returns to her chair)

OAKFIELD *(Laughs)* There's really no secret The will is to be read in everyone's presence simply because Mr Stancliffe specifically instructed that it was to be done that way

MICHAEL He always was as nutty as a fruitcake

PATRICE Michael!

OAKFIELD I can assure you he was perfectly sane sir However, I would go along with “a little eccentric”

MICHAEL Well, what are we waiting for? Let's get on with it

OAKFIELD As a matter of fact, we are waiting for someone *(He opens his briefcase, takes out a paper and reads)* A Miss Tammy-Jo Harper

PATRICE Who's she?

OAKFIELD Apparently she owns the neighboring ranch, just across the creek

MICHAEL I take it then that she's - er - mentioned in the will?

OAKFIELD Yes sir

MICHAEL I see

OAKFIELD You do know, don't you, that your uncle was extremely wealthy?

PATRICE I've never really thought about it, but yes, I guess I've

always known I mean this ranch is enormous.

OAKFIELD If it's not an impertinent question, do you mind if I ask what was the source of this wealth?

PATRICE I don't mind you asking at all, because I have absolutely no idea where or how he made his money I know he was in South America a lot when he was young and I've always thought it was something to do with that

OAKFIELD I see How interesting

(Enter JARVIS from the kitchen He comes down to the front door)

JARVIS Excuse me, but there's another car just pulled up

(He opens the front door, we see it is still raining Enter TAMMY-JO, she is a strikingly beautiful woman, age 25 to 40. She is wearing a loose, baggy, poncho-style slicker and a cowboy hat which she takes off and hands to JARVIS She is now seen to be wearing cowboy boots, a mid-calf length blue denim skirt with an ornate silver belt, and a checkered shirt with pockets)

JARVIS Good afternoon Miss Harper Let me have your coat please *(He turns to the room)* May I introduce Miss Tammy-Jo Harper, Mrs Patrice Leadley

(Everybody shakes hands)

PATRICE Hello

JARVIS Her husband, Michael

MICHAEL Nice to meet you

JARVIS And, of course, Mr Oakfield.

OAKFIELD Hello

T-JO Howdy everyone

JARVIS Let me get rid of these things and organize some more chairs I won't be a minute

(He exits to the kitchen)

OAKFIELD Please sit down

T-JO Thank you

(TAMMY-JO sits on the couch R end OAKFIELD stands D L with his back to the front door, PATRICE and MICHAEL return to their chairs)

MICHAEL How well did you know Mr Stancliffe?

T-JO Well, I didn't see too much of him in the last year or so I guess he was really sick but I've known him just about all my life I suppose

MICHAEL I see

T-JO When I was a kid I used to ride my horse over here all the time When my Daddy was alive he and Mr Stancliffe were like, you know, best buddies

MICHAEL I see

(MELODY enters from the kitchen carrying two straight chairs She gets briefly wedged in the kitchen door, then crosses R As she gets to the cow skin, she stops, very deliberately walks around it, then puts the chairs down between the couch and the L chair She turns D S , smiles at everyone and returns to the kitchen)

PATRICE Well Miss Harper, it seems that Uncle Edward has left you something in his will

T-JO Oh How exciting

PATRICE Please help yourself to coffee

T-JO Thank you

(She pours a mug)

MICHAEL Can we go ahead and read the will now?

OAKFIELD We need Jarvis and Miss Melody Ah - *(JARVIS enters from the kitchen)* Jarvis, can Melody join us too please?

JARVIS She'll be in in a moment *(He stands just below the stairs)*

OAKFIELD *(After an awkward pause)* Chair?

JARVIS *(Looks at the chair, then looks back at MR OAKFIELD)* So it is!

OAKFIELD No, no, I meant would you like a chair?

JARVIS Thank you but I already have several of my own

OAKFIELD I mean, would you like to sit down?

JARVIS Ah! Yes Indeed I would Thank you sir *(He sits on the L straight chair)*

(MELODY enters from the kitchen and crosses R to sit next to JARVIS She trips over the cow skin, staggers R and ends up in JARVIS' lap He helps her up and into the other chair JARVIS and MELODY then just smile at everyone)

OAKFIELD O K I think we might begin *(He takes papers out of his briefcase and stands with his back to the front door to read)* This is the last will and testament of Edward William Douglas Stancliffe *(He looks up over his glasses)* I am, of course, familiar with this document as I helped Mr Stancliffe to prepare it With your permission therefore, I will cut out all the legal mumbo-jumbo, and just deal with the bequests In any event, copies of this document will be made available to you later, should you require them O K Here we go then Firstly there is a trust fund whose basic function is to provide income to maintain this ranch and pay the salaries of Melody and Mr Jarvis Should Melody leave or be dismissed she would receive a lump sum payment of \$50,000 from the trust

MELODY *(Leaps to her feet, punches the air and screams)* Yes!

(JARVIS gets her seated again and they both smile as Oakfield continues)

OAKFIELD In the case of Mr Jarvis, Mr Stancliffe states that in recognition of his many years of devoted service, his salary is payable as a pension for the rest of his life There then follows a rather strange and complex deed of trust, which in simple terms

states that, while the ranch is bequeathed to you Mrs Leadley, Mr Jarvis may live here for the rest of his life Furthermore, you may never sell any part of it without the express permission of Mr Jarvis during his lifetime

PATRICE Does that mean that after Jarvis - er -

JARVIS (*Stands*) Rings down the final curtain madam?

PATRICE Well, yes

OAKFIELD You own the ranch with no restrictions

PATRICE I see Thank you

(*JARVIS sits*)

OAKFIELD The ranch that is, with one very small change Mr Stancliff makes a bequest to Miss Tammy-Jo Harper of a small tract of land, some 400 acres known as the Goat Creek Bottom He goes into a long rambling explanation about water rights on the creek, which I must admit I never fully understood

T-JO Oh, I understand all about that When my Daddy was alive he had a sort of unwritten gentlemen's agreement with Mr Stancliff giving our cattle access to Goat Creek The Goat Creek Bottom gives us a way to get there without crossing anyone else's land

OAKFIELD I see

T-JO That sure was generous of him

OAKFIELD Excellent then To continue All of the other assets, which are somewhat modest compared to the value of this ranch, he leaves to his only living relative, Mrs Patrice Leadley (*He looks up, around the room*) Oh, I nearly forgot, there's one other thing There's a limited liability company called Amelixco Incorporated The company is in good standing but does not appear to have any assets The shares are bequeathed as follows Mrs Leadley 25%, Mr Leadley 25% and Mr Jarvis 50% All I can tell you is that the company has a registered formula with the U S patent office, which, of course is secret At the time Mr Stancliff drew up this will, I tried to persuade him to divulge the formula to a representative of my firm He declined, saying, if I remember, it was too dangerous And that just about does it

MICHAEL That's really strange

OAKFIELD You will, of course, all have to come into my office and sign all the papers, but there's no hurry, any time in the next two or three weeks will be fine Now, I really should be on my way *(He closes up his briefcase)* I'll leave a copy of this for you Mrs Leadley *(He puts a file on the table)* If you have any questions please call me

JARVIS *(Stands)* Melody would you get Mr Oakfield's coat please

(MELODY exits to the kitchen JARVIS picks up one chair and follows her)

OAKFIELD It's been a pleasure to meet you Miss Harper

T-JO *(Stands and they shake hands)* Thank you Please be careful crossing the low bridge on the creek, the water level can rise real fast

(Enter MELODY with the raincoat She comes down and tries to help OAKFIELD put it on One sleeve is inside out He puts his arm in that sleeve, MELODY twists the coat so that other sleeve faces the right way He tries to put his arm in but it doesn't work They stop, extricate his arm and start again She gets her arm in one sleeve, they end up both half in the raincoat JARVIS has followed MELODY from the kitchen carrying OAKFIELD's umbrella and hat He comes D L)

JARVIS Excuse me Would you hold this for a second please? *(He hands the umbrella and hat to TAMMY-JO and then gets MELODY untangled)* There we are sir *(He gets OAKFIELD into the raincoat then hands him the umbrella and hat)*

OAKFIELD Thank you Now don't forget you all need to come into my office

MICHAEL We won't forget Thank you *(Shakes hands)*

OAKFIELD Goodbye Mrs Leadley

PATRICE Goodbye, and thank you *(Shakes hands)*

(JARVIS opens the front door and OAKFIELD exits We see it is still

raining JARVIS closes the door)

JARVIS Melody, perhaps you could clear away the coffee things *(MELODY looks at him in panic)* Go on It'll be alright

(MELODY picks up the tray)

T-JO *(Putting mugs on the tray)* Here let me give you a hand

MELODY *(Quickly pushes the tray into TAMMY-JO's hands)*

O K I'll get the door for you

(She rushes U S trips over the cow skin, keeps her balance and holds open the kitchen door TAMMY-JO, carrying the tray, exits to the kitchen followed by JARVIS MELODY smiles at everyone and exits backwards into the kitchen Immediately there is a tremendous crash)

PATRICE Do you get the feeling Jarvis isn't telling us something about Melody?

MICHAEL *(Deep in thought)* You know, there's something about that Amelixco company that I don't get If it has no assets, why bother to keep it going? It doesn't make sense

PATRICE Well I'm sure I don't know It's probably just another of Uncle Edward's little peculiarities

MICHAEL I guess so

(Enter TAMMY-JO from the kitchen She is putting on her slicker She is followed by JARVIS who carries her hat)

T-JO I need to get going It's still raining, and at this rate it won't take long for the low bridge to wash out *(She comes down to PATRICE)* I hope we'll be seeing each other often, now that we're going to be neighbors

PATRICE That'll be nice

MICHAEL Yeah! That'll be real nice

(JARVIS, who has come down to the front door, gives MICHAEL one of his sternest disapproving looks, opens the front door and hands TAMMY-JO her hat It is still raining)

T-JO I'll see y'all around then

(She dashes out into the rain JARVIS closes the door)

PATRICE Is everything alright in the kitchen Jarvis?

(She sits on the couch, L. end)

JARVIS Just a minor mishap madam Excuse me

(He exits to the kitchen)

MICHAEL *(Sits on the couch, R end)* Well, we've just about got the whole works

PATRICE Yes, it looks like we did

MICHAEL The only problem is we're stuck with Jarvis

PATRICE Oh, he's alright

MICHAEL I'm not saying he isn't I'm just not sure I want to live with him

PATRICE That's a point

MICHAEL What do you think this ranch is worth?

PATRICE I have no idea.

MICHAEL Well, there are 20,000 acres at let's say \$2,000 an acre *(He is counting zeroes on his fingers)* Wow, that's four million dollars No - wait a minute, that's forty million dollars

PATRICE It doesn't matter what it's worth, we can't sell it unless Jarvis agrees

MICHAEL That's right We'll have to find a way round that

(Enter JARVIS from the kitchen carrying a manila envelope and a large thermos bottle)

JARVIS Excuse me, please madam

PATRICE What is it Jarvis?

JARVIS (*Comes D C*) According to very specific instructions given to me by Mr Stancliffe before he died, immediately after the reading of the will, I was required to open his private safe, with the key he gave me, and bring its contents to you

PATRICE Oh What was in it?

JARVIS Just this thermos bottle and a sealed envelope with the words "Amazon Elixir Co" on the outside

MICHAEL Amazon Elixir Co? Of course Amelixco!

JARVIS Ah yes! I believe that would be it sir

MICHAEL Another mystery about to be revealed I must say the old boy certainly had a flair for the dramatic

JARVIS (*Tries to hand the envelope to PATRICE*) So, here you are madam

PATRICE No, no Don't you remember, you're the major shareholder, you open it

JARVIS Very well madam

PATRICE Why don't you sit down Jarvis?

JARVIS Thank you madam (*Sits on the L chair and opens the envelope*) Let me see now, there is something that looks like a list of ingredients and – ah, yes, a typewritten letter (*He turns it over*) There appears to be no signature (*He pauses, reading for a moment*)

MICHAEL Well? (*JARVIS continues to read*) Aren't you going to read it to us?

JARVIS Well, there's a long dissertation about how this formula is worth billions of dollars, about how dangerous it could be in the wrong hands, he mentions my experience and stability as reasons for making me the major shareholder, and (*He pauses*) Ah - Ah - ha!

MICHAEL What?

JARVIS I'm afraid sir, this appears to be another of Mr Stancliffe's, shall we say "eccentricities" sir?

PATRICE What do you mean?

JARVIS It states that this is a formula for, and a sample of, a love potion, madam

MICHAEL A love potion?

JARVIS A love potion sir

PATRICE That's ridiculous

MICHAEL I told you he was as nutty as a fruitcake

JARVIS In this instance sir, I am inclined to agree with you

(He continues to read)

PATRICE He can't have been that stupid I mean everyone knows there's no such thing as a love potion

JARVIS I absolutely agree with you madam, however there appears to be an interesting wrinkle to this love potion

PATRICE What do you mean?

JARVIS If I'm understanding this correctly, the potion does not claim to work on the person who drinks it

MICHAEL What?

JARVIS It claims that the potion causes the person who drinks it to give off some barely perceptible chemical odor, which it says affects the vomeronasal organ of the opposite sex, with devastating effect Here, you read it sir

(He hands the paper to MICHAEL)

PATRICE It's too stupid for words

JARVIS It is rather disappointing I agree I'm afraid we're just going to have to put this down to one of Mr Stanchiffe's little jokes madam *(He stands)* I need to get organized for dinner this evening, so if you'll excuse me, I have work to do in the kitchen

(He exits to the kitchen)

MICHAEL *(Still reading)* Now that's kind of curious

PATRICE What is?

MICHAEL The key ingredient would appear to be a solution made by soaking the bark of the Imbuya tree in salt water

PATRICE What's an Imbuya tree?

MICHAEL I've no idea Wait a minute

(He gets up, goes up to the bookcase and takes out one of the encyclopedias)

PATRICE Michael, this is ridiculous There's no such thing as a love potion I know it, you know it, the whole world knows it

MICHAEL Here we are I-M-B-U-Y-A Brazilian walnut It's a common hard- wood tree from Amazonia

(He puts the book back then returns to the couch)

PATRICE Amazonia! That is curious What else does it say?

MICHAEL *(Reading the paper again)* That's about it It says the potion is fast acting and the effect doesn't last long

PATRICE Michael, stop You're beginning to sound like you believe this nonsense

MICHAEL *(Puts down the papers)* You're right, it's just too far fetched

PATRICE *(Gets up and heads for the stairs)* You know, everything happened so quickly I never finished unpacking Let me get that out of the way, and then we've got a lot to discuss Especially about Jarvis, and whether we're going to live here I'm not sure I like the idea of having him around permanently I won't be long

(She exits to the west wing MICHAEL watches her go, then picks up the thermos from the small table, unscrews the cap, looks inside, and smells the contents, as MELODY enters from the kitchen She crosses R picks up the second straight chair and heads to the kitchen as MICHAEL rushes to open the door for her She is about to go through it when she realizes her derriere is vulnerable to MICHAEL's hands She turns, and keeping the chair between herself and MICHAEL, exits to the kitchen MICHAEL looks wistfully after her, then is struck with a brilliant idea He goes back to the small table, picks up the thermos, looks at the kitchen door and takes a drink He then goes to the drinks table, pours something into a glass, then carefully drops it on the floor He tries to smell his own breath,

primps a little, then goes to the kitchen door and calls in)

MICHAEL I'm afraid I've spilled a drink Could you help me please Melody?

(He hurries back to the R of drinks table and waits MELODY enters from the kitchen with a cloth in her hand)

MICHAEL I'm sorry about this

MELODY That's alright sir To tell you the truth, I'm kind of glad someone else can do it as well as me *(She starts to bend down to mop up the spill, realizes she will have her back to Michael, turns and bends so she is facing him MICHAEL just stands there, expectantly leaning slightly towards her)* It won't take a minute What was it anyway?

MICHAEL Er - er - just water I think

MELODY Oh, that's easy then *(She completes the mopping and stands up)* There that does it

(MICHAEL stands still but leans closer to her She pauses for a second looking curiously at him, then turns and crosses L to the kitchen door MICHAEL smiles at her but remains standing just to the R of the drinks table MELODY pauses at the kitchen door, looks at him and exits to the kitchen MICHAEL shrugs There's is a momentary pause, then MELODY bursts through the kitchen door on the dead run She crosses R and flings herself at MICHAEL, smothering him with kisses Her momentum carries them both through the open center door MICHAEL staggers backwards across the bed MELODY rips off her skirt and flings it away, then leaps astride him on the bed, tearing at his clothes MICHAEL grabs her and they roll over on the bed He manages to get his jacket off, and MELODY undoes her blouse, as JARVIS, who has entered from the kitchen, appears in the center doorway)

JARVIS Trying to get the lay of the land are we sir? *(He picks up Melody's skirt and holds it out for her as they untangle*

themselves MELODY gets dressed) If I may be so bold sir, perhaps it would be a good idea if you confined the activities of your baser instincts to your wife

MICHAEL No, no, you don't understand, it wasn't me

JARVIS Well, you could have fooled me!

MICHAEL No, no you see it all happened so quickly, it was just a -

JARVIS Tempest in a "D" cup sir? I shall for the moment remain silent about your conduct, but I cannot make the same guarantee should it happen again Come Melody

(MELODY and JARVIS exit to the kitchen MICHAEL follows them L, starts to protest, then shuts up and watches them go, as PATRICE enters from the west wing)

MICHAEL *(Rushes up to her)* It works

PATRICE What?

MICHAEL It works, the love potion, it works

PATRICE Baloney It's all in the head

MICHAEL *(Looks down)* That's not entirely true

PATRICE Nonsense

(She comes D and sits on the couch L end MICHAEL follows her down and sits on the couch R end)

MICHAEL Listen to me I drank some, and the maid, Melody, went berserk Her hormones were moving at warp speed

PATRICE What? Start again

MICHAEL I tried the love potion, and believe me, it works Melody couldn't keep her hands off me

PATRICE Baloney

MICHAEL Do you realize what this means? The implications are staggering Everyone on the planet will want to buy it Uncle Edward was right It's worth billions

PATRICE Michael, calm down I'm sure you're mistaken, and anyway why hasn't it affected me?

MICHAEL It's probably worn off The letter said it didn't last long

PATRICE Oh Michael, we both know what you're like I think you're believing it because you want to, why if everyone — *(She breaks off)* That's it, don't you see?

MICHAEL See what?

PATRICE You think it worked because you wanted it to

MICHAEL I'm not sure that was it at all I mean she really, you know, put a move on me I mean it I think it was the potion

PATRICE Of course you do, and that's the point This is the answer to our problem with Jarvis

MICHAEL Now you've really lost me

PATRICE Don't you see? If we could convince Jarvis the love potion works, he'd give us anything for our 50% of the shares

MICHAEL You mean "anything" as in his rights to the ranch

PATRICE Precisely

MICHAEL How do you propose to do that?

PATRICE We'll have to plan very carefully The first thing we're going to have to do is get him to drink some of the stuff Then, I guess it'll have to be up to me to convince him it works

MICHAEL You and Jarvis That's ridiculous

PATRICE The more unlikely it seems, the more he's liable to believe it Sh!

(Enter JARVIS from the kitchen, he comes D to the front door)

JARVIS Excuse me madam I believe a car has just pulled up

(He opens the front door It is still raining Enter TAMMY-JO and OAKFIELD They are still in their rain gear, but absolutely drenched PATRICE and MICHAEL are on their feet JARVIS closes the front door)

PATRICE Good heavens, you're absolutely soaked What happened?

T-JO Mr Oakfield's car got stuck on the creek bridge The flood level was over two feet when I got there He shouldn't have tried to cross

JARVIS Give me your coats everyone *(They hand JARVIS their wet raincoats We see the lower part of Oakfield's pants and TAMMY-JO's skirt are wet)* Are you alright sir?

OAKFIELD I'm fine Really I am

T-JO I've seen a lot of flash floods here, but this one came up real fast

(JARVIS takes the coats and exits to the kitchen)

PATRICE Here, sit down for a minute I'll get you both a little brandy

(She goes to the drinks table as TAMMY-JO and OAKFIELD sit on the couch)

T-JO Well, one thing's for sure, we're not going to cross the creek today

MICHAEL You mean you'll have to stay here?

T-JO I'm sorry to impose on you, but we really don't have any alternative It'll take several hours for the creek to go down, even if it stopped raining right now, which it doesn't look like it's going to do

(JARVIS returns from the kitchen followed by MELODY)

JARVIS Melody, there are some large towels in the powder room in the study *(MELODY crosses R into the study and exits to the powder room)* She won't be a second

(PATRICE comes D L with two brandy glasses which she hands to OAKFIELD and TAMMY-JO)

PATRICE Jarvis, Miss Harper was just telling us that both she and Mr Oakfield will have to stay here tonight Can you manage all that?

JARVIS Of course madam These two rooms *(He steps up to the landing and indicates B R 1 and B R 2)* are more than adequate You

will however have to share the bathroom in the middle

(MELODY enters from the powder room with towels, which she hands to TAMMY-JO and OAKFIELD)

PATRICE You'll need some dry clothes and I'm afraid I only brought one small suitcase

MELODY I could try to find something if you like

T-JO That would be real nice Thank you

JARVIS I think perhaps I could try to find something for you
Mr Oakfield Why don't you come with me sir?

(OAKFIELD, MELODY and TAMMY-JO all head towards the west wing)

OAKFIELD Thank you

MELODY I'm not sure we really wear the same kind of clothes, but I'll let you see what I've got

T-JO Don't worry, anything will do

(MELODY, TAMMY-JO, OAKFIELD and JARVIS all exit to the west wing PATRICE pauses at the foot of the stairs, watches them go, then turns to Michael)

PATRICE Perfect!

MICHAEL What's perfect?

PATRICE Well, now Miss Harper is here, maybe she could help us convince Jarvis that the love potion works

MICHAEL Why in heaven's name would she do that?

PATRICE Easy! What makes the world go round? We'll pay her to do it

(She sits on the sofa, picks up her purse from the coffee table, takes out a pen and check book and writes)

MICHAEL That's not going to work You're never going to get

Jarvis to drink that stuff

PATRICE Hmm! You're probably right We're going to have to slip it to him and tell him afterwards Michael, would you open a bottle of wine please and pour one glass

MICHAEL What are you going to do?

(He goes to the drinks table, finds a corkscrew and opens a bottle of wine)

PATRICE We'll ask Jarvis to try this wine Then we'll pay Miss Harper to put a move on him, and later we'll tell him he drank some of the potion That way he'll believe it works

MICHAEL *(Holds up the thermos)* Should I really put some in?

PATRICE Why not? It'll be a reason for the wine to taste funny

MICHAEL *(Pouring a little from the thermos into the glass of wine)* Did I ever tell you, you have a devious mind?

(Enter TAMMY-JO and MELODY from the west wing TAMMY-JO carries a bundle of clothes)

T-JO This is real nice of you Thanks

MELODY You're welcome, I just hope everything fits

(She comes straight down and exits to the kitchen)

T-JO *(Hesitates on the landing)* Which of these rooms should I take?

PATRICE *(Gets up and goes to the foot of the stairs)* I don't suppose it matters, but before you change, could I have a word with you please?

T-JO Sure Why not

(She drapes the clothes over the landing rail, and comes down)

PATRICE Please sit down for a minute

T-JO Okay *(Sits L chair)*

PATRICE (*Sits couch R end*) You're going to think this a little strange, but I wonder if you would cooperate with us in playing a little joke on Jarvis

T-JO What sort of joke?

PATRICE We'd like you to - er - sort of - er - make a pass at him

T-JO Jarvis! Why?

MICHAEL (*Comes D to the R of the R chair*) Well, he's such a stuffy old thing We thought it might be kind of amusing

T-JO If you don't mind my saying so Mr Leadley, I don't think that's in very good taste

PATRICE I was afraid you might say that Here, (*She hands her the check*) perhaps this check might persuade you

T-JO Five thousand dollars! (*She looks at both of them*) Just exactly what is it you want me to do?

PATRICE Well, we'd like you to - er - I'm not too sure how to put this Could you, just for a short while, er - act as though he was absolutely irresistible to you?

T-JO Jarvis? You want me to come on to him?

PATRICE Well yes, but just for five minutes

T-JO Five minutes? You're going to pay me five thousand dollars for five minutes?

PATRICE Well, almost We may have to call on you later for a repeat performance Ten minutes at the most

T-JO You're on! You're crazy, but you're on

PATRICE Can you do it? Can you convince him?

T-JO Piece of cake! Men are all easy!

MICHAEL What do you mean, men are all easy?

T-JO Well, when you unzip their pants their brains fall out

MICHAEL That's not fair

T-JO Listen, women may want a reason to have sex, but men just need a place Anyway, don't tell me men have never used sex to get what they want

MICHAEL How can we possibly use sex to get what we want
Sex is what we want

PATRICE Michael!

T-JO (*Stands*) Let me get changed and I'll get right to it

(She goes up to the landing Enter JARVIS and OAKFIELD from the west wing OAKFIELD is wearing a robe and JARVIS is carrying OAKFIELD's pants)

JARVIS Ah, Miss Harper, why don't you take this room

(He opens the door of B R 2)

T-JO Thank you Jarvis

(She picks up the clothes from the railing and exits to B R 2 JARVIS continues R to B R 1)

JARVIS You should be quite comfortable in here sir *(Opens the door of B R 1)* I'm sorry I didn't have much to fit you, but I'll have your pants dried and pressed in no time

OAKFIELD Thank you Jarvis

(OAKFIELD exits B R 1 JARVIS comes down and heads towards the kitchen)

PATRICE Jarvis

(She moves to the drinks table)

JARVIS *(By the kitchen door)* Yes madam?

PATRICE We just opened this wine, and it tastes a little strange to me Do you think you could taste it please?

JARVIS With pleasure madam *(He crosses R and takes the proffered glass He holds it up to the light, smells it, twirls it around, looks at it and finally takes the tiniest sip)* You're right madam, it is a little odd I can't quite put my finger on it *(Takes another sip)* Strange

MICHAEL Perhaps if you took a big gulp it might help

JARVIS We do not gulp wine sir However, *(He takes a good mouthful)* there is nothing wrong with the wine madam, it simply

has no body, no fruit, no texture, almost as though it had been watered down May I see the bottle? *(Patrice hands him the bottle)* Very odd I would have expected more from that *(Takes one more drink)* Very disappointing

PATRICE Oh well, never mind Now, Michael and I are going to help you in the kitchen

JARVIS I'm quite sure Melody and I can manage madam

PATRICE No, we insist, after all, we've got to prepare dinner for — good heavens, it's six people now Come along Michael

(PATRICE and MICHAEL exit to the kitchen JARVIS holds up the glass of wine and looks at it He then picks up the thermos and looks in it trying to see the liquid level, pauses, looks at the kitchen door, then looks again at the thermos Enter TAMMY-JO from B R 2 She has not changed but is carrying a dry outfit She opens the bathroom door)

JARVIS Have you got everything you need miss?

T-JO Well, I really could use a couple more towels

JARVIS Right away miss *(Goes to the kitchen door and holds it open)* Melody!

T-JO *(In the doorway of the bathroom)* Jarvis, do you ever have any fun?

JARVIS I beg your pardon miss? *(MELODY enters from the kitchen)* Ah Melody, could you please get Miss Harper some more towels, and then we'll need to dry and press Mr Oakfield's pants *(He hands her the pants)*

MELODY Sure Back in a jiffy

(She exits to west wing, carrying the pants T-JO drapes the clothes over the railing and comes down to JARVIS)

T-JO What I meant was, what do you do for recreation? You know fun?

JARVIS Well miss, I enjoy reading Shakespeare, playing chess, crossword puzzles -

T-JO Whoopee!

JARVIS That too miss

T-JO Why Jarvis! *(Now very close to him, almost chest to chest)* Would you like to have dinner some night?

JARVIS I like to have dinner every night miss

T-JO Has anyone ever told you you're a very attractive man?

JARVIS Thank you Miss Harper That's very kind of you to say so, but you really should get out of those wet clothes

T-JO What a good idea

(She starts to unbutton her shirt and advances on him till he is up against the kitchen door JARVIS ducks across in front of her and escapes R)

JARVIS Oh my goodness, that's not what I meant

T-JO *(Continues her pursuit as JARVIS backs away R)* You know I never noticed your eyes before

JARVIS My eyes?

T-JO Your eyes. *(She runs her fingers all over him, his hair, behind his ears, down his chest, etc JARVIS continues to back away R his eyes never leave her fingers as he reacts to every move)* your hair, your neck, your chest, your arms

(She grabs him and gives him a big passionate kiss)

JARVIS Oh my goodness *(He looks around, but the only escape is through the center door TAMMY-JO follows, sees the bed, very deliberately closes the center door behind her, and continues her advance)* Miss Harper I really think you should try to control yourself

T-JO Why? Don't you find me attractive?

JARVIS Indeed I have always found you attractive Miss Harper, but this is hardly the time and place

(PATRICE and MICHAEL enter from the kitchen, tip-toe across to the center door and listen)

T-JO I don't know about the time, but for the life of me I can't think of a better place

JARVIS (*Backing down toward the bed and looking at it over his shoulder*) Really Miss Harper, I don't think this is a good idea at all What's Mrs Leadley going to say?

T-JO I don't care what anybody says, I just want you, you great big beautiful butler

(*JARVIS is now trapped above the bed with no place left to go TAMMY-JO pushes him down on the bed and flings herself on top of him smothering him with kisses*)

PATRICE She really seems to be putting on a very convincing show
MICHAEL Sh! Come on We don't want to be caught out here
We can watch from the kitchen

(*They return to the kitchen, but can just be seen peeking out from behind the slightly ajar door*)

JARVIS (*Struggles free*) Miss Harper, that's enough, please control yourself

T-JO. (*Sits up and straightens her clothes*) It's difficult, but I'll try

(*JARVIS escapes back into the living room*)

JARVIS We really must try to maintain some sense of decorum
Now please go and change your clothes

(*TAMMY-JO follows him into the living room and moves L to the stairs as JARVIS backs away*)

T-JO O K. But I'm not finished I'm definitely going to see you later

(*She goes up stairs*)

JARVIS Oh dear!

(Enter MELODY from the west wing with two large towels)

MELODY Here you are miss

(TAMMY-JO takes the towels, picks up the clothes from the railing and exits to the bathroom, closing the door)

T-JO Thanks

JARVIS Thank you Melody

MELODY You're welcome

(She comes down and, as she gets close to JARVIS, she stops, takes a deep breath, looks around then gives him a long lingering kiss, watched by PATRICE and MICHAEL from the kitchen door. Then, without saying a word, she exits to the west wing. JARVIS looks puzzled, watches her go, then heads R towards the center door. He stops by the drinks table, picks up the thermos, looks towards the west wing, puts down the thermos, then goes into the study and straightens out the bedcovers, as PATRICE and MICHAEL enter from the kitchen)

PATRICE *(Crosses R to the center door)* Ah, there you are Jarvis. Could we see you for a moment please?

(JARVIS enters the living room)

JARVIS Of course madam

PATRICE There's something we need to tell you *(She pauses. JARVIS just stands there offering no help)* Would you like a seat? *(JARVIS reacts)* I mean, would you like to sit down?

JARVIS Very well madam

(He sits on the L chair, MICHAEL and PATRICE sit on the couch)

PATRICE I'm afraid we have a confession to make

JARVIS Confession madam?

PATRICE Yes I know it's silly, and of course there's no such thing as a love potion, but Mr Leadley got this idea it might work, and insisted we test it

JARVIS Test it madam?

PATRICE Yes So we - er - oh this is so embarrassing Michael, you tell him

MICHAEL Well, we - er - we put some in that wine you drank

JARVIS Really sir, I must protest If you wanted to test it, why not drink it yourselves?

MICHAEL Well, we thought of that, and then we thought it would be better if the person drinking it didn't know

PATRICE I think we got a little carried away with the idea it might work We really do apologize Jarvis What we did was very foolish and we are sorry

JARVIS I see Well, there's no harm done I suppose, and yet I can't help wondering *(He trails off, frowning and looking very thoughtful, then goes up to the drinks table, picks up the wine glass and looks at it)*

MICHAEL *(After a slight pause)* Well, what is it?

JARVIS Well, Miss Harper, she - er - *(He looks through the study door)* no, no, it's ridiculous

MICHAEL What's ridiculous?

JARVIS Well, she - er *(He looks at the bathroom door)* it's just too fantastic It's no matter sir I must get back to the kitchen

(He exits to the kitchen PATRICE gets up and follows him almost to the kitchen door, then stands looking at it)

PATRICE Did you see that? We've sown the seed of doubt He's starting to believe the love potion works Now the next step to really convince him is to find a way to do it again later

MICHAEL You didn't notice did you?

PATRICE Notice what?

MICHAEL Melody

PATRICE What about Melody?

MICHAEL She kissed him, and you didn't pay her Maybe it

really does work

PATRICE Michael, please don't start that again

MICHAEL Then how do you explain it?

PATRICE It's Melody, she's a flake, you've seen her, she probably kisses everybody

MICHAEL Oh, I never thought of that *(Pause)* She never kissed me!

PATRICE Of course not, she's an employee, she wouldn't kiss you Now, you need to go and unpack your things I've done all mine

MICHAEL *(Heads upstairs)* O K But I'm not convinced I think we should definitely run some more tests

PATRICE Yes, you'd like that wouldn't you, with you as the chief guinea-pig no doubt Go and unpack Michael

(MICHAEL exits to the west wing There is a pounding on the front door PATRICE crosses D L and opens it Enter MARY-LOU Age perhaps 30-40, she is wearing a huge waterproof poncho and rain hat, and carrying a large carry-all She steps into the room We see it is still raining PATRICE closes the door)

M-LOU Hello I'm Mary-Lou Winston Is Jarvis here please?

PATRICE Yes, of course, I'll get him.

(She goes to the kitchen door)

M-LOU I'm sorry to burst in like this I didn't know Jarvis had company

PATRICE *(Calls in the kitchen door)* Jarvis *(Comes back down)* Would you like to take your poncho off?

(JARVIS enters from the kitchen and comes D)

JARVIS Good heavens, Miss Winston What are you doing here? Here, let me help you

(He takes the poncho and hat MARY-LOU is revealed She is a

severe looking woman Her hair is up in a bun, she wears plain wire rimmed glasses and no make-up She is wearing blue jeans and a denim shirt She has on a small back-pack which she takes off after the poncho)

JARVIS Mrs Leadley, may I introduce you to Mary-Lou Winston Mrs Leadley is Mr Stanchiffe's niece and the new owner of the L P Circle Ranch

M-LOU How do you do *(They shake hands)*

PATRICE Hello

JARVIS Miss Winston is engaged in a woodpecker preservation program out in the North section

M-LOU Actually I'm doing research for my masters in ornithology

JARVIS You're shivering my dear Are you alright?

PATRICE I'll get you a little brandy

(She goes to the drinks table)

M-LOU Thank you

JARVIS What brings you to the house?

M-LOU Well, you know where I have my campsite?

JARVIS Yes, of course

M-LOU Well, it's a sea of mud I mean it's just awful, and I wondered if I could spend the night here?

PATRICE *(Comes D and hands her the brandy)* Well Jarvis, what do you say? What's one more?

JARVIS Well, we've finally run out of bedrooms madam We could give her the study or she could share with Miss Harper

M-LOU Oh I don't mind sharing at all

JARVIS Well, that's probably best, the study is a little spartan

(Enter TAMMY-JO from the bathroom She is now wearing a knee length skirt and blouse and no shoes She carries her original skirt, blouse and boots She comes down the steps)

T-JO Oh hi Mary-Lou What brings you here?

M-LOU I got rained out I've never seen anything like it

JARVIS Miss Harper, do you suppose you could share your room with Miss Winston?

T-JO Sure, it'll be fun Could I please put these things somewhere to dry?

JARVIS Of course, give them to me I'll take care of them

(He starts to take them from TAMMY-JO, but as he is already holding MARY-LOU's poncho and hat, has some difficulty)

PATRICE Here, I'll give you a hand

(She takes some of the clothes)

JARVIS Thank you madam

(JARVIS and PATRICE exit to the kitchen)

M-LOU Why are you staying here?

T-JO The creek bridge is out, so I'm here till tomorrow at least

M-LOU Did I hear Jarvis say Mr Stancliffe left the ranch to Mrs Leadley?

T-JO That's right

M-LOU He must be disappointed

T-JO Oh I'm sure But I think he half expected it, and you know Jarvis, he won't let it upset him Anyway, *(She heads up)* you finish your drink I'd better straighten our room up I've only been here half an hour and it's a mess already

(She exits to B R 2 Left alone on stage, MARY-LOU sits on the couch and sips her brandy She pulls a face and goes up to the drinks table She pours some "water" from the love potion thermos into her glass She stands at the drinks table and takes a sip Her facial expression indicates it tastes better She returns to the couch and drains her glass as MICHAEL enters from the west wing)

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