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The Matchmakers

A Romantic Comedy in Two Acts

By Don Zolidis

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The Matchmakers by Don Zolidis
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Full-Length Comedy
5F 8M

After a lame homecoming date at Wendy's and the dissolution of her parents' marriage, Bree begins to think that she's been cursed. When her mother declares that she's going to marry her loathsome marriage counselor, she's almost certain. And when she starts falling for that marriage counselor's geeky, awkward son, she's convinced. The Matchmakers is a wild, romantic comedy, complete with a strange clown, blind dates, and a swordfight.

Cast of Characters

BREE, 17, pretty, a little caustic, but in a nice way.

DEVIN, 18, her initial boyfriend. Very concerned with his stomach.

GABE, 19 (EMPLOYEE), dorky, awkward, but a nice guy.

BRENDA, 40ish, Bree's mother. Going through a mid-life crisis.

STANLEY, 40ish, Bree's father. Works at a Renaissance Festival.

BROCK, 40ish, their marriage counselor. Thinks very highly of himself.

ALAN, 27, Brock's oldest son. A bully.

KATLEIGH, 17, Bree's best friend. Pretty. Somewhat stupid.

CHASE, 17, Katleigh's boyfriend. Practically a servant.

SQUEAKY THE CLOWN, 30ish, not a very good clown.

GAIL, 43, a nutcase.

AUNT RHONDA, 40ish, Brenda's sister. Also a nutcase.

ROLAND, 22, Stanley's new boss at the Renaissance Festival.

Place: Suburbia. Somewhere near you.

Time: Now.

The Matchmakers was commissioned by the Pinewood Preparatory School, Glyn Cowlishaw, Headmaster. It premiered April 30th, 2010 under the direction of Shannon Horn with the following cast:

DEVIN: Ryan Ball
BREE: Rebecca Bruffey
GABE: Josh Blease
BRENDA: Heather Ringley
STANLEY: Jeremy Gray
BROCK: Corey Ryan
KATLEIGH: Ansley Rauton
ALAN: Daniel Armistead
CHASE: Nick Holt
SQUEAKY THE CLOWN: David Soyka
GAIL: Hannah Hiel
ROLAND: Michael Tibbs
AUNT RHONDA: Charlotte Holt

Act one

(A Fast Food Restaurant. BREE, 17, dressed up, sits on a plastic chair, highly annoyed. Cheesy music plays. DEVIN, 18, dressed in a ridiculous powder blue tux complete with cane and glove, approaches, carrying a tray.)

DEVIN

Here you go, baby.

(he sets the tray on the table, and hands BREE chicken nuggets and French fries.)

I got you a diet coke.

(BREE takes the diet coke and takes a sip.)

I'm not saying you're fat.

(BREE sets down the diet coke. Pause.)

What?

BREE

Why are we here?

DEVIN

We're having dinner. Um… hello? Eat up.

BREE

I'm not hungry.

DEVIN

Don't be like that.

BREE

What? I'm not hungry.

DEVIN

You're just pouting now. Why do chicks have to be like this?

BREE

We're at Wendy's.

DEVIN

I know that. I was driving the car.

BREE

It's homecoming.

DEVIN

Right.

BREE

We're at Wendy's and its homecoming.

DEVIN

I like Wendy's.

BREE

Oh my God.

DEVIN

What!

BREE

What do you think?

DEVIN

Why do you always play these mind games with me? Just tell me!

(BREE buries her head in her hands.)

Well I'm not playing, okay? We're gonna sit down and have a nice dinner here and you can either like it or not.

(DEVIN starts eating French fries.)

Oh man now my fries are cold. This always happens. Are you gonna eat yours?

(no response from BREE.)

Fine. Be that way. I'm eating your fries then.

(DEVIN starts eating BREE's fries.)

Is this about the fat thing? I think you look great. I hate skinny girls.

(BREE stares up at the ceiling in amazement.)

Well what is it then?! Tell me. Aggg! So I'm getting the silent treatment now, huh?

BREE

I just have no idea what to say to you.

DEVIN

How about you're so hot, Devin?

BREE

I'm not saying that.

DEVIN

You know what, sometimes you can be pretty mean.

BREE

Why are we at Wendy's?!

DEVIN

I like their nuggets and I was hungry!

BREE

Why aren't we going out to a nice restaurant?

DEVIN

What are you talking about?

BREE

You said we were going out before the dance.

DEVIN

Right. And here we are.

BREE

This is not going out!

DEVIN

Um… we are out, and we are having dinner. Well, I'm having dinner, you're just sitting there sulking cause I called you fat, *which I didn't even really call you!*

BREE

You didn't call me fat!

DEVIN

I know that!

BREE

I'm saying I would like to go to a better restaurant.

DEVIN

Well why didn't you just say that instead of playing all these evil games?

BREE *(trying to be calm)*

Devin. Can we please go to a different restaurant?

DEVIN

I just ate. I'm not hungry any more.

BREE

Okay, okay… you know what? We're breaking up!

DEVIN

Ah come on!

BREE

That's it. This is over.

DEVIN

You're crazy!

BREE

I'm crazy?!

DEVIN

Yeah, you and every chick like you is insane!

(BREE picks up chicken nuggets and throws them at DEVIN.)

What are you doing?! Those are perfectly good nuggets!

BREE

Fine! Eat them then!

DEVIN

Well now they've been on the floor!

BREE

Like you care about that!

(An EMPLOYEE, 19, geeky and awkward, approaches.)

EMPLOYEE

Um… excuse me?

DEVIN

Look, I'm trying to have a nice dinner here.

EMPLOYEE

Okay, and at Wendy's that's our goal, but um… the shouting and the food throwing is against our policy. Maybe you could -

DEVIN

You're impartial right?

BREE

I'm surprised you actually now what impartial means.

DEVIN

Can you explain to me why every chick is *freaking insane*!?

BREE

You're an idiot!

DEVIN

At least I'm an idiot with a full stomach!

BREE

That still makes you an idiot!

EMPLOYEE

Okay um… can you guys go somewhere else?

BREE

I'm not going anywhere with him!

DEVIN

Good!

BREE

Good!

DEVIN

I'm leaving then!

BREE

You do that!

(DEVIN gathers up all of the food on the table.)

DEVIN *(to EMPLOYEE)*

Can I get a bag for this?

(Lights down.)

(Lights up on BREE and EMPLOYEE in a car.)

EMPLOYEE

I apologize for the smell. The grease kind of stays with you after a while.

BREE

Oh.

EMPLOYEE

I try and try to wash it out, but… you know how it is. Well, you probably don't cause you're a girl.

(BREE tries to move a little bit farther away on her seat.)

BREE

Thanks for giving me a ride home –

EMPLOYEE

You'd be surprised at how often this happens at Wendy's.

BREE

Probably not.

EMPLOYEE

So um… is your house around here?

BREE

Yeah.

EMPLOYEE

Where is it?

BREE

You're not like a stalker or anything are you?

EMPLOYEE

Not usually. Just kidding. I don't do that any more. Just kidding again.
(he snorts a little)

BREE

I'm a little creeped out now.

EMPLOYEE

Don't look in the glovebox then. That was a joke.

BREE

Not helping…
(looks at his nametag)
Chuck.

EMPLOYEE

My name's not Chuck.

BREE

Why does it say Chuck on your nametag?

EMPLOYEE

It's an ironic nametag. It used to say Chuck Norris.

BREE

Oh.

EMPLOYEE

Like Chuck Norris was secretly working at the Wendy's and dressed up like me.

BREE

O-kay.

EMPLOYEE
But no one thought it was funny so I shortened it to Chuck. So um… so you're single now, right?

BREE
Okay can you just stop the car?

EMPLOYEE
No no I didn't mean it like that! I'm sorry. Do you want my wallet?

BREE *(mortally offended)*
What?!

EMPLOYEE
No I mean just so you know who I am –

BREE
I don't want your wallet!

EMPLOYEE
Okay. You don't have to take it.
(He goes back to driving. He steals a look at her.)
You know something? You have very elfin features.
(BREE is freaked out and says nothing. Pause.)
Not like one of Santa's elves, like a Lord of the Rings elf.
(She tries not to respond. Pause.)
That's a compliment.

BREE
I'd like to leave now thank you.

EMPLOYEE
But we haven't even gotten to your house.

BREE
Pull over the car.

EMPLOYEE *(pulling over)*
Oh man this always happens.

BREE
What always happens?

EMPLOYEE

Well, I meet a girl, and it's going really well and then… and then I just say the wrong thing. I'm such an idiot.

BREE

I wouldn't define `giving a girl a ride home from the fast-food restaurant where I work' as going really well.

EMPLOYEE

I'm not gonna work there my whole life, you know. I'm going to be a rocket scientist.

BREE

Ri-iight.

EMPLOYEE

I can do it. I have the test scores.

BREE

Yay for you.

EMPLOYEE

You know what's funny? I don't even know your name.

BREE

Let's keep it that way, shall we? Okay. Look, good luck with your weird issues and the rocket scientist thing.

EMPLOYEE

I've never kissed a girl.

BREE

And that. I gotta go.

EMPLOYEE

Can I call you sometime?

BREE

Ha.

(BREE leaves.)

EMPLOYEE *(to himself)*

Aw man. So close.

(Lights up on the living room of BREE's House. BRENDA, Bree's Mother, who dresses much younger than she should, is searching through the pillows of the couch.)

BRENDA

Where did you put it?

STANLEY *(off)*

Did you check on top of the television machine?

BRENDA

Yes I checked the "television machine."

STANLEY *(off)*

It might be in the cushions of the couch!

BRENDA

That's where I'm looking right now!

(BREE enters.)

BREE

Hey. I'm home.

BRENDA

Honey have you seen the remote control?

BREE

I'm home from homecoming and it's only eight o'clock.

BRENDA

Your father lost the remote control again.

(STANLEY enters; he is wearing his work clothes – a complete Shakespearean outfit complete with tights, tunic, codpiece, and extravagant boots. He looks absolutely ridiculous. He should probably have outlandish facial hair as well.)

STANLEY

For the last time woman, I did not lose the remote control!

BRENDA

When I'm done with the remote control, I put it on the arm of the couch. Right here. When you're done with the remote control, you just throw it somewhere.

STANLEY

Thou liest!

BRENDA

I've watched you do it for twenty-three years, Stanley. I know what you do.

STANLEY

Am I some kind of madman that tosses the remote control into the air when I'm done watching that infernal box? Dost that sound like me?

BRENDA

Yes. That sounds exactly like you!

STANLEY

I will not stand here and have my character assassinated.

BREE

Hi. I'm home.

STANLEY

Thou art a sight for sore eyes, Bree. Could you please explain to your mother that I am not criminally stupid?

BREE

Mom, Dad is not criminally stupid.

BRENDA

Bree, can you please tell your father that he looks ridiculous wearing his work clothes?

STANLEY

I have to break them in! This is a new outfit. If I don't break them in, my *thighs* get *chapped*, thou *knowest* this!

BRENDA

Well that would be a shame to hide those gorgeous pasty thighs away from the world. Seriously, Stanley, they look like two globs of pizza dough.

STANLEY

Oh the insults are flying fast and furious this evening.

BRENDA

Maybe one of these days when you're prancing about playing with your sword you can actually lift some weights or something.

STANLEY

So I'm supposed to get buffed up now? Is that what thou wishest? I should barge in here like Rocky the Hulk and smash things?

BRENDA

Who is Rocky the Hulk?

STANLEY

That wrestler fellow.

BRENDA

Hulk Hogan?

STANLEY

Who's Rocky the Hulk then?

BRENDA

There is no such person as Rocky the Hulk. You're confused.

STANLEY

Well how am I supposed to know this nonsense?

BRENDA

Join this century.

BREE

Hi Mom. Hi Dad.

STANLEY

Good evening, lass.

BRENDA

She's not a lass, she's your daughter. Can you please talk normal?!

STANLEY

What is odd about the way I speak?

BREE

So I'm home.

BRENDA

It's annoying, Stanley. Thee and thou and blah blah blah -

STANLEY

I need to stay in character!

BRENDA

Get out of character!

BREE

So is anyone gonna ask me why I'm home from the homecoming dance at eight o' clock?
(painful pause)

BRENDA

Why are you home from the homecoming dance at eight o' clock?

Skipping Forward

What's a counselor going to tell me?

BREE

They could help you sort out some of your issues and -

BRENDA

Maybe they could act like a referee and keep score over who's right and who's wrong.

BREE

I don't really think that's the point of counseling –

BRENDA

I'm signing up.

BREE

Okay –

BRENDA

Devin. Devin, Devin, Devin. Devin with the car.

BREE

He's been dumped.

BRENDA

Good riddance.

BREE

Yes.

BRENDA

Can I tell you something about love? Now, what your father and I have may not seem perfect, but we make it work, right?

BREE

I don't know that it really works, Mom.

BRENDA

No it works. It's messy, but it works. We made you, didn't we?

BREE

Yeah.

BRENDA

And that was a wonderful thing. It still is a wonderful thing. But sometimes your father… well… your father… you know when he puts on those tights and starts talking like that… well…

(BRENDA trails off with a forced smile.)

BREE

Well what?

BRENDA

You ever just want to punch somebody in the face? But that's love. Sometimes it's good and sometimes you just…

(she makes a fist.)

STANLEY *(off-stage, calling)*

Woman, bring me my mead!

(BRENDA cracks. Pause.)

BREE

Mom? Mom?

(BREE waves a hand in front of her face.)

BRENDA

I'm sorry what?

BREE

How do you make it work?

BRENDA

I have no idea.

(Lights change. BROCK, the marriage counselor enters. He looks like a lothario from the 70s, brightly colored shirt, perhaps a little mustache, open shirt. He saunters into his office, dancing a little bit to music.)

(There's a knock at the door.)

BROCK

Hold on.

(BROCK takes a mirror out of his back pocket. He smoothes his hair. He checks his teeth. He takes a bit of makeup and applies it to his face. There's another knock.)

(BROCK leans against his desk. He poses. He adjusts his pose. He undoes a button on his shirt. Then he redoes it. Another knock.)

Okay. Bring it on in.

(BRENDA and STANLEY enter. STANLEY is still dressed up in his Renaissance garb.)

Hey. You must be Brenda and… Stanley.

(He shoots out a hand to shake. He considers STANLEY.)

What's your deal?

STANLEY

I work at a Renaissance Festival.

BROCK *(utterly perplexed)*

A what?

BRENDA

It's sort of a theme park.

STANLEY

It is *not* a theme park. It is a cultural immersion experience, and I have to go straight to work after this, so…

BRENDA

It's kind of like a whole bunch of unattractive people pretending to live in the past.

BROCK

Renaissance Festival.

STANLEY

You should check it out.

BROCK

No. All right so… my name is Brock. And I'm going to save your marriage. First things first. My methods may be unorthodox, but I can assure you that I am the greatest marriage counselor in this town.

BRENDA

Good. Good.

BROCK

So let's get on with it!

(BROCK takes out a remote control and presses a button. Stirring emotional music plays.)

STANLEY

What's that for?

BROCK

Don't worry about it Romeo. Okay. Brenda. That's a pretty name.

BRENDA

Thank you.

BROCK

Why are you here?

BRENDA

Well… lately, I feel like the fire has gone out. I just look at Stanley in those tights and…

BROCK

Nothing.

BRENDA

Exactly. And I feel like he takes me for granted.

STANLEY

I do not.

BROCK

Hey! It's the lady's turn. He takes you for granted?

BRENDA

Yeah, like… I want him to fight for me, you know?

BROCK

Uh huh. Uh huh. I'm going to ask you some personal questions now. Don't be afraid. Take my hands.

STANLEY

What are you doing?

BROCK

HEY! Don't interrupt. Let's talk about passion.

BRENDA

We just got here.

BROCK

Shhh. Look at him. Tell me what you think.

BRENDA

I think he looks ridiculous. And…

BROCK

Let it out. Unleash the river within.

BRENDA

I don't know that I have a river within.

BROCK

Oh you have one.

BRENDA

Do I?

BROCK

Oh yes. And it's a raging rapid. Churning. And churning.

BRENDA

Wow. I feel kind of funny.

STANLEY

This seems a little strange.

BROCK

You know what's a little strange, George Washington? A grown man prancing around in tights, that's what's a little strange.

STANLEY

That's not remotely the right time period.

BROCK

I don't care if you're Abraham Lincoln, no one interrupts me when I'm in the zone. Got it? We'll get to you. Take a chill pill. I'm beginning to see the problem here.

(to BRENDA)

Talk to me.

BRENDA

Also… he's in character all the time – is it so bad to want him to live in this century?

(STANLEY is about to say something, but stops himself.)

I just… when we were first going out Stanley was an actor and he got this part in a Windex commercial. And it was like, every time I turned the T.V. on, there was Stanley talking about how clean his windows were – you know the commercial where the birds are like smashing into the windows?

BROCK

No but I can imagine it.

(BROCK imagines it.)

That's funny.

BRENDA

Right. But he was on T.V. all the time. And it was great. I was so in love with him.

BROCK

Because of his windows.

BRENDA

Because he was famous. And then… well… he got typecast as the window guy and couldn't get any other gigs so he took this job as the Renaissance Festival like nine years ago and he's been like this ever since.

BROCK

That's sick.

STANLEY

I'm following my passion, Brenda.

BROCK

HEY! We'll get to your passion, Genghis Khan.

BRENDA

Well, it might be his passion, but it's not mine, you know?

BROCK

I got you. You know something? You got a great voice.

BRENDA

Really?

BROCK

Yeah it's mellifluous.

BRENDA

Ooh.

STANLEY

Are you hitting on my wife?

BROCK

I'm a professional. Okay? If I do hit on your wife, rest assured I have my reasons and you will know them when the time is appropriate.

STANLEY

What?

BROCK

Moving on. I'm gonna lay it out for you straight cause I respect you people. Here's what you need to do:

(Lights down on him and up on the other side of the stage. BREE and her friend KATLEIGH are in the living room.)

KATLEIGH

Your parents are getting divorced?!

BREE

Yep.

KATLEIGH

Are you serious?

BREE

Apparently the marriage counselor convinced them.

KATLEIGH

Oh my God!

BREE

I know. My parents can't get divorced, it's not –

KATLEIGH *(cutting her off)*

This is horrifying. This could happen to anyone. What if it happened to me and Chase?

BREE

You're not married. You can't get divorced.

KATLEIGH

Check it out!

(She shows her ring finger.)

I'm getting married! Woo!

BREE

That's a class ring.

KATLEIGH

We're using it as an engagement ring until he can save up enough money to buy one. I'm getting married!

BREE

You're sixteen.

KATLEIGH

I know! How awesome is this?!

BREE

You can't get married at sixteen.

KATLEIGH

My Mom totally approves. But here's the best part: I want you to be my maid of honor.

BREE

Really?

KATLEIGH

Please? It would mean so much to me.

BREE

This seems a little rushed, Katleigh.

KATLEIGH

When you know, you know. He's the one. It's just like that Taylor Swift song. Love story. It came true.

BREE

Okay.

KATLEIGH

What's your deal?

BREE

I'm just not all that keen on love right now. I mean, my parents have been together for twenty-three years and all of a sudden –

KATLEIGH

That's because they weren't soul mates like me and Chase. We know about love.

BREE

I'm sure you do.

KATLEIGH

You know what you need Bree? A new boyfriend.

BREE

I just dumped my old boyfriend!

KATLEIGH

And now you're single. Which is another word for desperate.

BREE

You can be single and not desperate.

KATLEIGH

Please. I think I know a little bit more about this than you do. I haven't been single for more than two days since the fourth grade. And believe me, fourth grade was a pretty dark time in my life.

BREE

I'm fine with being single.

KATLEIGH

Oh Bree. You make me smile sometimes. We'll get you through this together. The first question you need to ask yourself is: what is wrong with me that I cannot accept love?

BREE

What?

KATLEIGH

You had a perfectly good guy –

BREE

He took me to Wendy's for homecoming.

KATLEIGH

So?

BREE

So that's ridiculous.

KATLEIGH

Maybe the fault was with you, huh? Maybe the Wendy's… is inside you.

BREE

That doesn't make any sense at all.

KATLEIGH

Whenever I have a problem with Chase or he does something I don't like, I take a step back and think: how did I cause Chase to behave like that? Men are like dogs, Bree. You have to train them. And if they misbehave, then you've failed in your training. They can't help it. You didn't give Devin the right road map for homecoming, so he disappointed you.

BREE

You're a little bit insane, you know that?

KATLEIGH

But I'm happy, and isn't that what matters? Let's go get a smoothie.

BREE

I can't. I gotta go help my Dad move out.

(They exit. Lights change.)

(STANLEY'S new apartment. A cramped space. BREE enters carrying a box. The only furniture is an inflatable chair.)

BREE

Is this it?

(STANLEY is right behind her with a suitcase and a sword. He is dressed in normal clothes.)

STANLEY

This is it.

BREE

It's um… it's small.

STANLEY

I'm trying to live simply.

BREE

Where's the furniture?

(STANLEY gestures toward the inflatable chair.)

That's it?

STANLEY

It's actually pretty comfortable to sleep on. I just deflate it a little bit and then I can um…

BREE

Maybe you should just apologize to Mom.

STANLEY

For what?

BREE

For anything you can think of.

STANLEY

Sorry honey. The woman has cast me out. I have no choice now but to go into exile. Do you want something to drink?

BREE

Sure.

STANLEY

Okay I have um… tap water. The stuff from the kitchen appears to be poisoned, but I can go in the bathroom and -

BREE

Skipping Forward

STANLEY

You're right. You are right. How did you get to be so smart? You deserve a good man. My new mission is to make –

BREE

No I'm the one with the mission –

STANLEY

My mission will be to find you a man.

BREE

No it won't. I'm fine. Okay? I have many boyfriends.

STANLEY

Cads and miscreants.

BREE

Did you meet any of them?

STANLEY

I met the one with the goatee.

BREE

There was no one with the goatee!

STANLEY

Who am I thinking of then?

BREE

I don't know.

STANLEY

You're right. I have no idea who these boys were. None at all. I have been a terrible father.

BREE

You aren't a terrible father.

STANLEY

I am. I have been so wrapped up in my persona that I have ignored the flower growing in my own garden.

BREE

That's a weird metaphor.

STANLEY

And the flower has borne such glorious fruit. It all ends now Bree. I will be the father I always wanted to be. I will take an interest in you, I will find you a lad, I will be the gardener, and I will cultivate you with –

BREE

If you start talking about fertilizer I'm leaving.

STANLEY

Sorry. Going off into Work Dad.

BREE

Right. Focus on Real Dad.

STANLEY

Real Dad doesn't even know who you are. Real Dad laughs about calling himself Real Dad because –

BREE

Real Dad needs to stop talking about himself in the third person.

STANLEY

Sorry. Oh I'm a horrible father. I don't even know when your birthday is.

BREE

This Saturday.

STANLEY

It is?

BREE

Don't you know that?

STANLEY

Let's have a party!

BREE

I'm a little old for birthday parties –

STANLEY

No I'm going to make up for sixteen years of being a bad father –

BREE

Seventeen.

STANLEY

Seventeen – no I was good the first year. We shall have a festival! A festival of Bree!

BREE

Let's focus on your life instead. Let's find you someone special.

STANLEY

Nonsense! Okay… a festival… what are we going to need?

BREE

Furniture.

STANLEY

That might be tough.

(Lights shift back to BREE's house. BRENDA enters. She looks fantastic.)

BRENDA

Have you chopped up the onions yet?

(BREE enters.)

BREE

They're in the fridge.

BRENDA

You're not wearing that, are you?

BREE

I was thinking about wearing a bikini.

BRENDA

Go change.

BREE

What is wrong with this outfit?

BRENDA

Maybe you don't understand the importance of tonight's dinner.

BREE

I get it, Mom.

BRENDA

Well I don't want you looking like that.

BREE

Like what?

BRENDA

Like some kind of little tartlet.

BREE

I'm not a tartlet! This is how people dress!

BRENDA

That is how people dress when they're trying to entice boys at the mall.

BREE

Oh my God, Mom.

BRENDA

Listen to me young lady: tonight is my chance to introduce you to my new boyfriend and his family and I can't have you parading around here like a banana split.

BREE

Aren't you moving a little quickly here?

BRENDA

The future is now, Bree. I am a new woman. I feel like a two-hundred pound tumor has been cut off my back and I'm not going to waste one single day wallowing in pity. You understand? This is the new me. I feel like roaring. Do you want to roar with me?

BREE

I'm not really in the roaring mood right now.

BRENDA

I am. Roar! Wow. Boy that feels good.

BREE

Aren't you concerned about Dad's feelings?

BRENDA

Why would I be concerned about your father's feelings?

BREE

Because you were married to him for twenty years?

BRENDA

This is the greatest thing I have ever done, sweetie. I feel like myself again. I feel like a panther with wings.

(the doorbell rings.)

That's him. Cover yourself.

(BRENDA takes a blanket and throws it on BREE.)

Come in!

(KATLEIGH enters.)

KATLEIGH

Hey.

BRENDA

Oh it's you. Don't you look… seductive?

BREE

Mom!

BRENDA *(leaving)*

Let's all dress like harlots then!

KATLEIGH

What did I do? What's a harlot?

BREE

It's a German word for motorcycle.

KATLEIGH

What's wrong with your Mom?

BREE

She's got a date tonight.
(BRENDA returns.)

BRENDA

It's not a date. This is dinner. Okay? Let's just put those rumors to bed. How do I look?

BREE

Stunning.

KATLEIGH

I hope I look that good when I'm old.

BRENDA

Thanks Katleigh. That really makes me feel good about myself.

KATLEIGH

Seriously. You should see my Mom. You're at least trying.

BRENDA

You are so sweet.

KATLEIGH

You know what though? Can I just… can I – here -

(KATLEIGH takes out her makeup)

Sit.

BRENDA

Well I don't know – I need to check on the roast -

BREE

Mom, Katleigh's an expert. I'll check on dinner.

KATLEIGH

This is all I do. I don't learn anything at school at all.

BRENDA

Okay.

(BRENDA sits in the chair as KATLEIGH applies makeup.)

KATLEIGH

Let's have a look at you. Okay. Now you've done some good things here, but I think we can make some improvements.

BRENDA

Bree go change.

BREE

What did I do?

BRENDA

Go change.

BREE

This is so unfair!

(BREE exits.)

KATLEIGH

So tell me about this guy.

BRENDA

Well he's um…

KATLEIGH

Look up.

BRENDA

He's nice. Well he's confident.

KATLEIGH

That's great. Look over here. So does he give you the feelings?

BRENDA

What?

KATLEIGH

You know what I'm talking about.

BRENDA

I guess. A little. Butterflies maybe.

KATLEIGH

That's nice. There's nothing like falling in love. I remember when I met my fiancé, it was… it was magical.

BRENDA

You have a fiancé?

KATLEIGH

Oh yeah. He's my soul-mate.

BRENDA

Wow.

KATLEIGH

I know. There we go. You look smashing.

BRENDA

I haven't dated in a long time.

KATLEIGH

It shows.

BRENDA

In a bad way?

KATLEIGH

I find that most men are attracted to vulnerability.

BRENDA

Well I'm done being vulnerable. I am a fierce wind.

KATLEIGH

You go girl.

(BREE enters. She looks slightly more provocative than last time.)

BRENDA

No.

BREE

What?

BRENDA

Go change.

BREE

You have gone insane!
(the doorbell rings.)

BRENDA

Back. Get back.

KATLEIGH

Calm down, Brenda. Breathe. You are a fierce wind.

BRENDA

I am a fierce wind.

KATLEIGH

Let him come to you.

BRENDA

Okay.

KATLEIGH

But you still have to get the door.

BRENDA

Oh.
(BRENDA goes to the door. BROCK is there, carrying a bucket of clams.)

BROCK

Hola.

BRENDA

Hi.

BROCK *(to KATLEIGH)*

And you must be the daughter.

BRENDA

Actually, no that's the daughter's friend. That's Bree over there.

BREE

Hi.

BROCK

What's up?

BREE

Just hanging.

BROCK

Sweet. I brought a bucket of clams.

BRENDA

All right.

BREE

Just what we needed.

BROCK

Clams are stacked with nutrients. Keeps you pumped up. I eat about twenty a day.

BRENDA

That's a lot of nutrients.

BROCK

You bet.

BRENDA

Well, I have a fabulous dinner prepared and it is just about ready to pop out of the oven, so if you want to set down your clams –

BROCK

I'll set down my clams for you any time.

BRENDA

I bet you will.

BREE

It's getting a little awkward in here.

BRENDA

Sorry.

(The timer rings from the other room.)

Can you go get that?

BREE

Sure. I'm just a servant girl, anyway.
(BREE exits.)

BRENDA

Weren't you bringing your boys?

BROCK

They don't do well in social situations.

BRENDA

You didn't bring them?

BROCK

They're outside. Waiting to make sure everything is kosher.

BRENDA

Oh.

BROCK

Don't worry.
(He moves to the door and shouts out)
Lock and load boys! Come on! Nobody's gonna bite you unless you ask for it!
(ALAN, 27, enters first, followed by GABE, 19, who just happens to be the EMPLOYEE from Wendy's.)

ALAN

Dad. Loser there totally farted in the car.

GABE

I did not.

ALAN

It was heinous. You have to change his diet.

GABE

You are such a liar, Alan!

ALAN

Shut up before I hit you again.

BROCK

Boys. Zip it.

BRENDA

Hi.

BROCK

I would like to present the beautiful, talented Brenda.

GABE

I'd like to apologize in advance for him; he has a hormone imbalance that we're –

ALAN

You're a hormone imbalance.

BROCK

Boy number one is Alan boy number two is Gabe.

ALAN

Gaaaaaaayyyyybe.

GABE

Shut up!

ALAN

Gaaayyyyybe.

BROCK

Hey. HEY! He is named after my uncle who was very beautiful man with a tortured soul, all right? You are not going to disparage that name with humorous puns.

ALAN

I wasn't doing anything.

(BREE returns.)

BREE

We're good to go.

BRENDA

Honey, these are Brock's sons: Alan and Gabe.

(GABE and BREE come face to face.)

BREE

Oh. Hi.

GABE

Hi. Bree, huh?

BREE

That's my name.

BROCK

Well quit staring at her like a moose and get over to the table.

ALAN

Yeah numnuts.

(BROCK smacks ALAN in the back of the head.)

BROCK

That's enough Alan.

BRENDA

Well I've put a little name card where you're supposed to sit. So find your name and sit down. Bree can you get us some water?

ALAN

I'll have a Pepsi.

BREE

We're fresh out of Pepsi, but um –

GABE

Do you have RC?

ALAN

Nobody has RC except aliens, dorkwad.

BREE

We don't have RC either but –

BROCK

Hey. HEY! This isn't a restaurant. Water will be fine.

BREE

Would you like some lemon in it?

BROCK

That would be great, sweetheart.

BRENDA

I'll have some too, honey.

(BREE exits.)

KATLEIGH

Where am I supposed to sit?

BRENDA

Oh that's right you don't have a card. We weren't expecting Katleigh.

KATLEIGH

I'm like a little fairy.

ALAN

So's Gabe.

GABE

Shut up!

(BRENDA gets up to write another card.)

KATLEIGH

Can I just pull up a chair?

BRENDA

Don't be silly. We have to write you a card first.

KATLEIGH

I'm okay without the card.

BRENDA

Everyone needs a card.

KATLEIGH

Okay then.

BROCK

This looks great.

KATLEIGH

There's not any food on the table yet.

BROCK

Presentation is important.

BRENDA

I'm so glad you think that way.

BROCK

And I'm glad you think I think that way.

BRENDA

I feel like so few things are presented well these days.

BROCK

In my practice, I try to create an aura of invincibility, you know? Stop that!

GABE

What was I doing?

BROCK

Quit fingering your silverware before we eat!

GABE

I wasn't touching anything!

ALAN

I'm gonna pound you when we get home, Gabe.

GABE

What did I do?

BROCK

Shut it. All right?

(BREE returns with the waters.)

BREE

Okay. And five waters.

BROCK

This is amazing. Like I was saying: presentation.

BREE

Where am I sitting?

BRENDA

Can you bring out the salad, Bree? As long as you're up?

BREE

Does everyone want salad?

BROCK

Yes.

GABE

I don't want salad. Bree I was wondering if –

BROCK

Yes you do. You need roughage.

GABE

I'm fine without the salad. But as I was saying –

BROCK

Bring him a salad.

ALAN

Do you have French dressing?

BREE

I'll check.

BRENDA

Thanks, sweetheart.

BREE

Do you want some, Katleigh?

KATLEIGH

That'd be great.

ALAN

Can I have mine without tomatoes?

BREE

Let me talk to the chef.
(BREE exits.)

BROCK

She's a good one. I can tell that right away. I find obedience in children appealing.

KATLEIGH

Oh yeah, she's brimming with obedience.

GABE

Really?

ALAN

What's for dinner?

BROCK

You shut your mouth and be polite.

ALAN

What did I say?

BROCK

Skipping Forward

BROCK

Alan. Enough. Gabe, this is a polite dinner. We are being polite.

GABE

I'm trying to be polite but you won't let me!

(BREE returns balancing all of the salads.)

BREE

Okay, five salads.

GABE

You always do this to me!

BROCK

What am I doing? What am I doing, huh?

BREE

And you had the French dressing, right?

BROCK

Just suck it up and act like a man!

GABE

I'm a man who needs to go to the bathroom!

ALAN

Dad, may I please use the lavatory?

BROCK

Yes Alan.

(ALAN gets up.)

GABE

Are you kidding me?!

(GABE runs to stop ALAN, but BROCK intercepts him.)

BROCK

Sit down!

GABE

No I asked first!

BROCK

You did not ask properly! Do you want me to floor you?

GABE

This is ridiculous!

BROCK

Sit down.

GABE

Fine.

(GABE sits. BREE hands him a salad and sits down.)

BROCK

All right then.

(BROCK sits down. Pause.)

KATLEIGH

This is nice.

(KATLEIGH begins to eat her salad. Pause.)

BROCK

This is a spectacular salad, by the way.

BRENDA

Thank you Brock.

BROCK

I love the way the lettuce compliments the cucumbers.

BRENDA

I'm glad you noticed.

BROCK

It's… sensuous.

(BREE coughs up her salad.)

BRENDA

Are you all right, dear?

BREE

I'm fine.

GABE

So Bree. I'm curious: how is your love life?

BROCK

What are you doing?!

KATLEIGH

I'll use one word to describe it. Disaster. She can't accept love.

BRENDA

Well you know, Brock is a really good counselor.

BROCK

That's awesome that you say that.

BREE

I don't need a counselor. I'm perfectly fine. How is your love life Gabe?

GABE

About the same.

BRENDA

I don't know what's going on. Bree can you bring out the roast please?

BREE

No I cannot bring out the roast!

BRENDA

What is wrong with you?

BREE

First of all, I'm not a waitress, and second of all, what the heck is going on?

BRENDA

What are you talking about?

BROCK

Time for some counseling. Things are confusing for you right now –

BREE

No – hey, let my Mom handle it. I don't know who you are.

BROCK

My name's Brock.

BREE

I'm aware of that!

(ALAN returns from the bathroom.)

Just please tell me why we have to sit here and have dinner with these people!

KATLEIGH

I thought I was your friend.

BREE

Not you!

ALAN

Why's she freaking out?

BREE

I'm not freaking out!

BRENDA

Fine. I had hoped to do this after we'd had the roast, but apparently the roast is being held hostage. Brock, would you like to join me?

BROCK

Yes I would.

BREE

Join you at what?

(BROCK and BRENDA stand up and head to the end of the table. They hold hands.)

KATLEIGH

That's sweet.

BREE

I don't like this. What's going on?

GABE

This doesn't look good.

BRENDA

Okay… Honey? You know how you're worried about not having a man around?

BREE

No.

BROCK

And Gabe, you know how I don't understand your feminine qualities?

ALAN

Gaaaaayyyybe.

GABE

Shut up!

BRENDA

And you know how you always wanted brothers?

BROCK

And you know how you always wondered what it would be like to have a sister?

BRENDA

Well… we're getting married! Boys, I'm your new Mom.

BROCK

And I'm your new Daddy.

KATLEIGH

Yay!

(Lights out.)

STANLEY and OTHERS *(singing in the dark)*

Happy Birthday to you! Happy Birthday to you! Happy Birthday dear Bree! Happy Birthday to you!

(Lights up on STANLEY's apartment. STANLEY, KATLEIGH, and CHASE, and others are standing in a very small area with the inflatable chair. BREE squeezes in.)

BREE

Thanks.

KATLEIGH

This is such a special day!

STANLEY

Who's ready for pin the tail on the donkey?

BREE

Dad, I'm eighteen, not eight.

STANLEY

Well now that you're an adult, I got a pin the tail on the donkey from the adult store.

BREE

What?

STANLEY

I'm just kidding! Let's set it up right here. Excuse me.

(STANLEY pushes past CHASE and starts to set up pin-the-tail on the donkey on the inflatable chair.)

KATLEIGH

Bree, you remember my fiancé.

BREE

Hey.

CHASE

Hey.

KATLEIGH

Well say something to her.

CHASE

Happy birthday, Bree. I'm gonna go get a soda.
(CHASE turns around.)

KATLEIGH

Isn't he awesome!?

BREE

I guess.

KATLEIGH

You guess. You're funny. Chase come here.

CHASE

I'm getting a soda!

KATLEIGH

Come here now.
(CHASE returns without the soda.)

CHASE

What?

KATLEIGH

Do you love me?

CHASE

Yes.

KATLEIGH

Okay now you can get a soda.
(CHASE throws up his hands and tries to get another soda.)
What do you think about that?

BREE

That's pretty amazing.

KATLEIGH

I know. Training. Watch this.

(CHASE returns with the soda. KATLEIGH immediately looks sad.)

CHASE

What?

KATLEIGH

It's nothing.

CHASE

What's wrong, honey?

KATLEIGH

You didn't get me a soda?

CHASE

Oh.

KATLEIGH

It's okay. I didn't want one.

CHASE

No here have mine.

KATLEIGH

Are you sure?

CHASE

I'll get another one. I love you.

KATLEIGH

Bye.

(CHASE leaves to get another soda.)

I can do that all day long! You need a boyfriend.

BREE

I have actual hands, I'm not sure I need a boyfriend.

STANLEY

Okay, I think we're ready for pin-the-tail on the… whoops.

(there's a slight pop.)

Uh-oh. I think I put a hole in my chair. Oh no.

BREE

It's okay, Dad.

STANLEY

It's all going wrong. This is becoming a nightmare. I can only hope your mother is as miserable and sad as I am.

BREE

Dad. Chill.

STANLEY

I can hear the snake moving Bree. It's coming for me.

BREE

Breathe.

KATLEIGH

It's okay to fail. You have to give yourself permission. I do it in school all the time and I'm cool with it.

STANLEY

I just want to make sure everything is perfect for my girl. What time is it?

BREE

It's five o' clock.

STANLEY

Okay great.

BREE

Why great?

STANLEY

You'll see.

BREE

See what?

STANLEY

Don't worry, Bree, I'm going to make everything up to you.

BREE

I don't need everything made up to me, I'm doing fine, I just want you to be happy. Tell you what, I have this great teacher at school who's single –

KATLEIGH

Who?

BREE

Miss Arbus.

KATLEIGH

Oh she's disgusting!

BREE

No she's nice, she's very attractive, and she's recently divorced, and I could set you guys up on a date –

KATLEIGH

I hate her!

STANLEY

That's very nice honey, but let's focus on –

(the doorbell rings. STANLEY assumes a conspiratorial pose.)

I wonder who that could be?

(He gets the door. GABE is there, holding a small present.)

GABE

I made it!

STANLEY

Who are you?

GABE

I'm Bree's new –

BREE

Friend. He's my new friend. Gabe. This is my father.

GABE

Hello sir. I have to say your neighborhood terrifies me.

STANLEY

Me too. If you'll excuse me, I have to save my furniture.

(STANLEY resumes trying to re-inflate the chair.)

GABE

After I parked my car I swear a rat threw a garbage can at me. Him and his friends.

BREE

You know it's funny seeing you here since I didn't invite you.

GABE

I figured you might need a ride home. And my Dad had the billing address. Here.
(He hands her the present.)
It's a birthday present. A token of my esteem.

KATLEIGH

Chase never gets me anything.

CHASE

I get you stuff all the time!

KATLEIGH

When was the last time you got me something?

CHASE

Today. I got you a smoothie.

KATLEIGH

You are so disappointing sometimes.

CHASE

What did I do?

KATLEIGH

If you can't figure it out, I'm not getting to tell you.

CHASE

I'm sorry!

KATLEIGH

What are you sorry for? Be specific.

CHASE *(utterly confused)*

I… have no idea.

KATLEIGH

Then you're not sorry. Apology not accepted.

CHASE

Is it about the smoothie?

BREE

Chase, it's never about the smoothie.

KATLEIGH *(walking off)*

I'm not talking to you.

(CHASE tries to follow.)

CHASE

Do you want me to buy you something?

KATLEIGH

You need to think of these things on your own.

BREE

Don't mind Katleigh. She thinks of a relationship as psychological warfare.
(BREE finishes unwrapping the present.)
Buffy the Vampire Slayer?

GABE

Season Three, the best season. With director's commentary. I also got this signed by Joss Whedon and Sarah Michelle Gellar looked at it. She didn't sign, though. She has a bit of an attitude in real life.

BREE

Oh. Um… well…

GABE

I thought it was appropriate seeing as how on Buffy's 18th birthday she wanted to spend quiet time with her father only to be trapped into a sadistic ritual where her slayer powers were stolen.

BREE

That does kind of describe tonight. This is kind of sweet in a geeky way.
(The doorbell rings.)

STANLEY *(conspiratorial)*

I wonder who that could be?

BREE

That's beginning to worry me.
(A CLOWN bursts in)

CLOWN

HI THERE! I'm Squeaky!!
(He honks his nose.)
And I heard through the grapevine that there's a little girl here having a birthday party! Where's Bree?

BREE

That would be me.

CLOWN

Wow you're hot. I mean… hi there little girl! Would you like to shake my hand?

BREE

Um…

(The CLOWN sprays her with a squirting flower.)

CLOWN

Hee hee hee!

KATLEIGH

I love clowns! Don't you love clowns, Chase?

CHASE

What?

KATLEIGH

Don't you love clowns, Chase?

CHASE

Yes. Yes I do.

CLOWN

Okay now I need the birthday girl to sit on my lap and tell me what she'd like for her birthday…

(the CLOWN looks around)

Can I get a chair or something?

BREE

Can we skip this part?

CLOWN

It's very important.

STANLEY

We're uh… we're out of chairs.

CLOWN

How can you be out of chairs?

STANLEY

Our chair died. Um…

CLOWN

Maybe Squeaky can just sit on the floor then! Let's clear off some room!

BREE

No no no – I'm not sitting on your lap, okay? So just drop that out of your little clown brain.

CLOWN

Oh. Okay.

BREE

Cool? Just sit in the corner and make balloon animals or something.

CLOWN

Would you like a giraffe?

KATLEIGH

I would!

CLOWN

Two dollars.

BREE

For a balloon animal? Aren't you getting paid to be here?

CLOWN

Squeaky's got to make a living.

KATLEIGH

That's okay Chase will pay for it.

CHASE

I will?

KATLEIGH

You're not going to pay for it? Really? Oh.
(KATLEIGH looks sad.)
I guess I won't get one then.

CHASE

Here's two bucks.

KATLEIGH

Yay!
(the CLOWN begins making a balloon giraffe.)

CLOWN

Now I warn you I'm not very good at this.

GABE

Maybe you should get some training.

CLOWN

I don't need the attitude.

STANLEY

All right, it's time to set up the projector.

BREE

What projector?

STANLEY

Just part of the festivities.

CLOWN

Um… does anyone here actually know how to make a balloon giraffe?

KATLEIGH

So Gabe if you were dating someone you would know what they wanted, right?

GABE

What?

KATLEIGH

Let's say you had a girlfriend –

BREE

We're stretching reality here.

KATLEIGH

It's a hypothetical, and she was mad at you, what would you do to make her feel better?

GABE

What did I do wrong?

KATLEIGH

You don't remember. That's part of the problem. You never know what you've done wrong –

CHASE

Because you won't tell me!

KATLEIGH

I can't hear you until you apologize properly.

CHASE

Just tell me what I did!

GABE

Well I think of love as the most special thing in the world, and I would do whatever it takes to preserve it.

KATLEIGH

See! Why can't you say things like that?

CHASE

Can you write that down for me?

STANLEY

Okay, everyone! It's time for the slide show! Everybody have a seat! Try and find a place to sit down.

(The CLOWN sits down. BREE avoids him.)

Can somebody get the lights?

KATLEIGH

Chase.

(CHASE gets up and the lights go down.)

STANLEY

Okay, I spent a lot of time on this my computer – I call this: The life and times of Bree. A study in photography. Hold on. Does anyone know how this works?

KATLEIGH

Chase get up there.

CHASE

Sorry.

BREE

You know what Dad we don't really need to see the slideshow –

CHASE

I got it.

BREE

Darn it.

STANLEY

All right. Here we go. Where to start? How about… at the beginning? Here we are on the way to the hospital.

(A light shines on them from off-stage. The pictures are not visible.)

Skipping Forward

BREE

What?

GABE

It was right there.

BREE

Well where is it now?

GABE

How am I supposed to know?

BREE

It's your car!

GABE

Well normally when I park my car somewhere it stays there.

BREE

This is not happening.

GABE

They've stolen it.

BREE

Oh come on.

GABE

It didn't just grow feet and walk away! Look around you! The hordes of the underworld crawled out of the sewers and stole my car! Why does your Dad have to live in the hood?

BREE

Cause he's poor and single and that's what you do when you get divorced!

(GABE pulls out a cell phone. He dials 911. BREE takes out her phone and dials.)

GABE *(into phone)*

Hello? 911. I'd like to report a stolen car.

BREE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

Katleigh? You know how I said Gabe was going to give me a ride home?

GABE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

Yes it's an emergency! Like five minutes ago! Look, I am stranded in an extremely sketchy neighborhood and I'm going to be mugged any second –

BREE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

What are you talking about? Come get me. I don't care if you're having special time with Chase, come and pick me up –

GABE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

I just saw someone peeing against the wall. They are peeing right now!

(GABE puts the phone down and shouts at someone off-stage)

Hey! I SEE YOU! NOT COOL!

(back into phone)

I'm going to die here – no it hasn't been 24 hours!

BREE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

I don't care that you're in love, I don't care that you're having alone time –

GABE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

Why does it have to be missing 24 hours!? It's not a toddler it's a car! I AM IN THE GHETTO AND I AM DELICATE. Do you understand what that means?!

BREE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

Fine!

GABE *(into phone, simultaneous)*

Fine!

(They both hang up.)

Um… Maybe we should go back inside.

BREE

I'm not going back up there. The clown is still there negotiating his fee.

GABE

I don't care. We are in danger.

BREE

Oh come on it's not that bad.

GABE

They STOLE my CAR. Criminals from the street spotted it and hotwired it or whatever and now it is gone.

BREE

How did they steal it?

GABE

Do I look like a detective? They used street knowledge. That's what they learn instead of going to school. Like there are little kindergarten programs where they teach carjacking and drug dealing.

BREE

Oh come on. Did you lock it?

GABE

Of course I locked it.

BREE

How do you know you locked it?

GABE

Because I did. I touched my little…
(GABE reaches into his pocket.)
Where's my fob?

BREE

Your fob?

GABE

You know the little beep-beep thingie.

BREE

That's called a fob?

GABE

Yes that's called a fob. Where is it?

BREE

Maybe robbers stole it.

GABE

Somebody took my fob. Oh my God someone's going to kill me tonight.

BREE

Is it possible you left it in the car?

GABE

Why would I leave it in the car?

BREE

Because you're an idiot and that's what idiots do.

GABE *(a horrible realization)*

I left it in my car.

BREE

You left it in your car?

GABE

That's what I just said!

BREE

Ug.

GABE

Oh God I'm dead. I just realized something. There's mail in my car.

BREE

So?

GABE

So there's mail in the car.

BREE

Again. So?

GABE

It has my address on it.

BREE

Yeah?

GABE

They can find me.

BREE

Why would they do that?

GABE

Why do they do anything?!

BREE

They stole your car, they find a piece of mail, and they return to your house with the car?

GABE

Actually, your house. Our house.

BREE

Why would any criminal steal a car and then go to the house of the person they stole it from?

GABE

To finish the job.

BREE
They already finished the job! They've got the car!

GABE
I'm not saying it makes sense. But it's possible.

BREE
No it's not!

GABE
It's not like we're dealing with rocket scientists here.

BREE
Oh right, that's you, professor.

GABE
I am going to be a rocket scientist.

BREE
Well you're gonna have a hard time piloting your rocket if you leave your fob in it!

GABE
Rockets don't have fobs!

BREE
It's your lucky day then!

GABE
Can we please go back inside?!

BREE
I'm not going back in there!

GABE
What are we gonna do then, walk?

BREE
Unless you have a better idea.

(Lights down. Lights up on the CLOWN's car. BREE sits in the front seat. GABE sits in the back.)

CLOWN
Good thing I found ya.

BREE

Yeah.

GABE

I've never ridden in a clown car before.

CLOWN

I don't find that funny, all right?

GABE

Can you fit like ten other clowns in here?

CLOWN

Well right now I got one moron.

GABE

I resent that.

CLOWN

You wanna get out? I'll stop right now and kick your butt out.

GABE

Fine. You know you're not a very jolly clown.

CLOWN

I'm off the clock.

BREE

Gabe just be quiet, okay?
(GABE throws up his hands.)

CLOWN

That was a super party your Dad threw.

BREE

Oh yeah.

CLOWN

So you're eighteen?

BREE

Yeah.

CLOWN

Cool.
(short pause)
So where do you live?

BREE

I'll give you directions.

GABE

Oh you'll give the clown directions but you wouldn't give me directions?

CLOWN

I thought you were shutting up.

GABE

Why do you trust this guy more than you trusted me?

CLOWN

All right I'm stopping the car.

BREE

No, don't, just –

CLOWN

Last chance, buddy.

BREE

Just ignore him.

CLOWN

So uh… are you dating anybody?

BREE

You know what, I'm in a relationship.

CLOWN

So am I, but I got an understanding with my lady.

BREE

Getting a little weird now. I don't date clowns.

CLOWN

What do you got against clowns? Tell you what, can I holler at you some time?

GABE

Can you *holler* at her?

CLOWN

Shut up!

GABE

I'm right here, okay? You're hitting on her and I'm right here.

CLOWN

So?

GABE

So how do you know I'm not her boyfriend?

CLOWN

You're dating this chick? Yeah right. She's fine.

GABE

So?

CLOWN

So you're not dating her.

GABE

I am so dating this `chick', as you so eloquently put it.

CLOWN

No you're not.

GABE

Yes I am. We're madly in love.

CLOWN

This nerd is not dating you.

GABE

Yes this nerd is dating her.

BREE

Yes this nerd is dating me.

CLOWN

No way.

BREE

He is.

CLOWN

Prove it.

GABE

What?

CLOWN

Make out with him right now if you're dating him.

BREE

I'm not making out with him for your sick enjoyment, clown.

GABE

Yeah we're not into that. Our expressions of affection are private and –

CLOWN

Oh you're not into making out? See you're not dating him.

BREE

I am *so* dating him.

CLOWN

Make out with him then.

GABE

I guess if we have to, we have to, Bree.

BREE

Gabe. I'm not making out with you in front of this clown.

CLOWN

See I don't buy it.

GABE

You wanna buy it? You wanna buy it? Watch this!

(GABE grabs BREE and kisses her.)

Did you see those sparks?

(The CLOWN considers them for a moment.)

CLOWN

All right I can respect that.

BREE

I think we'll get out now.

GABE

Okay.

CLOWN

That'll be ten bucks.

(Lights shift to the street in front of the house. BREE storms in, GABE is following.)

GABE

Oh come on! Come on just talk to me! Bree it was a requirement!

(BREE spins on him.)

BREE

It was a requirement?!

GABE

You heard him!

BREE

I'm sorry, when did the clown get the authority to make us kiss? Is he some kind of like clown emperor?

GABE

Otherwise he was going to hit on you.

BREE

Oh gee.

GABE

Well? Is that what you wanted?

BREE

I am perfectly capable of taking care of myself, all right? Guys hit on me all the time. It's like a daily occurrence with me, okay? It's what happens when you look like this.

GABE

Well I thought you needed help.

BREE

I didn't.

GABE

Then why did you say we were going out?

BREE

It's standard operating procedure, all right? When a weird guy in a clown suit or from a fast food restaurant starts hitting on you, you just say, `I have a boyfriend.'

GABE

You didn't say you had a boyfriend when I gave you a ride home.

BREE

You had just seen me break up with my boyfriend! God you're infuriating.

GABE

Sorry.

BREE

Why does my life suck? Seriously, can you please explain it to me? I go to homecoming at Wendy's, my parents get a divorce, and I spend my birthday in a clown car making out with my future stepbrother!

(she speaks up to GOD)

Lord, what have I done to offend you? I'll go to church, I promise. Is there anything I can do to make this up?

(Thunder. It starts to rain.)

Ah!

(BREE dashes for cover. GABE runs and huddles next to her.)

Hey no! Back up!

GABE

It's raining!

BREE

I'm aware of that! Back up!

GABE

No!

BREE

Back up or I'll kick you!

(BREE pushes him out of her spot.)

Go over there!

GABE

Ack!

(GABE runs to another spot on the stage and cowers.)

BREE

This is just great. Thanks God! Thanks a bunch!

GABE

Maybe you shouldn't tempt fate any more.

BREE

What more could happen?

(Thunder again.)

GABE
You realize you're going to get hit with lightning now.

BREE
Maybe it will vaporize my memories of the slide show from tonight.

GABE
By the way, I'm really sorry *my* car getting stolen was a big inconvenience for *you*.

BREE
Well it was.

GABE
The world doesn't revolve around you, okay?

BREE
No the world lands on me.

GABE
You are so conceited.

BREE
Oh I'm sorry Mr. Rocket Scientist.

GABE
Do you think I want to live in your house?

BREE
I don't really care. You're already here like fungus. We can't get rid of you without spraying.

GABE
You know what I'm sorry I kissed you tonight! I would have preferred my first kiss to be with a nice person!

BREE
Grabbing my face and shoving your mouth on me doesn't qualify as a kiss, freak boy!

GABE
Well it's the closest I've gotten!

BREE
That is really pathetic, you know that?

GABE
Yeah, I know! Thank you for bringing up a painful subject.

BREE

You brought it up.

GABE

You know what, you're going to be a great addition to my family, you're just like my brother!

BREE

Really? Do you try to kiss him too?

GABE

I'm just saying that just because you think you have it bad, doesn't mean that you have it any worse than anybody else.

BREE

That's deep, Gabe. Don't mind that your life sucks, if you look around you'll realize that everybody's life sucks.

GABE

Pretty much.

(BREE stops herself.)

BREE

All right, all right, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have made fun of you.

GABE

I didn't make fun of the slide show.

BREE

I don't think I'm really responsible for the way my skull looked at birth. You can't really hang that on me.

GABE

It did look a little bit like a zucchini.

BREE

Yeah.

GABE

Like a red zucchini with a little bit of fuzz glued to it.

BREE

Thanks. I'm glad you thought I was pretty.

GABE

Well you turned out great. You can't even tell that you wore a helmet as a baby.

BREE

Thanks. I guess.

GABE

The rain's stopping.

BREE

Yeah. Things are looking up.

GABE

I suppose.

(They move from their respective hiding places.)

BREE

I guess we should go home.

GABE

By the way, I was just trying to save you tonight.

BREE

Thanks. And I'm sorry you're so weird that no one's ever kissed you.

GABE

I bring it on myself. My standards are too high.

BREE

Oh right.

GABE

I've just been holding out for somebody really special, you know?

BREE

That's your problem.

GABE

And then I look at these guys, these jerks, like that clown, and I think how do they do it? You know, like how do they get girls to like them? And I figure it's cause girls like jerks.

BREE

Girls don't like jerks.

GABE

How many of your ex-boyfriends have been jerks?

BREE

All of them.

GABE

So. So I guess I've just been hoping that there's some girl out there who doesn't want to date a creep, and she'll… you know, go for me.

BREE

Well… there's gotta be somebody out there.

GABE

Yeah.

(BREE stops. She looks at GABE.)

BREE

All right, keep your hands at your sides.

GABE

What are you gonna do?

(BREE kisses him.)

BREE

There. That one counts.

(Lights down. End of act one.)

Act Two

(Lights up on a store. BREE is sitting alone, dressed up for a date. KATLEIGH enters, wearing an extravagant wedding dress.)

KATLEIGH

I'm totally skeeved out right now. Your kids are going to have like three eyes.

BREE

Oh come on.

KATLEIGH

He's your brother!

BREE

He's my future step-brother.

KATLEIGH

This is incest, Bree. This is like a capital sin or whatever. Your children are going to be mutants.

BREE

First off, I kissed him once, I'm not actually dating him, and second off, it's not like when he becomes my stepbrother his DNA *magically* changes to match mine or something. There's absolutely no risk of mutation.

KATLEIGH

Great. I'm sure you'll have an awesome life in Arkansas where this type of thing is normal.

BREE

There is no type of thing! I kissed him once cause I felt sorry for him.

KATLEIGH

This is the absolute worst reason to kiss a guy and you know that. You ever leave a saucer of milk out for a stray cat? You can't get rid of the cat afterwards. This guy is going to be pawing at your door for the rest of time, which won't be that hard to find *because he lives in the next room over!* Oh my God I can't even deal with this. I can feel myself breaking out.

BREE

I'll tell him today. Let him down easy. He is kinda nice, though.

KATLEIGH

What do you mean, nice?

BREE

He's a little vulnerable, I guess, I like that.

KATLEIGH

You actually like this guy? You like your own *brother*?!

BREE

He's not my brother!

KATLEIGH

When I told you it was a bad thing to be single, I didn't think you would take it to this extreme! You need to find a dating partner outside your house. Now can we please focus on me? Your incest story is ruining my complexion. How do I look?

BREE

You look like you in a wedding dress. It's frightening.

KATLEIGH

Oh I'm sorry I can't fall in love with my brother like some people.

BREE

He's not my brother he's my future step-brother.

KATLEIGH

Same difference.

BREE

It is very far from the same difference!

KATLEIGH

Do I look lovely?

BREE

Is that what you're supposed to be going for?

KATLEIGH

That's my theme.

BREE

Your theme is your own loveliness?

KATLEIGH

Duh. Of course.

BREE

You look enchanting.

KATLEIGH

Are you just saying that?

BREE

No, Katleigh, you look magical, okay? Does that make you happy?

KATLEIGH

I think this is the one.

BREE

Are you sure? Cause we've only been here five hours. I'm sure there must be more dresses in the back somewhere. Maybe we could sit here and wait while they make a new one.

KATLEIGH

Don't get all bitter on me, all right? Your role as maid of honor is to exult me.

BREE

Is to what?

KATLEIGH

Exult me.

BREE

What the heck does that mean?

KATLEIGH

You know, raise me up. Make me godlike.

BREE

Uh huh.

KATLEIGH

You just don't understand weddings, do you? You're too busy with your own little drama you can't appreciate the fine love story unfolding right in front of your nose. You need to get with the program, okay?

BREE

Fine. I am with the program.

KATLEIGH

Are you?

BREE

What do you want me to say?

KATLEIGH

It's not about saying, it's about buying in.

BREE

Fine. I'm buying in.

KATLEIGH

So tell me how I look in this dress.

BREE

You look lovely.

KATLEIGH

You think so?

BREE

Yes. Let's get it.

KATLEIGH

I'm not getting it. Don't be insane.

BREE

What?

KATLEIGH

This is the first store we've looked in.

BREE

So? You like the dress, you look lovely in the dress –

KATLEIGH

But maybe I look lovelier in another dress.

BREE

Oh my God.

KATLEIGH

We need to hit all the stores before I can be certain I am getting the right dress. You have to understand: your wedding happens once in your life.

BREE

Unless you get divorced.

KATLEIGH

You're awful sometimes.

BREE

If you start early enough, you can probably get in at least three or four –

KATLEIGH

Your wedding happens *once* and it is the most glorious day of your life, all right? So everything must be perfect or it's no good whatsoever.

BREE

Okay, but consider this: what if, when we're at the other stores, someone comes in here and buys this dress –

KATLEIGH

Why would they do that?

BREE

Because this is a store and they sell dresses. So somebody buys this dress, the *lovely* dress, and then there are no more lovely dresses at all the rest of the stores and you come back here and this dress is gone and your heart breaks and you go with the second-best dress and Chase sees you an all of a sudden he's not in love with you any more and he dumps you on the spot. What then?

(KATLEIGH thinks about it.)

KATLEIGH

That is just – you know, sometimes, I don't even know who you are.

(Lights change. Back to the house. The house has undergone a few changes since act one. There are empty packing boxes everywhere. Furniture has been moved to accommodate a large mat in the center of the living room. As the lights come up, BROCK, wearing an extraordinary pastel spandex outfit, is exercising with what appears to be an enormous rubber band.)

BROCK *(counting to himself)*

One two three four five six seven eight

(he switches positions)

One two three four five six seven eight

(he lets the rubber band go and shakes out his muscles.)

That's the stuff. Woo!

(BROCK looks in a full-length mirror and flexes. He checks himself out. BREE enters while this is going on.)

Oh man. It's like I can't even stand it.

(BREE looks at him in pity and disgust. She's about to say something, then moves backward to watch. BROCK flexes a different way.)

Coming along nicely, sir.

(He turns from the mirror and spots BREE. A moment.)

Hello.

BREE

Hey there.

BROCK

Sometimes I find it therapeutic to imagine conversations with myself.

BREE

Okay. Good.

BROCK

All right then. I'm… gonna shower.

BREE

Great.

BROCK

Later.

(BROCK leaves. BREE is about to head in the opposite direction when GABE enters.)

GABE

Bree!

BREE

Oh hey. Gabe. How are ya?

GABE

Can I talk to you for a second?

BREE

Sure, cause I wanted to talk to you.

GABE

Wow. We're on the same wavelength.

BREE

Yeah. About yesterday –

GABE

I know.

BREE

You do?

GABE

That's what I wanted to talk to you about. I wanted to let you know it was just a one-time thing and I don't want you to start getting feelings for me.

BREE

I'm sorry?

GABE

I know how girls are. You have one kiss in a moment of passion and then all of a sudden you'd be falling for me.

BREE

What?

GABE

And that would be a terrible idea, wouldn't it? Besides, I don't think it would work out.

BREE

Wait a minute, you're breaking up with me?

GABE

You're strong, Bree. You'll make it through this.

BREE

You are breaking up with *me?*

GABE

You'll find somebody else. I just want you to be happy. I'm so glad you're understanding.

BREE

No no no no I am *not* understanding. You can't break up with me!

GABE

I'm afraid I have to.

BREE

We weren't even going out! And if we were going out, I can assure you *I'd* be the one breaking up with *you*!

GABE

Whatever makes you feel better.

BREE

That doesn't make me feel better! You can't break up with me! You're going to fall in love with me and be totally obsessed with me!

GABE

Sorry.

BREE

This is not happening. You can't do this. We're not breaking up.

GABE

I feel how I feel.

BREE

No! You can't just come in here with your thoughtful birthday gifts and I love love garbage and won't-somebody-kiss-me-cause-I'm-so-pathetic and just turn that around on me! This is not happening!

(a realization)

I have feelings for you.

GABE *(shocked)*

I have feelings for you too.

BREE

Then why are you dumping me?

GABE

I thought you were going to dump me. Look, Bree, if you want to –

(ALAN enters.)

ALAN

What's up, pukepile?

GABE

You're the pukepile.

ALAN

What was that?

(ALAN charges and tackles GABE, knocking him off the couch and smothering him. Ad libs. ALAN takes off his shoes while sitting on GABE.)

You know what time it is? It's foot-smelling time! It's FOOT-SMELLING TIME!

GABE

No!

ALAN

Yes it is! YES IT IS!

(ALAN shoves his feet into GABE's face.)

Smell them! You love smelling them, don't you Gabe?

GABE

Get off me!

ALAN

Never! Smell my feet! My feet love you! They love you!

BREE

Maybe I'll just let you guys hang out for a little bit.

ALAN

Where you going?

(GABE struggles to escape from underneath ALAN. ALAN looks at him.)

When you resist it makes it more fun for me.

GABE

Bree don't go!

ALAN *(mocking him)*

Bree don't go!

BREE

No I gotta like um… I gotta think through some things.

(BREE darts off. ALAN stops, still on top of GABE.)

ALAN

Why are you so rude?

(Lights change. STANLEY enters, trying to look nice. He's nervous. BREE approaches and fixes his tie.)

BREE

You're going to be fine. Just be yourself.

STANLEY

That's what made your mother hate me.

BREE

Mom doesn't hate you, she's just confused. Now remember to compliment her. Girls like that.

STANLEY

What if it just exposes her neuroses?

BREE

Dad. You're going to have a lovely date. Just relax.

STANLEY

Okay.

(STANLEY exhales deeply, then begins to hyperventilate. BREE shakes him. STANLEY stops.)

I need to go home.

(He tries to leave.)

BREE

No you don't. There is nothing scary about a blind date.

STANLEY

I'm glad you said that. Because the guy I found for you is waiting at Table Seven.

(Split scene. Lights up on two separate parts of the restaurant.)

(GAIL, 40ish, sits on one side. ROLAND, 22, and dressed rather awkwardly, sits at another. ROLAND is fancy and has ridiculous facial hair. He stands when BREE approaches and pulls out her chair.)

ROLAND

You must be the lovely Bree.

BREE

Yeah that's me. That's my new name.

(she sits down. He pushes her in.)

You're very chivalrous.

ROLAND

Indeed I am. Indeed I am.

BREE

First off can I just say that I'm not really looking to date right now, I'm in a really confused place with my future stepbrother and I don't know what my Dad told you, but –

(ROLAND holds up his hand.)

ROLAND

Quite all right. I know the dance.

BREE

Good. So what's your name?

ROLAND

I am Sir Roland the Brave.

BREE

Let me guess: you work with my Dad?

ROLAND

I'm actually his commanding officer. Sir Stanley and I have spent many a fair afternoon together.

BREE

Oh boy.

ROLAND

But let me assure you I am completely normal.

BREE

Generally the people who say that are the people who aren't normal.

(ROLAND laughs very loudly.)

ROLAND

You have a fine wit.

BREE

So I'm told.

(BREE looks around.)

Do they have menus at this place?

ROLAND

I've taken care of it. This evening you will dine on the roast duck. I find it to be the most robust of game birds.

BREE

I was just going to order a salad.

ROLAND

No. There will be no salads where we're going.

BREE

Where exactly are we going?

ROLAND

On an adventure. An excursion into courtly fantasy and high chivalry. Take my hand Bree –

(he stands up)

BREE

No.

ROLAND

Take my hand.

BREE

No.

(ROLAND is thrown.)

ROLAND

Come on take my hand.

BREE

I'm not taking your hand. Sit down.

ROLAND

Please just take my hand.

(a fierce whisper)

You're embarrassing me.

BREE *(a fierce whisper back)*

You're embarrassing me! Sit down.

ROLAND

No! Stand up.

BREE

No!

ROLAND

Fine.

(He sits and pouts.)

BREE

I guess I'm not ready to be whisked off into a world of adventure.

ROLAND *(dropping his entire persona)*

Forget about it. It's not a big deal. I don't care.

BREE

Oh come on.

ROLAND

No that's fine. We should just go to Burger King or something. Maybe that's too adventurous for you.

BREE

Why does there have to be an adventure?

ROLAND *(mortally offended)*

Why? Why?! Did you just ask why we needed adventure?

BREE *(continuous, underneath)*
It was sort of a rhetorical question –

ROLAND *(continuing over previous line)*
I'll tell you why, Miss Bree. Because I suck the marrow out of life. I suck adventure like a baby calf sucks milk from its Momma's udder.

BREE *(underneath)*
That was unnecessary.

ROLAND *(continuing over her)*
I eat adventure like a heavyset person at an all-you-can-eat Chinese Buffet. I crave adventure because in this world of Wal-Marts and fast food internet service, there must be something pure and golden, like a drop of sunshine.

BREE
Yeah. Look Roland –

ROLAND
Sir Roland the Brave – I had my name legally changed.

BREE
Roland, um… I know that you work with my Dad, but um… I don't think this is going to work.

ROLAND
A challenge.

BREE
No no it's not a challenge, it's a statement of fact.

ROLAND
In courtly love the knight must pursue the maiden. I shall compose a song for you.

BREE
Not necessary.

ROLAND
Let's see… what rhymes with Bree?

BREE
It's not going to work.

ROLAND

Skipping Forward

Okay, yeah, at the moment of the kill, the wolf is close, okay? Fine. At all other times the wolf and his friends keep a distance. Way to wreck my metaphor.

STANLEY

Sorry.

GAIL

Hey listen. A real man doesn't ever apologize for anything. Remember that. That's my first piece of advice to you. Like, say you're the president and you totally wreck the economy and destroy the country or whatever, never say you're sorry.

STANLEY

So um… tell me about yourself.

GAIL

No. Ha! I'm just kidding. Geez.

(GAIL starts playing with her silverware.)

Can I get your honest opinion on something?

STANLEY

Sure.

GAIL

Let's say you take a certain drug, I'm not gonna name any names. Prescription drug, don't get any ideas, mister. I can tell by looking at you you've got a past.

STANLEY

I really don't.

GAIL

Whatever. You take prescription drugs to keep yourself from… what's the word I'm looking for – going crazy. You know, hearing voices, no impulse control, that sort of thing, like if you see a knife

(she picks up her knife)

And you think knife – knives are for killing, right? So what's to stop you from just flinging that knife at the waiter for being slow?

(she's about to throw the knife)

That kind of thing.

(she gestures wildly with he knife)

So you're off your medication. As a little experiment. Just to see what will happen. Do you think that would make you more or less attractive to the opposite gender?

STANLEY

Less.

GAIL

Less attractive, huh?

STANLEY

Definitely.

GAIL

Huh. Well that just bites. So what's your story?

STANLEY

My story?

GAIL

Yeah. Tell me in twenty words or less. Go.

STANLEY

I'm recently divorced, father of a teenage girl, um…

GAIL

Good. Got it. So you're lonely.

STANLEY

I don't know that I'm lonely.

GAIL

You're a lonely man cub and you come looking for Gail.

STANLEY

I'm just testing out the waters. You know, the dating pool.

GAIL

So you come to Gail. Nice. Testing out the waters.

STANLEY

I don't know where our waiter is.

GAIL

Who cares? Can I tell you something? It might just be the lack of pills talking, but I'm very attracted to you.

STANLEY

Oh.

GAIL *(articulating each word with a stab of the knife)*

Very. Attracted. To. You. Mister. Warrior. Man.

STANLEY

That's flattering.

GAIL

That's all you're gonna say?

STANLEY

Um… I'm… I don't… can you put the knife down please?

GAIL

Does it unnerve you?

STANLEY

A little bit.

GAIL

We don't want that now, do we?

(GAIL puts down the knife and moves her chair right next to STANLEY.)

You're like a barbarian king, you know that? I want just to run my hands through your bearskin cape and plunder the British coastline with you.

STANLEY

Uh…

GAIL

That's okay, you don't have to speak. We can communicate in other ways.

STANLEY

I need to go home.

GAIL

Awesome.

STANLEY

Alone.

GAIL

What's wrong?

STANLEY

You're just a little too… uh…

GAIL

A little too what?

STANLEY

You're just very forward, that's all.

GAIL

Stanley I am forty-three years old. If I don't go out there and grab love by the scruff of the neck and shake it like a rag doll I'm going end up alone in a nursing home watching Wheel of Fortune for the rest of my sad, pathetic life. So I'm seizing it, got it? And right now I'm gonna seize you. So here's the deal my sweet, sweet warrior prince. I'm laying my cards on the table. Are you gonna love me or not?

STANLEY

No. Please God no.

GAIL

(STANLEY escapes. GAIL motions to the waiter.)

I'll have the duck.

(Lights change to BREE's house. BREE is sitting on the couch. BRENDA enters in a huff. Stacks of folding chairs line the back wall.)

BRENDA

Why are you just sitting there?

BREE

Why does anyone do anything? Why does a crazy woman go out and get engaged to a guy like Brock?

BRENDA

Missy, cool it. When are the flowers getting here?

BREE

I don't know, Mom.

BRENDA

What do you mean, you don't know?

BREE

I mean I have no knowledge of when the flowers are getting here.

BRENDA

I put you in charge of one thing. *One thing*!

BREE

I am not contributing to the abomination of this wedding. You have to go talk to Dad, he's unbearably lonely without you -

BRENDA

If you think your slapdash approach is going to apply to my wedding, you've got another thing coming, sweetheart!

BREE
Are you listening to me? I want you to go talk to Dad.

BRENDA
I have no time to talk to him when someone didn't get the flowers ordered!

BREE
The flowers will die Mom. The flowers will see this wedding for the nightmare that it is and they will spontaneously disintegrate! You don't know anything about Brock.

BRENDA
You don't know anything about Brock.

BREE
True. I have no idea who he is and that scares the bejeesus out of me.

BRENDA
Don't use the lord's name in vain.

BREE
I'm sorry, is there a lord bejeesus out there somewhere? Are we praying to bejeesus now?

BRENDA
I don't have time for this Bree. I have an entire wedding to prepare. Where are the chairs?

BREE
How should I know?

BRENDA
The chairs were supposed to be set up by now.

BREE
I'm not in charge of chairs, I'm in charge of flowers!

BRENDA
You're not in charge of anything! You're like a terrorist of love.

BREE
Oh come on!
(BRENDA takes out "the list" which must be at least ten pages long.)

BRENDA
Gabe. Gabe is in charge of chairs. Gabe! GABE!
(BRENDA starts to storm off.)

And you are not off the hook, young lady. You are going to participate in this wedding and it is going to be a lovely, lovely thing right here in this living room.

BREE

Yuck.

BRENDA

I gave birth to you, all right? Think about that.

BREE

Believe me, I know. I've seen the pictures.

BRENDA

Gabe!

(BRENDA exits. We hear her off-stage.)

I put you in charge of *one thing*!

(BREE returns to the couch and her magazine. GABE enters. He stops when he sees BREE.)

GABE

Hi.

BREE

Hello.

(They stare at each other like gunfighters. Pause.)

GABE and BREE

About yesterday…

BREE

You're not going to dump me again are you?

GABE

Were you planning on dumping me?

BREE

I don't think so.

GABE

Then I wasn't going to dump you.

BREE

Good.

GABE

Good.

(short awkward pause.)
So I guess we should make out now.

BREE

I guess we should.
(They inch closer. And closer. They are about to kiss when BREE breaks away suddenly.)
I'm sorry this is just too weird!

GABE

I knew it!

BREE

You're going to be my stepbrother!

GABE

So what!

BREE

So you're going to be my stepbrother I can't date you!

GABE

Listen to me: I like you a lot. A whole lot. You're like a distant galaxy that has come closer –

BREE

No no stop with the geeky stuff I can't handle the geeky stuff.

GABE

Yes you can. Listen: I was thinking about this all today trying to come up with the right metaphor –

BREE

The right metaphor is that we're like a Sphinx trying to kiss its own butt!

GABE

That's a simile.

BREE

Arg!

GABE

You know why I like astronomy? Because it's a study of the unattainable. And for the longest time I equated girls with the unattainable. All those galaxies out there, those stars, I'm never going to see them in person, I can only just barely scratch the idea of them in my mind, but what it's important to me, what I find beautiful, is the fact that as a human

being I have the chance to search out the impossible. And that's you. You are the impossible. Who would have ever thought a girl like you would like somebody like me? When I saw you in that Wendy's, I thought, I thought, that girl is a comet, and that guy she's with is a lead chain. And for the first time in my life I managed to come up and talk to you and say something. I didn't even know I could do that. But you were so amazing that you forced me to do that. To find that in myself. So I'm not gonna give up.

BREE

What am I gonna do with you?

(BREE kisses GABE. ALAN enters.)

ALAN

DUDE!!!! THAT'S YOUR SISTER!!!

GABE *(overlapping)*

She's not my sister yet!

BREE *(overlapping)*

This isn't what it looks like!

ALAN

THIS IS SO MESSED UP!

GABE

Shut up! Shut up Alan!

ALAN *(contintuous)*

I'M FREAKING OUT!

(BREE grabs ALAN and pulls him over to the couch.)

BREE *(overlapping)*

It's not what it looks like, okay? It was –

ALAN

YOU WERE TOTALLY MAKING OUT WITH TONGUE AND EVERYTHING!

BREE

There was no tongue!

(ALAN escapes.)

ALAN

This is… you guys are unclean.

GABE

There's nothing wrong with it!

ALAN

I'm gonna throw up right now.

BREE

No Alan just be quiet about this!

ALAN

I have to get out of this house!

(ALAN scrambles away. BREE grabs a hold of him. GABE grabs the other side of him. ALAN drags both of them around the room, knocking over chairs.)

BREE *(overlapping)*

Look this isn't important, okay? Just don't go telling anyone! We were just fooling around, it doesn't mean anything –

GABE *(overlapping)*

This is like Romeo and Juliet Alan, you can't stop true love, that's what this is – you can't let anyone know about it –

(ALAN trips and falls to the ground. GABE and BREE pounce on him and hold him down, still talking to him.)

BREE *(overlapping)*

Most families have secrets and this is one you have to keep because you can't let this out –

GABE *(overlapping)*

Remember when you had that guinea pig that you loved, Muffin, and everyone made fun of your for loving Muffin but you still loved her, right? She's my Muffin, Alan.

(BROCK enters.)

BROCK

Hey. HEY! WHAT IS GOING ON!!

(They stop.)

I AM TRYING TO MEDITATE BACK HERE. We are having a wedding in this house tomorrow, jerkwads! And it is going to be BEAUTIFUL and HOLY or I am gonna kick some butt around here! Got me?

ALAN

Yeah, Dad.

BROCK

Now clean this up before Brenda sees it and has a brain aneurysm.

(They slowly get up.)

And I don't wanna see any of you trying to feel up your new sister.

GABE

What?

BROCK

I saw what was going on!

BREE

The whole thing?

BROCK

What whole thing?

ALAN

Nothing.

BROCK

I'm going tanning. Don't embarrass me while I'm out.

(BROCK exits. BREE and GABE look at each other.)

BREE

Thank you.

ALAN

I want twenty bucks a week and shoulder massages every Friday. Got it?

(ALAN leaves.)

GABE

Wow.

BREE

Yeah.

GABE

Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

BREE

No idea.

GABE

There's only one thing we can do.

(Lights shift.)

(The Renaissance Festival. ROLAND enters, dressed in medieval attire, followed by STANLEY, dressed in his costume.)

ROLAND

This way, Sir Stanley.

STANLEY

Yes Sir Roland.

ROLAND

Mead?

STANLEY

No thank you sir.

ROLAND

I need to speak with you for a moment. Um… we've noticed that your routine has uh… taken a stroll down the dark path lately.

STANLEY

Of what do you speak?

ROLAND

Last evening you told a group of schoolchildren from Kindercare that they quote "would someday be old and alone and live in a cave of their own devising, hollow shells of men, living out their last days in despair and sadness." Unquote. You also told a newlywed couple that they should quote "cherish these moments of love for the end is surely near. Run. Run. Don't buy anything in the gift shop it's all made in China."

STANLEY

Is this about my daughter?

ROLAND

Let us not speak of that wench.

STANLEY

This is about Bree, isn't it?

ROLAND

I know no woman by that name. But if I did she is a brazen strumpet.

STANLEY

Bree is a wonderful girl and far too precious to be involved with you, so now you are taking it out on me.

ROLAND

That's absurd. That is the most absurd thing imaginable. I laugh at that.

STANLEY

You, sir, are a coward and a blackguard.

ROLAND

A coward! A coward?! You dare call me a coward!

STANLEY

I dare, sir!

ROLAND

I have faced down three dragons, Sir Stanley! Three! I have battled the wizard Ekvamoth, and let me tell you sir, you don't walk into a live-action role-playing game with merely ten hit points and battle a wizard without learning a little something about bravery!

(STANLEY's cell phone rings.)

What is that noise? What is that?

STANLEY

Hold on.

(He answers it.)

Hi Honey. Oh I'm fine.

(ROLAND snatches the cell phone away and closes it.)

ROLAND

No magic boxes!

(STANLEY grabs the cell phone back and opens it. ROLAND tries to get it back. STANLEY rushes around talking into the phone, playing keep-away, while ROLAND tries to get it.)

STANLEY

What's that about your mother? What?! Are you kidding me?! What can I do about it? But – wait, hold on. Just wait. I'll think of something.

(ROLAND gets the phone.)

ROLAND

Ha! Open the infernal box again and you are fired.

(STANLEY grabs the cell phone and opens it provocatively.)

Turn in your sword, sir.

STANLEY

No.

ROLAND

Turn. In. Your. Sword.

STANLEY

I may be fired but this is my sword and you shall not have it.

ROLAND

Must I trounce you?

STANLEY

I'd like to see you try.

(ROLAND draws his sword. STANLEY draws his sword.)

Have at thee!

(ROLAND runs. STANLEY calls out.)

Sir Roland the Brave indeed! Ha!

(Lights shift back to the house.)

(The next day. Chairs have been arranged. A makeshift altar has been placed in the living room. There are very few flowers. BROCK enters, wearing a white tuxedo. He does some stretches and warm-ups. ALAN enters shortly, wearing a similar tuxedo.)

BROCK

Let's do this.

ALAN

All right.

BROCK

Awesome.

(BROCK continues to shake out his muscles.)

I do. I do. I… Do. Gotta warm up my mouth.

(GABE enters, wearing a tuxedo. He looks more rumpled.)

BROCK

Did you sleep in your tux or something?

GABE

No.

BROCK

Aw man. Look at you.

GABE

What?

ALAN

Way to ruin the special day, Gabe.

GABE

I didn't do anything!

(ALAN flicks the back of GABE's ear.)

Ow!

BROCK

Hey! HEY! I don't want you behaving like donkeys today. All right? Manners.

GABE

I have manners.

BROCK

Because I am fine with locking you in the basement for the duration of this if you can't behave yourself.

ALAN

Yeah, Gabe.

BROCK

Shut it, Alan. I've had just about enough out of you.

ALAN

I didn't do anything.

(RHONDA, 40ish, enters, wearing a dress. She is brash, boisterous and a complete mess.)

RHONDA

You must be Brock!

BROCK

Does it show?

RHONDA

I'm Rhonda. Brenda's sister.

BROCK

Oh… you're the one.

RHONDA

I'm the one what?

BROCK

Never mind.

RHONDA

And these must be your sons… look at them. They look so good I could just eat `em up. Especially this one. Yum. Do you work out?

ALAN

Yeah.

RHONDA

Spectacular. Turn around.

BROCK

Do you mind?

RHONDA

Sorry I get carried away. At least I hope I will later. HA! Don't worry, cutie, I'm too old for you.

ALAN

What are you talking about?

RHONDA

It goes right over his head, doesn't it? Pretty but dumb. Just like I like `em. So I guess I'm standing right up here.

BROCK

When?

RHONDA

During the ceremony. I'm the minister.

End of Excerpt.
To Purchase this play, visit www.concordtheatricals.com