

# FOR THE LOVE OF LUCY

## OR LUCY'S CIGAR IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

By Ray Sheers

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**FOR THE LOVE OF LUCY  
OR LUCY'S CIGAR IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS  
By Ray Sheers**

*This is the second play in Ray Sheers' trilogy.*

**CAST OF CHARACTERS  
(16 MEN, 13 WOMEN, FLEXIBLE)**

GODIVA DOOLITTLE (F) ..... The BOA's maid. (56 lines)

VASCHA POPOVICH (M) ..... One of the POPOVICH brothers, a juggling team from Europe. Both speak limited English with terrible accents. (No real juggling ability required.) (33 lines)

IGOR POPOVICH (M) ..... One of the POPOVICH brothers, a juggling team from Europe. (21 lines)

LUCY BOA (F) ..... A kind-hearted, good-natured, middle-aged woman who accepts just about anybody. She's not as dumb as she sometimes appears. (114 lines)

DESMOND BOA (M) ..... LUCY's husband. He's a bit eccentric, like his wife, but he, too, has a good heart. (92 lines)

ROSIE BOA (F) ..... The BOA's daughter. She is a successful lawyer, a liberated woman who takes life a bit too seriously. (47 lines)

VITA ROTTENSWAPPER (F) ..... President of Arrow Enterprises. She is aggressive and successful. She is used to getting her way. (52 lines)

EDNA RICE (M/F) ..... An executive of Arrow Enterprises – EDGAR, if played by a male. (9 lines)

- HARPO (M/F).....A fun-loving clown. Like Harpo Marx, his namesake, he does not speak. He should be dressed like Harpo Marx in ragged, mismatched, loose clothes rather than as a typical clown. He wears a curly wig and top hat. Sometimes he wears wire-rimmed sunglasses. What he lacks in speech, he makes up for in gestures and facial expression. He is totally outrageous and uninhibited. The more the actor patterns himself (or even herself!) after the real Harpo, the more effective the role will be. (*No lines*)
- PUPINSKI (M) .....Friend of the BOAS. He and DESMOND are starting a circus. He says outrageous things but means no harm. He is something of a flirt. He's a cross between Groucho and Chico Marx. (*72 lines*)
- PETROV VISHNEFSKI (M).....One of the VISHNEFSKI brothers, just arrived from Transylvania. The VISHNEFSKI brothers are acrobats, come to work for DESMOND and PUPINSKI. Like the POPVICHES, their English is limited. They are also constantly on the lookout for brides. (No acrobatics required.) (*22 lines*)
- IVAN VISHNEFSKI (M).....One of the VISHNEFSKI brothers, just arrived from Transylvania. (*16 lines*)
- STEFAN VISHNEFSKI (M) .....One of the VISHNEFSKI brothers, just arrived from Transylvania. (*17 lines*)
- SHERIFF (M/F) .....A bumbling law officer. (*9 lines*)
- ALIEN 1 (F).....Should wear long robes and have an oversized, bald head. (*8 lines*)
- ALIEN 2 (M/F).....Should wear long robes and have an

oversized, bald head. (5 lines)

CLETA SPINK (F) ..... Author who writes books about UFOs.  
She, herself, is also an alien, but that is not  
revealed until the very end of the play.  
She needs a wig and possibly a hat to  
cover her bald head. (13 lines)

### **(FORMERLY) BEARDED LADY BANDITS**

EDITH (F).....(29 lines)

IRMA (F) .....(25 lines)

OPAL (F) .....(96 lines)

PEARL (F) .....(98 lines)

Formally the Bearded Lady Bandits, they are crude, rude, and ruthless. Since their arrest and subsequent escape, they no longer use beards to disguise themselves. They scheme to rob unsuspecting citizens. Reminiscent of the witches in Macbeth, they must be able to laugh fiendishly and be convincingly evil. They should wear fairly formal dark clothes. They could have tattoos and wear bright boas.

### **EXTRAS**

GIOVANNI FRESCOBALDI .Piano tuner (17 lines)

DELIVERY MAN 1 .....(30 lines)

DELIVERY MAN 2 .....(19 lines)

JOE SALVI.....Exterminator (22 lines)

*Optional, for robbery scene:*

VOLUNTEER.....(1 line)

VENDOR.....(4 lines)

MAN .....(3 lines)

WOMAN .....(2 lines)

STREET MUSICIANS

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

### ACT ONE

SCENE 1: Christmas street scene. (*Played before the curtain.*)

SCENE 2: Living room of a house.

### ACT TWO

SCENE 1: Lucy Boa's Bed 'n' Breakfast, living room.

SCENE 2: Lucy Boa's Bed 'n' Breakfast, living room.

### ACT THREE

SCENE 1: Lucy Boa's Bed 'n' Breakfast, living room.

SCENE 2: Lucy Boa's Bed 'n' Breakfast, living room.

## SOUND EFFECTS

1. Doorbell
2. Telephone
3. Eerie music
4. Animal growl
5. "Never" music

## SUGGESTED MUSIC

To capture the wild and zany spirit of the play, the original production used Klezmer music extensively. It seemed to fit the mood of the play extremely well and was very popular with all audiences.

Track 1 of *The Klezmorim* was especially effective for the "Never" music that occurs throughout play. When the VISHNEFSKIS bring in the coffin before ACT TWO, SCENE 2, use Track 9 for a mysterious and foreign sound. For HARPO's tricycle scene, "Fiddler's House", Track 15, is a very moving addition. For the chase scene at the end of ACT THREE, SCENE 1, "Live in the Fiddler's House", Track 7 is an exciting accompaniment. The following CDs are widely available online or at most large music stores:

*The Klezmorim* (Arhoolie CD 309), Tracks 1, 3, and 9.

*Itzhak Perlman in the Fiddler's House* (Angel CD 7243-5 5555 26) Track 15.

*Itzhak Perlman Live in the Fiddler's House* (Angel CEC 7243-556209 27), Track 7.

*The Klezmatiks Possessed* (Xenophile CD 4050), Tracks 3 and 10.

In addition, use Michael Daugherty's *Metropolis Symphony* (Argo 452 103-2) to introduce ACT ONE, SCENE 1 (Track 2) and ACT ONE, SCENE 2 (Track 1).

For the eerie music scenes, use "The Banshee" from *Henry Cowell's Piano Music* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40801), though other electronic music would work as well for the effect.

## PROPERTIES

Newsstand (*Optional*)

Newspapers

Salvation Army bell and collection bucket

Santa hat for Salvation Army Person (*Optional*)

Fake money

Wallets and purses

Watches

Jewelry (*For robbery scene*)

Diamond-like necklace (*For ROTTENSWAPPER*)

Sofas, desks, chairs, end tables, lamps, pictures, knickknacks, etc.

*(NOTE: Sofas and chairs may be covered with fabric to create a different look from ACT ONE to ACT TWO and THREE. Furniture in ACT ONE does not need to be extravagant.)*

Small table for card game

Phone

Screen (*Optional, but useful to conceal HARPO and his various props*)

Piano

*(Optional, since it doesn't really have to be played; large table or chair would suffice for ROTTENSWAPPER to climb onto or hide behind.)*

Three guns with caps (*Guns could be cardboard cutouts.*)

Sheriff's uniform (*Badge, holster with gun and hat will suffice.*)

Squirt gun

Bubbles

Serving tray

Tea cups

Brownies

Artificial flowers

Large plastic vase (*Or other large object for IRMA to knock out DELIVERY MAN with.*)

Artificial Christmas tree

Christmas ornaments, decorations

Balls for juggling  
Bag with oranges  
Bag with books  
Fur coat  
Two handkerchiefs  
Bicycle horn  
Top hat  
Winter coats and hats  
Mail  
Banana  
Telephone  
Two large artificial fish  
Coffin with red bow (*Easily and cheaply obtained at Halloween.*)  
Two or three suitcases  
Clothes for ROTTENSWAPPER's suitcase  
Large tricycle (*Optional*)  
Plastic fangs (*Readily available at Halloween.*)  
Alien heads (*Three*)  
Large fake cigar  
Playing cards  
Game of checkers  
Wrapped Christmas packages  
Feather duster  
Knitting yarn and needles  
Beard  
Soil for coffin (*Just a handful in a container is needed.*)  
Peanuts  
Throw pillow  
Feathers  
Broom  
Sunglasses for HARPO  
Eyeglasses for DESMOND and PEARL

### **SPECIAL EFFECTS**

For the Bird Cage Scene in ACT ONE, SCENE 2, loose feathers should be placed at the bottom of the cage so that OPAL can grab them and fling them about when she sticks her hand in. Plastic bird can be suspended from top of cage and unhooked when she "kills" it. Real feathers from an old pillow make a nice effect. They can also be used when DESMOND hits PUPINSKI with the pillow in ACT TWO, SCENE 1. They're funny when they fly, but messy, so

provide a broom for GODIVA to try and sweep them up.

Lifting the ornaments off the Christmas tree in ACT TWO, SCENE 1, is easily accomplished by rigging many ornaments with fish line before arranging them on the tree. They can be lifted by someone behind the rear curtain. If no tree is used, objects can be lifted off a desk in the same manner. In that scene, a laser pointer could be used to create a supernatural effect. GODIVA is the only one who sees it and she chases it from place to place, and person to person, swatting at it with her feather duster. The laser is also effective for the alien's entry and to shine on CLETA's bald head at the end of the play. Laser pointers are fairly easy to obtain at a reasonable cost.

Because HARPO is so active and he needs to have a hat, to keep HARPO's hat from falling off, sew the hat to his curly wig and place another hat over it so that whenever one hat is removed, he always has another. This solves the problem and easily works with his character. Cheap plastic top hats work best. Also, his clothes need to be loose with a lot of pockets and a loop to attach his horn. Sixties style wire-rimmed pink tinted sunglasses, while not in keeping with an authentic HARPO, gave him an interesting look. When he exchanges glasses with DESMOND, it makes DESMOND look ridiculous.

### **NOTE ON STAGING**

Since so much of the humor, situations, and characters in the play are meant to convey the spirit of Marx Brothers' comedy, it is strongly advised that those involved in the production are familiar with the films of the Marx Brothers, especially the actor playing HARPO. Many young people, in particular, are not familiar with their work. While HARPO is the only character in the play true to his name, DESMOND and PUPINSKI have elements of both Chico and Groucho. Also, ROTTENSWAPPER is a stock Margaret Dumont-type character. How strictly a production adheres to the Marx Brothers' characters is, of course, entirely up to the director.

**ACT ONE, SCENE 1**

*This street scene during the Christmas season is played in front of the curtain. Center stage, a Salvation Army VOLUNTEER is ringing a bell. He has a bucket for donations. Stage left, a newspaper VENDOR is selling newspapers to passersby. Street musicians may be added as well.*

**VENDOR:** "Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Bearded Lady Bandits Escape on Way to Prison! Headed This Way! Bearded Lady Bandits Escape on Way to Prison! Headed This Way!"

*WOMAN with packages enters stage right and drops a donation into the Salvation Army bucket.*

**VOLUNTEER:** Thank you, and Merry Christmas!

**WOMAN:** Merry Christmas. *(She goes to newsman and buys a paper, then stands waiting for a bus.)*

**VENDOR:** "Extra! Extra! Bearded Lady Bandits Escape on Way to Prison! Headed This Way! Armed and Dangerous!"

*While the VENDOR is shouting, EDITH and IRMA enter from the rear of auditorium. They swagger and appear menacing. They stop in front of the stage for the following conversation. EDITH motions IRMA to listen to the newspaper VENDOR.*

**VENDOR:** "Bearded Lady Bandits headed this way! Armed and dangerous!"

**EDITH:** Did you hear that, Irma?

**IRMA:** *(Laughs fiendishly.)* Yeah, the city's not safe anymore, is it? Are you armed?

**EDITH:** *(Checks for gun. Pats reassuringly.)* I'm armed. Are you dangerous?

**IRMA:** I'm very dangerous. *(They laugh malevolently, approach newsstand and proceed to stage. MAN enters right just before they do. He stops at Salvation Army VOLUNTEER, takes out his wallet to make a donation. EDITH grabs his wallet.)*

**MAN:** Hey! What's the big idea?

**IRMA:** Big idea? Big idea? You want to know what the big idea is? Here's a little hint! It starts with a G. . . *(Pulls out her gun and waves it around.)*

**EDITH:** And it ends with an N. . . (*EDITH holds her gun and waves it around as well.*)

**IRMA:** And U is in the middle! (*EDITH and IRMA laugh.*) Get it? (*He doesn't laugh.*) You're no fun. Give me your wallet, Buster. Now! (*WOMAN waiting for bus gasps and tries to leave, but EDITH stops her and pulls her over.*) Nobody's going anywhere. The party's just begun.

**EDITH:** Give me your wallet, Cinderella!

**IRMA:** What are you, deaf? Come on, come on, we don't have all day! (*WOMAN opens purse and takes out the wallet.*)

**EDITH:** (*Grabs wallet.*) Give me those earrings too and that ring. (*She hesitates. EDITH approaches her threateningly.*) I'm losing my patience with you, Cinderella! Do I have to bite 'em off? (*WOMAN gives her the jewelry. EDITH approaches the Salvation Army VOLUNTEER.*) You too, Santa. Hand over the loot! (*He reluctantly gives her the bucket.*)

**WOMAN:** (*To MAN.*) It's them! The Bearded Lady Bandits!

**EDITH:** What are you, nuts? There's only two of us! There were four Bearded Lady Bandits, Bozo.

**IRMA:** Yeah, and do you see any whiskers on us, Cinderella?

**EDITH:** You'd better not, 'cause we shaved this morning! (*They laugh.*)

**VENDOR:** She's right! I saw your picture. It's right here in the paper!

**EDITH:** Let's see that! (*Grabs newspaper.*) It's not a very good picture of you, Irma. But I look real pretty.

**IRMA:** Hand over the cash, Einstein. (*He hesitates.*) I said hand it over! (*He does.*)

**EDITH:** You folks have a Merry Christmas!

**IRMA:** Yeah, go out and spread the word that the Beardless Lady Bandits are in town and they're even badder. . .that's not the right word -

**EDITH:** - meaner.

**IRMA:** - badder and meaner without their beards than they were with 'em!

*They laugh. EDITH grabs WOMAN'S packages as she and IRMA exit.*  
**BLACKOUT.**

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

*Living room of a house where the BEARDED LADY BANDITS are staying. (Without the owner's knowledge or consent.) There is a small table with a large vase on it stage left. OPAL is sitting in a chair sipping coffee and reading the paper. Toward the rear of stage is a bird in a cage that keeps squawking, obviously disturbing OPAL. Finally, exasperated, she throws down the paper, goes to the cage, and opens it. She grabs the bird and shakes it violently. Feathers fly. OPAL grins in a satisfied manner and returns to her paper. PEARL enters stage right wearing a beard.*

**OPAL:** Well, it's about time you got up.

**PEARL:** I was having a nightmare. I dreamt we were back in jail.

**OPAL:** Which is where you'd be right now if I hadn't gotten the gun away from that stupid detective! *(They both laugh fiendishly. Notices beard on PEARL.)* What are you wearing that beard for?

**PEARL:** I've gotten kind of used to having a beard.

**OPAL:** Well, take it off. We don't need it anymore.

**PEARL:** *(Walks over to the desk and picks up the newspaper.)* Where are Edith and Irma?

**OPAL:** Working. We need some fast cash so we can get out of here. We've got to clear out of here by tonight, before this bozo gets back from vacation and finds us in her house.

**PEARL:** It was sure a lucky break finding this empty house.

**OPAL:** Yeah, but according to her calendar she gets back tomorrow, so we gotta get out of here tonight.

**PEARL:** Right! She should know she's had house guests!

**OPAL:** Yeah, and what they've been doing! *(They both laugh. Doorbell rings.)*

**PEARL:** Well, I guess we'd better get to work. Coming! Just a minute! *(Checks her appearance in the mirror.)* I feel so weird without my beard.

**OPAL:** Yeah, well, what do we need a disguise for if the police already know what we look like? *(She takes PEARL's beard and throws it behind the sofa.)*

**PEARL:** Still, I kinda miss not having it. *(Bell rings.)* Coming!

*PEARL answers the door and GIOVANNI FRESCOBALDI, the piano tuner, enters.*

**GIOVANNI:** I am Giovanni Frescobaldi.

**OPAL:** Frescobaldi, huh?

**GIOVANNI:** I am piano tuner.

**OPAL:** Piano tuner?

**PEARL:** A piano tuner? I don't believe it. Let me see your hands. *(He is reluctant, but she takes them and looks closely at them.)* Oh yes, he has wonderful hands! *(She holds his hands. He tries to get them away, but she persists. Finally, he gets free.)*

**GIOVANNI:** I am, uh, charmed to meet you both.

**OPAL:** Pearl, doesn't Mr. Giovanni remind you of someone?

**PEARL:** *(Puts on glasses and examines him more closely.)* Now that you mention it, he does.

**OPAL:** You're the spittin' image of Mortimer.

**GIOVANNI:** Mortimer?

**OPAL:** Mortimer. My late husband. *(She tries to get his hands again; he puts them behind his back.)*

**GIOVANNI:** Oh.

**OPAL:** My husband was a wonderful musician.

**GIOVANNI:** It's his piano I tune?

**OPAL:** He played the tuba. He had wonderful lips. You need great lips to play the tuba. Say, you got nice lips. Did you ever play the tuba? *(She reaches as if to touch his lips. He pulls back.)*

**GIOVANNI:** No.

**PEARL:** Mortimer played the tuba beautifully.

**OPAL:** We buried him with it. It was such fun. I mean. . .he was such fun.

**GIOVANNI:** I see. *(Looks around.)* I do not see piano.

**PEARL:** Well, it's here somewhere. We'll find it. Do you know where it is, Opal?

**OPAL:** How would I know? It's not my piano. If you can't keep track of your pianos, it's none of my concern.

**PEARL:** Oh, I know, the maid must have moved it when she cleaned. I'm sure it'll turn up. She's always rearranging things. Would you like some brownies, Mr. Frescobaldi? Opal makes a mean brownie. It's her secret recipe.

**GIOVANNI:** Well, maybe just one.

**PEARL:** I'll go get them. Why don't you sit down? *(She pushes him down on the sofa.)* Don't go away. *(She exits.)*

**OPAL:** *(Taking his hand in hers.)* So, Kermit, would you like to know how my husband died?

**GIOVANNI:** What?

**OPAL:** I said, would you like to know how my husband died?

**GIOVANNI:** Well, I. . .

**OPAL:** My sister Pearl killed him. Pounded a stake right through his heart while he slept on this very sofa. There was blood everywhere.

**GIOVANNI:** *(Uncomfortable, looks at sofa.)* This is terrible.

**OPAL:** The stains were almost impossible to get out. She thought he was a vampire. *(She laughs hysterically.)* Now isn't that ridiculous? A vampire in this day and age! *(Laughing.)*

**PEARL:** Here's the brownies! *(He hesitates.)* Take one! They're great.

**GIOVANNI:** Thank you. *(He takes a bite.)* Oh, this is very good.

**OPAL:** Oh, they get even better. *(He takes another bite.)* The recipe's been in my family for generations. . . hey, Kermit, are you all right? *(He is wide-eyed, his hand frozen on the way to his mouth.)*

**GIOVANNI:** I feel. . . I. . . what. . . *(He gasps, eyes bulging; he staggers and finally falls on the floor.)*

**PEARL:** *(Looking closely at GIOVANNI.)* Well, that was fast. What'd you do, double the secret ingredient? He's out like a light. I hope you didn't kill the guy. *(Doorbell rings. Alarmed.)* What do we do with him? *(Rings again.)*

**OPAL:** Here, help me stretch him out on the sofa. *(They pick him up, swing him onto the sofa, as doorbell continues to ring.)*

**PEARL:** Just a minute!

**OPAL:** Wait! *(She puts a newspaper over his face.)* Now.

*PEARL answers the door and two DELIVERY MEN enter with a chair. Throughout scene, GIOVANNI groans.*

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** We got a chair here. Where do you want it?

**PEARL:** Opal, the chair's arrived.

**OPAL:** It's about time.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** Where do you want it?

**PEARL:** How about in the other room? *(They start to go stage right. She follows closely behind them.)* On the other hand, I think it might look good in here. What do you think, Opal?

**OPAL:** I think it would look good in the alley. How much are we paying for this chair?

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** The bill is for two hundred fifty-four bucks.

**OPAL:** That's ridiculous! Take it back!

**PEARL:** I think it looked better in the store.

**OPAL:** Were you wearing your glasses when you bought this monstrosity? *(To DELIVERY MAN 1.)* She can't see a thing without her glasses. *(GIOVANNI falls off the sofa.)*

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** Uh, I think your husband fell off the sofa.

**PEARL:** That's the piano tuner. He's undigested.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** Indigested, you mean.

**PEARL:** Oh, what's the difference?

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** If he were undigested, something would have eaten him and not been able to, you know, digest him. Indigested means something he ate is, well, not agreeing with him.

**PEARL:** He's got a little of both.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** I see.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** So, you don't want the table?

**PEARL:** Maybe it would look better with something on it.

*GIOVANNI groans loudly.*

**OPAL:** Yeah, like the piano tuner.

**PEARL:** Did I mention that my husband was an undertaker?

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** No ma'am.

**PEARL:** Well, he was. He used to bring me the most beautiful flowers. He used to call me his precious little buttercup. *(OPAL and PEARL circle the DELIVERY MEN during this scene. The MEN watch them and are obviously uncomfortable.)*

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Is that right?

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** That's sweet.

**PEARL:** He used to call me Toadblossom. I never had much use for the man. One morning, he just... vanished.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** You don't say.

**PEARL:** I do say, Kermit.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** Name's Wally. Well, that's mighty strange, mighty strange.

**PEARL:** It was three years ago. He was sitting right there in that very chair. And poof! He disappeared. Right before my eyes.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** You don't say.

**OPAL:** *(Very close to him.)* She does say.

**PEARL:** I do say, Kermit.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** Wally.

**OPAL:** Kermit, he was abducted by aliens.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** What?

**OPAL:** He was abducted by aliens.

**PEARL:** Now, we're not sure of that, Opal.

**OPAL:** I'm sure. Aliens are probably performing truly disgusting experiments on him in space somewhere as we speak. *(To DELIVERY MAN 1.)* Calls Pearl "Toadblossom" and thinks he can get away with it. Ha!

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Uh, Wally, I think we'd better be going. We got lots of other deliveries to make you know. Do you want to keep the chair, ladies, or do you want to cancel the order?

**PEARL:** I'm not sure. What do you think, Opal?

**OPAL:** I think it's hideous. Just hideous! (*Looking closely at DELIVERY MAN 1's teeth.*) Say Kermit, are those your real teeth?

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Uh, yeah, they're mine.

**OPAL:** They look just like my late husband's, and his were missing when they found him.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** Was he abducted by aliens, too?

**OPAL:** Don't be a fool. He fell off the high wire. His teeth must have fallen out on the way down. He was in the circus. We never found his teeth. Are you sure those are real? (*She reaches out as if to yank on them. He pulls back. PEARL should move behind him at this point.*)

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** They're mine, I told you. (*Moves away from her.*) Now, do you want us to put the chair back on the truck?

**OPAL:** I've no use for it.

**PEARL:** Take it back.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** OK.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** Have a nice day, ladies.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** (*To DELIVERY MAN 2 as they carry the chair out.*) Boy, they're nuttier than a fruitcake.

**DELIVERY MAN 2:** You think so? I thought they were kinda cute.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Cute, huh? Any fruitcakes in your family? (*PEARL closes the door after them.*)

**OPAL:** Well, did you get it?

**PEARL:** (*Holding up wallet.*) Have I ever failed? (*They both laugh fiendishly.*)

**OPAL:** When did you snatch it?

**PEARL:** When you were examining his teeth. That was a stroke of genius. Pure genius! I think he was afraid you were going to yank them right out of his mouth.

**OPAL:** I was about to. How much did we make?

*PEARL counts money.*

**PEARL:** Eighty-seven dollars. Not bad.

**OPAL:** Could be better, but it's still early. (*GIOVANNI groans loudly.*) You'd better tend to the piano tuner.

**PEARL:** Yeah, what am I thinking of? (*She goes over to him and removes his wallet, then hands it to OPAL. She counts the money.*)

**OPAL:** Well, here's another hundred and twenty dollars. Things are looking up. *(The doorbell rings.)*

**PEARL:** Now what do we do?

**OPAL:** Let's get him back on the sofa. *(They lift him. While they struggle with him, DELIVERY MAN 1 enters.)*

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Excuse me, ladies. *(Startled, they drop GIOVANNI.)* Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you. I rang the bell, but nobody answered.

**OPAL:** The bell's broke.

**PEARL:** Yeah, it doesn't always work.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Well, I seem to have lost my wallet and I thought I might have dropped it here. *(PEARL moves over to desk and hides wallets.)*

**OPAL:** I don't think so. *(She gets close to him and examines his teeth. He moves away from her.)*

**PEARL:** Look around. Maybe it's on the floor.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** *(Looking on floor.)* Say, the piano tuner, he don't look so good.

**PEARL:** He, uh. . .

**OPAL:** Sleepwalks.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Sleepwalks? Weird, huh? *(Doorbell rings.)* Bell's working again.

**PEARL:** Who can that be?

**OPAL:** There are several possibilities. *(Answers door.)*

**SALVI:** Exterminator! You the people with rats? The door was open.

**PEARL:** Rats? We don't have rats, do we, Opal?

**OPAL:** Bats! It's bats. I even spelled it for the dimwit on the phone. Bats with a B, Kermit.

**SALVI:** Name's not Kermit. It's Salvi, Joe Salvi. Yeah, the girl's new, still learnin' the ropes. So, you got bats, huh?

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** *(To SALVI.)* Yeah, in the belfry. *(Holds up beard.)* This yours?

**OPAL:** Give me that! *(Grabs it.)* It's uh, the piano tuner's.

**PEARL:** You didn't tell me we had bats.

**OPAL:** I didn't want to worry you. You know how you worry, Pearl.

**PEARL:** I do not worry.

**OPAL:** You do when you don't take your medicine.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** *(Looking into bird cage.)* Your bird's dead.

**PEARL:** What?

**OPAL:** It's not dead! It's. . .asleep.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** No, it's definitely dead.

**OPAL:** I told you it's asleep! Now, shut up or you'll wake him!

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Whatever you say. Well, my wallet's not here, I guess, so I'll be going. Thanks, anyway. (*GIOVANNI moans.*)

**OPAL:** Before you go, Kermit, would you and Mr. uh. . .

**SALVI:** Salvi. Joe Salvi.

**OPAL:** Could you put Mr. Frescobaldi back on the sofa?

**SALVI:** What is he, drunk?

**PEARL:** He's undigested.

**SALVI:** You mean indigested.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** At least he hasn't been abducted by aliens yet.  
(*They hoist GIOVANNI onto the sofa.*)

**SALVI:** Aliens?

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Yeah. (*Sings theme from "Twilight Zone".*) And you'd better keep an eye on your teeth, too.

**SALVI:** What?

*DELIVERY MAN 1 shows SALVI his teeth.*

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Well, I'm off.

**PEARL:** Bye. Hope you find. . .

**OPAL:** (*Quickly.*) What you lost.

**PEARL:** Yeah. Now get outta here.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** Thanks. (*To himself.*) I hope you find your, uh, marbles, too. (*Exits.*)

**SALVI:** So, which way to the attic?

**PEARL:** There's no hurry. (*She shoves him onto sofa where he lands on GIOVANNI.*)

**OPAL:** Yeah, let's get acquainted.

*PEARL sits very close to him. OPAL stands behind him. Every time OPAL speaks to SALVI, she bends down and puts her face next to his.*

**SALVI:** (*Worried.*) Acquainted? I, uh, charge by the hour, you know.

**OPAL:** We're not worried about the money. Are we Pearl?

*PEARL and OPAL laugh.*

**PEARL:** Nah, besides, we should get to know one another if you're going to be up in our attic, don't you think?

**SALVI:** What do you mean?

**PEARL:** Well, attics are rather personal, don't you think?

**SALVI:** Personal? What do you mean personal? It's just an attic.

**PEARL:** You can tell a lot about people by what's in their attics, don't you agree?

**SALVI:** I suppose. I never thought about it.

**OPAL:** Well, maybe it's time you did, Kermit.

**PEARL:** Is that your real hair? *(Tugs on it.)*

**OPAL:** Pearl! Really! We hardly know this man. You have to forgive Pearl. She hasn't been the same since she fell off her exercise bike. It's *(Pointing up.)* in the attic.

**PEARL:** *(Glaring at OPAL.)* I did not fall. *(To SALVI.)* I was pushed.

**SALVI:** *(Starting to get up.)* Yeah, well, maybe I should. . .

**PEARL:** *(Pulling him down.)* All my dead husbands' ashes are in the attic.

**SALVI:** Oh.

**OPAL:** All four of them.

**PEARL:** Five.

**OPAL:** Are you sure?

**PEARL:** Don't you think I know how many husbands I've had? You always forget to count Rufus. *(To SALVI.)* He went so quickly. He got a fish bone stuck in his throat. . . on our honeymoon, no less. *(OPAL holds her throat and pretends to choke.)* He was gone, just like that. *(Snaps her fingers.)* Perch.

**SALVI:** Beg your pardon?

**PEARL:** Perch. Perch was the fish he was eating.

**OPAL:** They're loaded with bones. *(Starts choking again.)*

**PEARL:** Yeah, you gotta be careful with fish.

*GIOVANNI groans and falls off sofa. SALVI begins to get up as if to help him.*

**OPAL:** Leave the fool.

**SALVI:** You know, it occurs to me that I didn't bring the right equipment for bats. You see, I thought you had rats.

**OPAL:** You should fire Miss Piggy.

**SALVI:** Miss Piggy? Her name is Edna.

**OPAL:** Whatever. I even spelled it for her. Bats with a B, I told the nitwit.

**SALVI:** So you said. You see, bats are a whole different ball game. You need special equipment for bats.

**PEARL:** Like a catcher's mitt? *(OPAL and PEARL laugh. Noticing SALVI isn't laughing.)* Bats? Catcher's mitt? *(To OPAL.)* I hate a man with no sense of humor. *(To SALVI.)* Don't you get it?

**SALVI:** Oh, yeah. Bats, catcher's mitt. I get it. *(Forcing a laugh.)*

**OPAL:** Well, don't you even want to see the bats? Maybe they are rats after all.

**PEARL:** (*Jumping up.*) I got a great idea! Why don't you stay for lunch?

**OPAL:** We're having fish.

**SALVI:** No, thanks. I . . . I think I'd better get back to my truck and check my equipment. If I don't have the right equipment, it won't do me any good rummaging about in your ashes, I mean attic.

**PEARL:** You sure you won't have some fish with us?

**SAVLI:** No, thanks anyway. I'll, uh, be in touch. (*He exits quickly.*)

**OPAL:** Well, he wasn't much fun! Poor man!

**PEARL:** (*Holds up wallet.*) He is now!

*They both laugh fiendishly. PEARL starts to count the money. DELIVERY MAN 1 enters. They don't notice him.*

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** So that's your game, huh ladies? A little stealing going on here, is there?

**OPAL:** Well, look who's back, Pearl. It's Kermit, the one with the ugly chair.

**DELIVERY MAN 1:** (*Approaching them.*) I think you have something that belongs to me, so if you'll just. . .

**OPAL:** (*Pulling out gun.*) Oh, I don't think so, Kermit. (*To PEARL.*) Pearl, did you remember the bullets?

**PEARL:** I forgot the bullets.

**OPAL:** Oh, Pearl! (*Suddenly.*) Here, Kermit, catch! (*She throws the gun in his direction. He grabs for it. IRMA enters with EDITH, and EDITH hits him over the head with a vase from a nearby table, knocking him unconscious.*) Nighty-night, Kermit!

**EDITH:** Getting a little careless, are we, girls?

**PEARL:** We could have handled it.

**IRMA:** We'd better get out of here now.

**PEARL:** Yeah, but where are we going to go?

**IRMA:** All I know is we've got to clear out of here. You want to go back to jail?

*DELIVERY MAN 1 starts to regain consciousness. IRMA clubs him again.*

**OPAL:** Say, I've got an idea. (*Goes over to desk, picks up newspaper.*) Listen to this, "Two Women in Leadville Claim to see UFO: Last Tuesday, Godiva Dolittle and Lucy Boa of Leadville claim to have observed a UFO. Mrs. Boa, the owner of Lucy Boa's Bed n' Breakfast, and Miss Dolittle, an employee of Mrs. Boa's, were picking mushrooms—"

**IRMA:** Did you say mushrooms?

**OPAL:** Yeah. "—picking mushrooms in the woods near their home when they claim to have observed an alien spacecraft. . .Boa said: 'There was an object in the sky, unlike anything I have ever seen. It looked like a huge cigar with millions of tiny diamonds around it. (*They laugh.*) It circled the woods. We also heard loud, eerie sounds. Our hair stood on end, and then we both fell to the ground and the object disappeared. (*They laugh.*) All our mushrooms were gone when we woke up.'"

**PEARL:** Mushroom-eating aliens?

**EDITH:** UFO, huh?

**OPAL:** Cigar-shaped, no less!

**IRMA:** She's a mushroom picker? You're a genius, Opal.

**PEARL:** I've always wanted to spend Christmas in Leadville, haven't you?

**IRMA:** Yeah, with mushroom hunters who see aliens! (*They laugh.*)

**OPAL:** I wonder where Leadville is.

**EDITH:** Not too far from this place. This is the local paper. We'll find out.

**OPAL:** This Boa dame don't sound too bright.

**IRMA:** Yeah, I like her already.

**DELIVERY MAN 1** stirs. **PEARL** hits him again. *They all laugh evilly.*  
**CURTAIN.**

**NOTE:** *If street musicians are used, they could play in front of the curtain during the scene change. HARPO might enter with suitcase with "Leadville or Bust" on it and the bird cage from SCENE 2, obviously enjoying the musicians' music. He could dance wildly.*

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

*The living room of LUCY BOA's Bed 'n' Breakfast. Its furnishings, like its inhabitants, tend toward the eccentric. GODIVA is standing on a chair trimming a Christmas tree, which is at the rear of the stage, center. She sings or hums a Christmas carol as she works. IGOR and VASCHA practice juggling. DESMOND enters, sees GODIVA on the chair and thinks she's his wife, LUCY. He puts his arms around her.*

**DESMOND:** How about a kiss, darling? *(She freezes, slowly turns and looks down at him.)*

**GODIVA:** I don't do windows and I don't do kisses, Mr. Boa.

**DESMOND:** *(Embarrassed.)* Oh, Godiva, I'm sorry. I thought you were Lucy.

**GODIVA:** Well, I'm not. There's some coffee on the table if you want some. You need some breakfast?

**DESMOND:** No, I'll just have coffee. I've got to pick up Pupinski at the train station. I'll grab a bite on the way. Is Lucy gone already?

**GODIVA:** She said she had to go to the library and then pick up some groceries.

*DESMOND and LUCY's daughter, ROSIE, enters. She is carrying a newspaper and is obviously upset. GODIVA continues to decorate the tree.*

**ROSIE:** *(Holding up paper.)* Father, have you seen this morning's paper?

**DESMOND:** Can't say that I have, Rosie. The newspaper boy hasn't delivered it yet.

**ROSIE:** Newspaper person, Father.

**DESMOND:** Oh, right! Newspaper person. He hasn't delivered it yet.

**ROSIE:** *(Throwing paper down.)* This nonsense about Mother's UFO encounter has made the papers again, her "cigar-shaped flying object with diamonds all around it. . .sound familiar?

**DESMOND:** *(Smiling.)* Did it? *(Picks up paper.)* Any pictures?

**ROSIE:** *(Grabbing paper and hitting him with it.)* No, thank goodness. Father, I wish you'd take this seriously.

**DESMOND:** Oh, life's too important to take seriously, Rosie. Somebody once said that. I forget who.

**ROSIE:** Well, some of us do take life seriously. And it's a good thing we do, too. Not everybody can live life like you and Mother.

**DESMOND:** Well, maybe they should. We have a good time. *(He does a silly little dance. ROSIE is obviously exasperated with him.)*

**ROSIE:** *(Pacing.)* Father, listen. *(DESMOND hops on one foot while she talks. She doesn't notice.)* I'm a lawyer. I've worked hard to get where I am and I've had to work twice as hard because I'm a woman. People come to me because they think I'll do a good job defending them in court. I have a reputation. A very good reputation. One I work extremely hard to keep. But I'm not going to have it long if my family keeps seeing UFOs and all the other nonsense Mother claims to see. People will start to question my sanity.

**DESMOND:** Sanity is highly overrated, Rosie.

**GODIVA:** *(Indignantly approaching ROSIE.)* Nonsense! You wouldn't call it nonsense if you'd seen what me and Mrs. Boa seen. It still gives me the heebie jeebies just thinking about it.

**DESMOND:** And heebie jeebies are nothing to sniff at, Rosie. You wouldn't want people sniffing at your heebie jeebies, would you? *(He begins to sniff at her.)*

**ROSIE:** Oh, I give up.

**DESMOND:** Now, I wouldn't give up, and I wouldn't worry about it too much either, Rosie. The story will die down in time.

**ROSIE:** Not soon enough for me! *(To GODIVA.)* Do you remember the time, not too long ago, when you and Mother were convinced there was a werewolf roaming the area?

*VASCHA starts howling. ROSIE gives him a withering look. VASCHA and IGOR return to their juggling.*

**GODIVA:** Well, it coulda been one.

**ROSIE:** No, it couldn't have been one because there aren't any werewolves, here or anywhere else. It was the Gilberts' St. Bernard that ran away, remember? People at the office still bring that up. And now you're seeing aliens!

**GODIVA:** *(Defensively.)* Didn't see any aliens.

**ROSIE:** That's right, you didn't. Because there aren't any!

**GODIVA:** *(Firmly.)* Just saw their ship.

**ROSIE:** The whole idea of UFOs is nonsense. Utter nonsense! I can't imagine how people can believe in such things. You and Mother should know better, Godiva. Don't you understand that because we're women we have to work twice as hard in this world?

**GODIVA:** I know what I saw and I know what I heard. There's plenty we don't understand in this world. You shouldn't make fun of what you don't understand, male or female.

**ROSIE:** What I don't understand is how two grown women can be so gullible. Next you'll be seeing ghosts and vampires. And if you do, I do not want to read about it in the newspaper. By the way, where is Mother?

**GODIVA:** She's gone to the library.

**DESMOND:** She's been doing a lot of research on UFOs.

**ROSIE:** (*Sarcastically.*) Wonderful. (*Checks her watch.*) Oh, it's getting late. I've got so much to do today. I'm meeting a very important client this afternoon. If I can land this account, it could mean a promotion for me.

**DESMOND:** That's terrific, darling. I wish you luck.

**ROSIE:** Luck will have nothing to do with it. I just hope she doesn't see the paper.

**DESMOND:** Oh, I wouldn't worry about it, dear. Maybe she can't read.

**ROSIE:** Oh, she can read all right. She's the president of Arrow Enterprises, one of the largest manufacturing companies in the country. I'd better get to the office. (*Kisses him on cheek.*) Goodbye. Father, please talk to Mother about this UFO nonsense. And Godiva, please don't talk to any more reporters. (*She exits.*)

**GODIVA:** Humph! (*Grumbling.*) Nonsense. . .superstition. . .I know what I saw.

*DESMOND finishes his coffee and flips through the paper. Strange music is heard, softly at first, then gradually getting louder. No one but GODIVA hears it. The lights dim somewhat. No one but GODIVA notices the changes. She stops and looks around, obviously unsettled by it. The music gets louder. She looks up, and drops an ornament on the floor.*

**GODIVA:** Oh, no.

**DESMOND:** (*Thinking she's referring to the ornament.*) Oh, it's only an ornament. Don't worry about it. And don't worry about Rosie either. She's a little high strung.

*The music continues to increase in intensity and volume.*

**GODIVA:** Mr. Boa, do you hear something?

**DESMOND:** Hmm? Hear what, Godiva? Is there any more coffee?

**GODIVA:** (*To herself.*) Oh, no, not again. (*Looking around.*)

**DESMOND:** (*Puts down paper.*) I've only had one cup. (*Sees the expression on her face.*) What's wrong, Godiva?

**GODIVA:** (*Runs over to VASCHA.*) Vascha, can you hear it?

**VASCHA:** (*Upset.*) Now you make me lose concentration and I drop ball.

**GODIVA:** What about you, Igor? You hear it, don't you?

**IGOR:** I got to practice.

**VASCHA:** We get rust on us if we do not practice. You want us to have rust? (*A strange light plays across the stage, unnoticed by all except GODIVA.*)

**DESMOND:** (*Stands.*) Are you all right, Godiva? Maybe you've been standing on that chair too long. The altitude may be getting to you. (*GODIVA continues to look around. DESMOND notices she isn't paying attention.*) Godiva?

**GODIVA:** Yes, Mr. Boa?

**DESMOND:** You look as if you've seen a ghost, Godiva. (*Strange lights and music ends.*)

**GODIVA:** Not a ghost. (*To herself.*) I don't think so. (*Looking around.*)

**DESMOND:** Well, I've got to get Pupinski at the station. Tell Lucy I'll be back shortly, will you, Godiva? Godiva?

**GODIVA:** (*Distracted.*) Yes, Mr. Boa?

**DESMOND:** Forget it. (*He walks to coat rack to get his coat.*) See you later, boys.

**VASCHA:** We stay.

**DESMOND:** (*Quietly.*) Keep an eye on Godiva. She's not herself.

**IGOR:** Don't worry. We keep eyes on her.

*DESMOND exits. GODIVA goes back to decorating the tree, looking around from time to time. IGOR and VASCHA return to their juggling. Suddenly, many of the ornaments appear to rise off the tree and hang suspended in the air. (See PRODUCTION NOTES.) No one sees this except GODIVA, who reacts and runs in tears from the room. (Note: The ornaments rising from the tree is optional, you could have someone simply shake the tree, which would have the same effect on GODIVA.)*

**VASCHA:** Women crazy!

**IGOR:** Yah. All of them crazy.

*LUCY BOA enters, helping MRS. ROTTENSWAPPER into the house. LUCY is carrying a bag of groceries in one arm and holding books in the other.*

**LUCY:** Now do be careful, Mrs. Rottenswapper! We don't want anything more to happen to you today, do we?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** (*Shakes her off.*) Let me be. I'm fine. I'll be fine.

*LUCY drops the bag and oranges roll across the floor. The POPOVICHES rush over to carry MRS. ROTTENSWAPPER in. Each takes an arm. ROTTENSWAPPER screams. They don't know where to take her, so she dangles in midair until LUCY tells them where to put her. LUCY motions to the sofa.*

**LUCY:** Over there.

**VASCHA:** *(To ROTTENSWAPPER.)* Why you scream? You make ugly face when you scream. I don't like ugly face. *(To LUCY.)* Why she scream, Mrs. Boa?

**LUCY:** Oh, Mrs. Rottenswapper has had such a difficult morning. Thank you so much guys. Let me take your coat, Mrs. Rottenswapper. *(She does. VASCHA helps LUCY with hers, then takes both to hang up.)*

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Did you say your name was Boa?

**LUCY:** That's right. Boa. Lucy Boa. Why?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Oh, nothing. Nothing. I just didn't catch your last name before now.

**VASCHA:** *(Holds up coat.)* This real animal fur? *(Tosses it to IGOR.)*

**IGOR:** *(Sniffing it.)* It smells like animal. *(He tosses it back to VASCHA.)*

**VASCHA:** You kill animal for coat?

**IGOR:** Shame! Shame!

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** You be careful with that coat! *(VASCHA throws it in the corner, hangs up LUCY's.)* Who are they, your bodyguards? *(VASCHA and IGOR crawl on floor gathering the oranges that LUCY dropped.)*

**LUCY:** Bodyguards? Good heavens, no, what on earth would I need with bodyguards? These are the Popoviches. They're jugglers from Europe. *(They look up and smile at MRS. ROTTENSWAPPER.)* Oh, we're so honored to have them staying with us. They're guests.

**VASCHA:** *(Rises, taking LUCY's hand.)* You such nice lady. *(Referring to ROTTENSWAPPER.)* She not nice lady.

**LUCY:** Oh, I think she probably is. She's just a little upset.

**VASCHA:** *(To IGOR.)* Why she scream?

**IGOR:** *(Shrugging.)* I don't know. *(They finish getting the groceries together and take them into the kitchen.)*

**LUCY:** You make yourself comfortable, Mrs. Rottenswapper. *(Yells.)* Godiva! *(ROTTENSWAPPER reacts to her shouting.)* Godiva!

**GODIVA:** *(Enters, comes up behind LUCY and keeping her distance from the tree.)* Yes, Mrs. Boa?

**LUCY:** (*Jumps.*) Oh, there you are. (*Noticing the tree.*) Oh my, the tree looks beautiful. (*GODIVA moves away from it.*) The prettiest we've ever had.

**GODIVA:** (*Motions LUCY over.*) I heard it again, Mrs. Boa.

**LUCY:** Heard what? (*GODIVA points up and LUCY understands.*) You didn't!

**GODIVA:** I did. (*MRS. ROTTENSWAPPER is obviously listening.*)

**LUCY:** Where?

**GODIVA:** Right here. Just a few minutes ago.

**LUCY:** No! Did anyone else hear it? (*ROTTENSWAPPER keeps inching closer to hear.*)

**GODIVA:** Mrs. Boa, no one heard it but me. Mr. Boa was here, and Igor and Vascha, but no one else heard it.

**LUCY:** No!

**GODIVA:** Yes! Another thing happened, too.

**LUCY:** What?

**GODIVA:** The ornaments, they just lifted themselves off the tree. And there were these strange lights. . .

**LUCY:** No. . .

**GODIVA:** Mrs. Boa, I'm so scared.

**LUCY:** Oh, it's nothing to be frightened of, I'm sure. Don't worry, dear. (*Notices ROTTENSWAPPER eavesdropping.*) We'll talk later. Godiva, this is Mrs. Rottenswapper. Her automobile and mine had a little encounter.

**GODIVA:** Oh, another accident, eh, Mrs. Boa?

**LUCY:** Just an itsy-bitsy one.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** What? With that tank you were driving, it's a wonder I'm alive.

**LUCY:** Well, I didn't see you. I can't imagine where you came from.

**GODIVA:** Were you reading the paper again?

**LUCY:** No, I was not. I was looking for a piece of paper in the glove compartment to write down the name of a lovely piece of music I heard on the radio and then (*Claps hands together.*) BANG! (*ROTTENSWAPPER jumps.*) I just can't imagine where you came from. One minute you weren't there, the next minute, BANG!

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** (*Jumping.*) Scared the daylights out of me.

**LUCY:** Oh, it was just a little bump. But you're all right now, aren't you, Mrs. Rottenswapper?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I suppose I'll live, which is more than I can say for my car.

**LUCY:** Oh, I'm sure it'll be fine. *(To GODIVA.)* We had it towed to Jack's Garage. *(To ROTTENSWAPPER.)* That Jack's a miracle worker when it comes to cars.

**GODIVA:** Soap box cars.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** What!

**GODIVA:** *(To LUCY.)* What was the song?

**LUCY:** Song? Oh, the one I wanted to write down. I've completely forgotten. I knew I would if I didn't write it down. *(To ROTTENSWAPPER.)* Which is why I was looking for a piece of paper. I knew I had one in the glove compartment, and I was just about to take it out when *(Claps hands again.)* BANG! *(ROTTENSWAPPER jumps again.)*

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Could you stop doing that? *(Wipes her brow with handkerchief.)* You mean you had my car towed to a soap box car mechanic? I need that car fixed. I do not fly, and so I need that car for business. *(Checks her watch.)* Furthermore, I have an appointment this afternoon. And you're telling me you sent my car to a Safeguard mechanic -

**LUCY:** Godiva, dear, maybe Mrs. Rottenswapper would like some tea or coffee.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** A cup of tea might settle my nerves. *(IGOR and VASCHA enter with oranges and begin to juggle.)*

**GODIVA:** I'll put the water on. *(Remembering.)* Oh, Mrs. Boa, we made the paper again.

**LUCY:** *(Excitedly.)* Oh, really?

**GODIVA:** *(Hands her the paper.)* Yeah, and Rosie was pretty upset about it.

**LUCY:** Oh dear. *(GODIVA starts toward the kitchen.)*

**IGOR:** I go to kitchen with you.

**GODIVA:** *(Flirting.)* Oh, Igor. *(VASCHA goes to coat rack and gets his coat and hat.)*

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Rosie?

**LUCY:** Rosie's our daughter.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Rosie Boa. . .is. . .your daughter?

**LUCY:** That's right! She's a lawyer. We're so proud of her.

**VASCHA:** I go out now.

**LUCY:** Oh, are you leaving, Vascha?

**VASCHA:** Sure, but I come back. I go get something to eat for dinner. Surprise! *(To ROTTENSWAPPER.)* You be nice. No more you scream and make ugly face. She going to be in circus with us?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Circus?

**LUCY:** *(To VASCHA.)* No, dear.

**VASCHA:** Good. *(He exits.)*

**LUCY:** The Popoviches are so sweet. And so talented! *(IGOR chases GODIVA, giggling, into the room.)*

**GODIVA:** Oh, Igor, you're such a flirt! *(He chases her out again.)*

**LUCY:** Igor has such. . .energy!

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Who are these Popoviches anyway?

**LUCY:** They're friends of Mr. Pupinski's.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Pupinski?

**LUCY:** He's a friend of my husband's. Desmond and Mr. Pupinski are putting together a circus. Mr. Pupinski's gathering talent from all over the world. It's just so exciting! There's so much talent out there, you know. Jugglers and clowns and acrobats and tightrope walkers. . . Say, why don't I see if there're some of those delicious coconut macaroons we had for dessert last night? Would you like some macaroons, Mrs. Rottenswapper? They're really quite scrumptious!

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Well, all right.

**LUCY:** You just relax right there and I'll see if there are any left.

*She exits. HARPO enters. MRS. ROTTENSWAPPER doesn't see him at first. He approaches her from behind and looks into her face, honking his horn. ROTTENSWAPPER screams and tries to run away from HARPO. He continues to chase her, grinning. She climbs up on the piano or another large piece of furniture at rear of stage. He hides behind screen. LUCY, IGOR, and GODIVA rush in.*

**LUCY:** *(Looks around.)* Did somebody scream? Where in the world is Mrs. Rottenswapper?

**GODIVA:** *(Sees ROTTENSWAPPER and points to her. She is still in a state of shock.)* You all right, lady?

**LUCY:** Oh dear.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** He. . .he. . .he snuck up on me and scared the daylights out of me.

**LUCY:** *(Looks around.)* Oh, my. Godiva, why don't you get Mrs. Rottenswapper the tea? Igor, would you help Mrs. Rottenswapper down?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** *(She refuses.)* Don't you touch me. *(He shrugs and goes to kitchen.)*

**LUCY:** Can you tell me what happened, Mrs. Rottenswapper?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Some maniac came in and chased me.

**LUCY:** Oh, we don't have any maniacs here, Mrs. Rottenswapper.

**GODIVA:** *(Enters with tea.)* Here's the tea.

**DESMOND:** *(From off stage.)* Bills, bills, bills! *(Enters with PUPINSKI. They hang up their coats.)* Electric bill! Phone bill! Gas bill! Water bill! What do these people think I am. . .made of money?

**LUCY:** Oh, it's my husband, Desmond! *(DESMOND and PUPINSKI enter. Neither notices ROTTENSWAPPER, who is still on the piano.)* Why, Desmond, you're home early. How nice. We have company. Come over here and let me introduce you. *(DESMOND shoves mail into his suit coat pocket.)* You too, Mr. Pupinski. This is Mrs. Rottenswapper. Mrs. Rottenswapper, my husband, Desmond, and our good friend, Mr. Pupinski, the one I told you about. *(DESMOND looks up at her on the piano, then motions LUCY aside.)*

**DESMOND:** Lucy, why is Mrs. -

**LUCY:** Rottenswapper.

**PUPINSKI:** Say, that's a mouthful.

**DESMOND:** Why is Mrs. Rottenswapper on the piano?

**LUCY:** Oh, uh, she got frightened.

**DESMOND:** Frightened?

**LUCY:** She thought she saw something.

**DESMOND:** Ah, well, that explains it.

**LUCY:** Would you like to come down now, Mrs. Rottenswapper? *(She helps her down.)*

**DESMOND:** Pleased to meet you, Mrs. -

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Rottenswapper. Mrs. Vita Rottenswapper.

**DESMOND:** *(He shakes her hand.)* How do you do? I'm sorry something frightened you, Ms. Rottenswapper. Our "somethings" are usually so well-behaved. I'll have to speak to them. Maybe even take one to the woodshed as an example to the others.

**PUPINSKI:** *(Takes her hand.)* A real pleasure, Miss Rottenswapper. *(Flirting.)* Or may I call you Vita?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** *(Sternly.)* You may call me Mrs. Rottenswapper.

**PUPINSKI:** Rottenswapper, huh? Well, something's rotten around here, that's for sure.

**DESMOND:** Say, I knew a Rottenswapper once. Used to rob banks. Any relation?

*ROTTENSWAPPER is insulted.*

**LUCY:** Oh, I'm sure there are no federal offenders in Mrs. Rottenswapper's family. Are there, dear?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I should say not.

**PUPINSKI:** No need to be offended.

**DESMOND:** Why, every family's got a few black sheep, isn't that right, Lucy? *(Quietly.)* Several of Lucy's ancestors were burned as witches.

**LUCY:** Desmond, really!

**DESMOND:** It's true. It was in Europe though. Does that count?

**PUPINSKI:** Any witches in your family, Mrs. Rottenswapper?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** No!

**PUPINSKI:** Take my family. Insanity runs rampant in it. There're nuts all the way up and down the family tree. *(Pulls banana from his coat pocket.)* Care for a banana?

**DESMOND:** Any insanity in your family, Mrs. Rottenswapper?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Certainly not.

**PUPINSKI:** *(Starts to peel the banana and gives half to DESMOND.)*  
Now, now, it's nothing to be ashamed of.

**DESMOND:** *(Eating the banana.)* You can be frank with us.

**PUPINSKI:** But you'd rather be Rottenswapper, wouldn't you? Come, come, my precious, any cuckoos in your nest?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Well! I never!

*The word "never" always creates momentary chaos in the household. Loud, lively music begins. DESMOND and PUPINSKI dance together. LUCY and GODIVA do likewise. ROTTENSWAPPER watches them incredulously.*

**LUCY:** Oh, Mrs. Rottenswapper, please don't ever use that word in this house. It always causes. . . things to happen.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** What word? Things? What are you talking about? What's wrong with you people? Why, I've never. . . *(Music and dancing begins again.)*

**LUCY:** Oh, please, Mrs. Rottenswapper, you must be more careful.

**PUPINSKI:** By the way, who are you, anyway? Why are you looking at me with those big beautiful diamonds? I mean, eyes? *(Touches her necklace.)* Are those real diamonds? If they are, this could be the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Get away from me!

**DESMOND:** Yes, Mrs. Rottenswapper, what brings you to Leadville?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I'm here on business. I have an appointment with a law firm.

**DESMOND:** Really! Our daughter's a lawyer!

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** *(Sarcastically.)* You don't say. What a coincidence.

**LUCY:** Mrs. Rottenswapper and I met quite by accident. *(Laughs.)* You see, her automobile, uh, broke down, and she needed to have it towed to Jack's Garage.

**DESMOND:** You had another accident.

*GODIVA enters with tray of cookies.*

**PUPINSKI:** You won't recognize your car when he's done with it.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I don't recognize it now.

**GODIVA:** Want a cookie?

**PUPINSKI:** I'll take one.

**GODIVA:** *(To PUPINSKI.)* They're a little stale.

**PUPINSKI:** *(Gives her his.)* Have two, Mrs. Rottenswapper.

**DESMOND:** Sure, I pay the bills and she gets the cookies. Is that fair? Here, why don't you take the bills and I'll take the cookies. All right, how about you pay half the bills and I'll give you half the cookies. Do we have a deal? Let's shake on it. *(He extends his hand. She ignores it.)*

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** *(To GODIVA.)* Are there any nuts in here? I'm terribly allergic to nuts.

**DESMOND:** Is that an insult to my family?

**PUPINSKI:** We wouldn't insult your family, would we?

**LUCY:** I think she means in the cookies.

**GODIVA:** Nah, there's no nuts in the cookies. There's coconut, but that's not really the same as a nut, at least I don't think so. *(She exits.)*

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I have to be extremely careful. One nut could kill me.

**PUPINSKI:** Think what two could do! *(He slaps DESMOND on the back.)*

**LUCY:** Oh, you two, stop. What will Mrs. Rottenswapper think?

**DESMOND:** I don't know, what will she think?

**PUPINSKI:** I know! Let's ask her. Tell us, Mrs. Rottenswapper, what do you think?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** What do I think about what?

**PUPINSKI:** So your mind was wandering, eh? What were you thinking about? No, don't tell me. Let me guess. Swedish meatballs? Another cookie? Our honeymoon on the Riviera? You and I on the beach with a couple of whales in the ocean. Any whales in your family? No, of course not. And would you tell me if there were? No, I'm sure you wouldn't, but that's all right, I don't mind. You keep your

little secrets and I'll keep mine. I don't care if your mother was a whale. I won't tease you about it.

**DESMOND:** The world is a crazy place and don't you ever forget it, Mrs. Rottenswapper. (*LUCY sees the mail in DESMOND's pocket and takes it out. She starts to go through it, opening letters and reading them.*)

**PUPINSKI:** Your wife's a pickpocket, Desmond. (*To ROTTENSWAPPER.*) By the way, do you happen to have a cigar on you?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** A cigar? Certainly not!

**PUPINSKI:** Oh, you don't have to give me one of your expensive cigars. A cheap one will do. You save the good ones for yourself.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I don't have any cigars.

**PUPINSKI:** What? You mean you smoked them all?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** (*Indignant.*) I do not smoke cigars.

**PUPINSKI:** Now, now, it's nothing to be embarrassed about. So you smoked all the cigars and didn't save me one. Sure, it was a selfish thing to do, but after all, they were your cigars to begin with.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I don't have any cigars. What are you talking about? (*To LUCY who doesn't notice because she's looking through the mail.*) What is he talking about?

**GODIVA:** Cigars. You know, (*Pretending to smoke one.*) people smoke 'em.

**PUPINSKI:** Filthy habit. You really should think about quitting. The world would be a better place for it.

**DESMOND:** Lucy won't allow smoking in the house. If you're going to smoke, you'll have to do it outside, I'm afraid.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I do not smoke. I have never smoked!

*Music and dancing begins again, ends as quickly as it started.*

**LUCY:** I thought you were going to be careful, Mrs. Rottenswapper. This really can't go on.

**DESMOND:** What can't go on?

**PUPINSKI:** Why can't it go on? The show must go on!

**LUCY:** Desmond, dear, I have some wonderful news.

**DESMOND:** Really?

**LUCY:** You'll nev. . . (*Stops herself before she says "never," then smiles at her cleverness.*) You won't guess who's paying us a visit!

**DESMOND:** I'll bet I can.

**LUCY:** I'll bet you can't.

**DESMOND:** He's got a white beard and wears a red suit, ho-ho-ho!

**LUCY:** No, you silly string bean. Cleta Spink is coming.

**DESMOND:** It won't be the same. Will she at least come down the chimney?

**PUPINSKI:** I hope she brings her own cigars. *(To DESMOND.)* Who's Cleta Spink? *(He shrugs.)*

**DESMOND:** It's all a mystery to me.

**PUPINSKI:** Speaking of mysteries, you're a mystery to me, Mrs. Rottenswapper. Where were you on the night of June 14, 1927?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Why, I wasn't even born yet!

**PUPINSKI:** You don't expect that to hold up in court, do you?

**LUCY:** Isn't it just so thrilling?

**DESMOND:** Cleta Spink?

**LUCY:** Oh, Desmond, don't tell me you really don't know who Cleta Spink is! I told you about her.

**DESMOND:** All right. I won't tell you I don't know who she is. I'll tell Pupinski. *(To PUPINSKI. With his hand on PUPINSKI, his head lowered.)* I blush to confess, Pupinski, I don't know who she is. There, I've said it. I feel ever so much better.

**LUCY:** Cleta Spink, the writer.

**DESMOND:** A writer, huh?

**PUPINSKI:** *(Checking his arms.)* I think I may have goose bumps.

**LUCY:** Mr. Pupinski, really!

**DESMOND:** Did we order a writer?

**PUPINSKI:** I thought we ordered a pizza.

**LUCY:** She's going to interview Godiva and me about our UFO experience.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Did you say UFO?

**LUCY:** That's right.

**PUPINSKI:** Stop! My goose bumps are spreading! They're all over my body! *(Throws himself on the floor, rolling and slapping at his body!)* Somebody help me! *(DESMOND pulls pillow from sofa and hits PUPINSKI with it. Feathers fly.)*

**LUCY:** *(Laughing.)* Mr. Pupinski, really! Desmond, stop! *(She takes a pillow and hits DESMOND with it. PUPINSKI remains on the floor looking up at ROTTENSWAPPER.)*

**DESMOND:** When is she coming?

**LUCY:** She should be here any day now. She's working on a new book and she'd like to interview us around the holidays. Her schedule is a little uncertain, she says.

**PUPINSKI:** *(Jumping up.)* Maybe she's already here. Let's search the house. You take the downstairs, I'll take upstairs. Godiva, get the bloodhounds! Mrs. Rottenswapper, organize a tea party.

**DESMOND:** You mean a search party.

**PUPINSKI:** Right! Organize a search party, or if you insist, a tea party, but don't just sit there like a lump in a bog.

**DESMOND:** That's "bump on a log," I believe.

**PUPINSKI:** Or rump of a hog!

**LUCY:** Oh, Mr. Pupinski, you're such a silly goose.

**PUPINSKI:** I am, aren't I? It's the goose bumps that do it. Tell me, Mrs. Rottenswapper, could you love a man with gooseflesh? (*Fluttering his eyelashes and raising his eyebrows at MRS. ROTTENSWAPPER.*)

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Why, I've never been so. . . (*Music and dancing begins.*)

*Knocking is heard. Enter EDITH, IRMA, OPAL, and PEARL. They look around, confused. Music stops suddenly and LUCY notices them.*

**LUCY:** Oh, my. I'm so sorry. We didn't hear you. (*IGOR enters from kitchen.*)

**OPAL:** Is this Lucy Boa's Bed 'n' Breakfast?

**LUCY:** Why yes, it most certainly is. I'm Lucy Boa.

**OPAL:** Yeah, well, we need a place to stay for a few days.

**LUCY:** Why, certainly. Come in.

**PEARL:** We're the, uh, Slagg Sisters.

**LUCY:** Oh, I'm so happy to meet you. Let me introduce everyone. (*Phone rings.*) This is my husband, Desmond, and our good friend, Mr. Pupinski. And this is Mrs. Rottenswapper. Oh, and that's Godiva Dolittle and Igor Popovich.

**PUPINSKI:** Does anyone else have a ringing in their ears?

**LUCY:** Would you sign the register?

*Leads them over to the desk. While IRMA signs the register, the other sisters start to pick up objects, pocketing some, rejecting others. Audience sees this, but no one on stage does.*

**GODIVA:** (*Answering phone.*) Hello. Yep. She's here. You want to talk to her? Okay. What? How long? Okay. I'll tell her. (*Hangs up.*) That was Jack. He says your car needs some part he ain't got.

**LUCY:** (*Corrects her.*) He hasn't got.

**GODIVA:** Right, he ain't got the part, so he's got to order it. Might take a couple of days. Maybe a week, he says. Unless it snows real bad, then it could take longer.

**LUCY:** Oh, my. I'm so sorry. *(To the sisters.)* Her car broke down.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** But I have an appointment.

**LUCY:** I hope you don't lose your job.

**PUPINSKI:** How will you afford those expensive cigars?

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** If you could just direct me to a hotel. . .

**GODIVA:** The hotel burned down two years ago.

**PUPINSKI:** A woman smoking a cigar started it.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Well, surely there must be somewhere in this town to stay.

**LUCY:** Of course there is. You'll stay right here as our guest. We wouldn't have it any other way.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Well, I suppose. If there's no place else.

*DESMOND gets his coat and hat, as well as PUPINSKI's.*

**LUCY:** Not unless you drive fifty miles or so through the mountains. But you don't have your automobile, so you'll stay with us. After all, this is Lucy Boa's Bed 'n' Breakfast. It's the least we can do under the circumstances. Desmond, would you be a dear and run over to Jack's Garage and pick up Mrs. Rottenswapper's luggage? It's in her automobile.

**GODIVA:** We need some peaches, too, if we're going to have peach cobbler tonight!

**PUPINSKI:** Oh, so that's where the peaches went. What are our peaches doing in your car, I'd like to know, Mrs. Rottenswapper? For shame, you petty peach thief! The wedding is off! I couldn't marry you now, knowing what I do about your peach fetish. How could I ever trust you? Farewell! Farewell and good riddance to Rottenswappers everywhere!

*DESMOND throws PUPINSKI his hat and coat. They exit. GODIVA goes into the kitchen as IGOR enters and starts juggling.*

**LUCY:** *(ROTTENSWAPPER shakes her head.)* Oh, Mr. Pupinski means no harm. Pay him no mind. He's just a terrible tease. You'll get used to him.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I don't want to get used to him. The man's a lunatic, an insolent lunatic.

*VASCHA enters, carrying fish wrapped in newspaper.*

**VASCHA:** (*Proudly.*) I bring fish for dinner! (*He unwraps it and displays it to all. The SISTERS and ROTTENSWAPPER are thoroughly disgusted.*)

**LUCY:** Oh, that's wonderful, Vascha. Mr. Popovich, let me introduce you to (*Looks at register.*) the Slagg sisters. (*They nod but obviously want nothing to do with him.*) This is Vascha Popovich. He's a juggler. And you remember Mrs. Rottenswapper, Vascha.

**VASCHA:** Sure, the screamer. (*To the sisters.*) You acrobats?

**EDITH:** No.

**VASCHA:** You like fish? (*Shoves it in her face.*) Is fresh!

**PEARL:** Get away from me!

**LUCY:** Why don't you take the fish into the kitchen? (*He tosses fish to IGOR.*)

**IGOR:** (*Sniffs.*) Good fish. Fresh. (*They exit.*)

**VASCHA:** (*To OPAL.*) Yah, but you have to be careful with fish. Many, many little bones. I know man who choked to death on fish bone. Got stuck in his throat. (*He grabs his throat and pretends to choke. OPAL reacts.*) I clean fish. Take out all the little bones. Don't you worry.

**IGOR:** Yah. Don't worry.

**LUCY:** Yes, guys, why don't you take the fish into the kitchen? (*Trying to change the subject.*) Godiva, let's show these ladies to their rooms.

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** I need to use the phone.

**LUCY:** Why, certainly dear. It's right on the desk.

**GODIVA:** (*To the sisters.*) Follow me, ladies.

*ROTTENSWAPPER is alone on stage. She dials number. HARPO enters with bubbles, which he blows throughout ROTTENSWAPPER's phone conversation. She doesn't see the bubbles or him until the end of her conversation.*

**ROTTENSWAPPER:** Yeah, it's Vita, Edna. No, I haven't met the lawyer yet, but I'm in her family's house. A loony bin is more like it. Her family's a pack of crazies, Edna. You heard me, crazies. Well, she may be normal, but I can't see how, coming from this bundle of lunatics. I know, I know, but I tell you, these people ought to be locked up. You wouldn't believe what goes on here! Her mother wrecked my car. That's right! Wrecked my car. She sees aliens, too. Uh huh. Then they sent my car to a soap box car mechanic who says he doesn't have the right parts to fix it. No, I will not fly out of here. I never fly. I'll wait until the car is fixed or else I'll rent one on

Monday. Listen, if you don't hear from me by tomorrow, you get yourself down here and start looking for my body. You heard me. And start looking for another law firm to represent the company! Right now! We don't have any time to lose. *(She slams down phone. She notices bubbles, and slowly turns and comes face to face with a grinning HARPO.)* Now, don't you dare come near me. Get away, I say! You get away from me, you hear? Get away! HELP!

*HARPO grins and chases her out of the room, honking his horn.*  
CURTAIN.

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