



likely story

THE EXTRA MAN

by

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Based on The Novel by Jonathan Ames

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FADE IN:

A 78 RECORD SPINS ON A LARGE GRAMOPHONE.

1 INT. WEST EGG MANSION / ROARING 20'S -- DAY 1

A young gentleman clad in a white flannel suit (LOUIS IVES, mid-twenties, handsome in an odd way) gently drops the needle onto the vinyl. A scratchy rendition of AIN'T WE GOT FUN fills the room.

Louis runs a hand through his slicked back hair, then rushes down the foyer of his elaborate mansion. He is trailed by his aging VALET. Louis stops in front of a vase of calla lilies to fuss with the arrangement.

VALET
Excuse me, sir? ... Sir?

LOUIS
(fretting)
She's not coming. I've made everything perfect, and I just know she's not coming...

VALET
Excuse me, Sir.

Louis spins around, finally paying attention.

VALET
A car, I believe, is approaching.

Louis gulps. He turns towards the door.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. WEST EGG MANSION -- DAY 2

Across an expansive privet-hedged lawn, a 1920's Buick Sport Tourer creeps towards the porte cochere. A CHAUFFEUR drives the car, while an ELEGANT YOUNG WOMAN -- her face concealed by a lavender, wide-brimmed hat -- rides in back. The scene is the epitome of roaring 20's opulence, until... the Tourer parks behind something decidedly out of place: a beat-up, '81 PONTIAC PARISIENNE CONVERTIBLE.

ANGLE ON THE MANSION DOOR: LOUIS steps forward, heart pounding.

ANGLE ON THE TOURER: The Chauffeur escorts the lady from the back seat, dutifully holding an umbrella. Her head's still down, her face concealed.

ANGLE ON LOUIS: He arrives at the car and waits patiently for her to disembark. Finally he speaks, his voice trembling:

LOUIS

Daisy. I've waited for this moment
for so long. I've never stopped
loving you, dreaming of you.

A soft, feminine voice answers.

DAISY

I know, Louis, I know.

Daisy looks up. Her hat tips back, revealing something
thoroughly shocking: the face of LOUIS IVES HIMSELF.

ANGLE ON LOUIS: He stares, transfixed, confused. The VALET
appears at his side, softly patting his arm.

VALET

Sir... *Sir!*

CUT TO:

3 INT. LOUIS' PRINCETON STUDIO / SPRING 2008 -- MORNING 3

LOUIS' eyes open. He awakens in his futon as the F. Scott
Fitzgerald dream evaporates. He glances down at a copy of THE
GREAT GATSBY lying on his chest, then sighs.

Louis' one-room studio is small and spartan -- a converted
attic in an old Princeton home. Classic books(P.G. Wodehouse,
Thomas Mann, Oscar Wilde, Evelyn Waugh, etc) neatly pile up
everywhere. A vase of calla lilies brightens one corner.
Louis fumbles for his old, wind-up clock to check the time.

LOUIS

Dammit.

He hops out of bed.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP ON A NOTEBOOK PAGE: A student's mocking sketch of a
suit-and-tied Louis with a 3D square block head. A pencil
finishes some shading.

4 INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM -- DAY 4

LOUIS stands before the class reading aloud from *The Great
Gatsby*. His rather formal attire -- corduroy slacks, oxford
shirt, wool blazer and Brooks Brothers tie -- looks
particularly odd amongst the tee-shirt clad students.

LOUIS

*... I felt a haunting loneliness
sometimes, and felt it in others--
young clerks in the dusk, wasting
the most poignant moments of night
and life...*

THE SKETCHING MALE STUDENT (dressed Emo like Pete Wentz)
slides the picture to an attractive FEMALE STUDENT who
giggles. THE BELL RINGS. Everyone rises and dashes out. Still
caught up in his book reverie, Louis is late to notice.

LOUIS

Oh!

He smiles. The FEMALE STUDENT kindly smiles back.

CUT TO:

5

EXT. PRETTY BROOK COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL -- DAY

5

Spring cherry blossoms flutter about, adding a welcome splash
of pink to this gray, Gothic prep school. LOUIS escorts the
pretty FEMALE STUDENT down a campus path. Her allure makes
him so nervous he can barely make eye contact.

FEMALE STUDENT

*... Why did Fitzgerald make Nick
Carraway so dull? What's the point
of having such a boring narrator? I
think it was a bad choice.*

LOUIS

Well, Carraway is like a camera.
He's fascinated by Gatsby, so he
wants to create a portrait of him.
In a way, the book is kind of a
love letter to Gatsby.

FEMALE STUDENT

Love letter?...I guess. Oops!

She dropped her paperback. As she bends to retrieve it, A
LACY THONG peeks out of her low-rise jeans. Louis gapes for
one moment, then nervously checks his watch.

LOUIS

Um, unfortunately I have some
business in the teacher's lounge.
But we can talk again next week
before class.

FEMALE STUDENT

You need to check your calendar,
Mr. Ives.

(MORE)

FEMALE STUDENT (cont'd)
Next week is Spring Break. I'll be
in Cancun, getting skin cancer and
drinking margies.

LOUIS
Okay, so the week after then.

FEMALE STUDENT
Sure. If I have any brain cells
left.

She chuckles. Louis smiles uncomfortably.

LOUIS
Well, please be careful.

FEMALE STUDENT
Okay -- see ya, Mr. Ives!

Louis watches her saunter off, trying to suppress his lust.

CUT TO:

6

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE -- DAY

6

LOUIS enters the lounge. He passes between two attractive
FEMALE TEACHERS in tennis whites on their way out.

FEMALE TEACHER #1
Finally some real tennis weather...

LOUIS
Good afternoon.

They don't notice him. Louis smiles and waves anyway. No
response. Alone, he turns and moves towards the water cooler.
On the way there, Louis accidentally trips over a GYM BAG
left behind by one of the teachers. The bag slides across the
floor. Out spill a few books, lipsticks, a tampon and most
notably a PLAYTEX BRASSIERE.

The bra rests majestically on the tile floor. A shaft of
light illuminates the fully formed cups. Louis is transfixed
by these two magic mountains.

He glances around to insure that he's alone, then slowly
bends down. He scoops up the bra in his hands. His very first
instinct is to smell it -- one long, deep whiff.

Next, Louis steps towards the mirror just beyond the water
cooler. As if possessed, he slips his arms through the loops
and drapes the bra neatly over his coat and tie. He regards
himself in the mirror, running his fingers just under the
firm cotton cones.

ANGLE ON MIRROR: Louis cocks his head to the side, almost femininely. *Alluringly.*

CUT TO:

7 INT. HALLWAY -- SIMULTANEOUS 7

MS. MARSH, the Principal, stomps towards the teacher's lounge. She's a mid-sixties no-nonsense matriarch with bullet-gray hair. She reaches for the door.

CUT TO:

8 INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE -- DAY 8

THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN. Louis spins around, the bra still spread across his chest. His eyes meet those of MS. MARSH.

LOUIS
Um... It was in Miss Jeffries' bag.

He fumbles to remove the bra. Ms. Marsh glances down towards his crotch accusingly.

MRS. MARSH'S POV: A large bulge advertises his guilt. Louis bundles the bra up and covers his crotch, desperate to conceal his arousal.

CUT TO:

9 INT. MS. MARSH'S OFFICE -- DAY 9

Several weeks later, LOUIS nervously perches before MS. MARSH's desk. She can barely make eye contact.

MS. MARSH
I'm sure you're aware that Pretty Brook did not meet it's funding goals this year. As a result, we're forced to make cutbacks, especially in faculty size. Therefore, I'm sorry to say that we're unable to offer you a position next Fall.

LOUIS
I understand.

MS. MARSH
You *have* been an excellent teacher, however. In light of this, we've decided we're willing to recommend you for positions elsewhere.

LOUIS
(timidly)
Thank you.

Ms. Marsh has clearly finished. She shuffles her papers to signal so, but Louis hopes to end on a more positive note.

LOUIS
Actually, for some time now I've considered moving to Manhattan. It's always been my dream to make a living as a writer. Maybe this would be a good time for a big change like that.

MS. MARSH
(smirking sarcastically)
Yes; I think Manhattan sounds like a very fitting place for a young man like you, Louis.

Louis blushes.

FADE TO BLACK:

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
*But after his crushing dismissal,
Louis Ives had no courage for such
bold moves...*

This surprising, disembodied voice belongs to an ELDERLY ENGLISH NARRATOR a la Alistair Cook -- deep, distinguished, discretely sympathetic. He could easily be from a faded era.

FADE UP TO:

10 EXT. PRINCETON STREET / SUMMER - DAY

10

Wearing a seersucker jacket and hat, a deeply depressed LOUIS exits a secondhand bookstore and trudges down Nassau Street.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
*... For the brassiere incident had
crippled him. He struggled to deny
these strange urges, but in moments
of weakness they demanded
attention.*

He approaches a lingerie shop named "Unmentionables." A display window of scantily clad mannequins beckon, but Louis resists. He crosses the street, nearly getting hit by a bus.

ENGLISH GENTLEMAN (V.O.)
*And so he spent an entire summer
 immersed in the solitary routines
 of a young gentleman.*

CUT TO:

11 INT. OLD FASHIONED BARBER SHOP -- DAY 11

LOUIS leans back and receives a hot towel shave from an ITALIAN BARBER.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (O.S.)
*He wore these rituals like armor to
 shield him from despair.*

12 INT. FRENCH CAFE -- DAY 12

LOUIS sits alone at the "bachelor table" with a croissant and coffee. The rest of the cafe is packed with lively couples and groups. By contrast, Louis looks lost, alone and sad.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (O.S.)
*But in Louis Ives' darkest moments,
 he feared he was unlovable.*

CUT TO:

13 EXT. PALMER SQUARE / AUTUMN -- DAY 13

In a town square, stately Princeton Elms shed auric leaves. Beneath one such tree we find a very lost LOUIS, lying on a bench in a near fetal pose. His head rests softly on a BOOK. As we creep in towards this image, the VOICE continues.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
*It was the changing of leaves that
 finally brought a change in
 perspective.*

A leaf lands on Louis' face. He sits upright, wiping it off. He glances down at book beside him.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
*For Fall -- with it's brisk air and
 clarity of light -- rekindled the
 feeling of possibility...*

ANGLE ON BOOK: Henry James' WASHINGTON SQUARE. The cover features a soft watercolor of a familiar New York scene -- people gathered below the famous Park's arch. Louis smiles.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. PRINCETON "DINKY" TRAIN STATION -- DAY 14

Smack in the middle of the Princeton University campus, a single train car sits at a strange platform. We hear:

CONDUCTOR (O.S.)
10:30 Dinky Train. Switch at
Princeton Junction for Manhattan.

The little train takes off.

15 INT. DINKY TRAIN - DAY 15

Boisterous PRINCETON STUDENTS and FACULTY MEMBERS fill the train with intellectual banter. In the back of the car, LOUIS sits alone. He scans the real estate section of the VILLAGE VOICE, red pen in hand. Suddenly, something catches his eye.

ANGLE ON VILLAGE VOICE PAGE: In the center of a dozen X-ed out ads, one gets enthusiastically circled:

*GENTLEMAN SEEKS SAME TO SHARE APARTMENT
\$350 a Month / 212-555-1212. NO CALLS BEFORE NOON!*

CUT TO:

E.C.U. GREELEY SQUARE CLOCK. The marble face reads 12:01.

16 EXT. GREELEY SQUARE - DAY 16

LOUIS -- cradling his cell phone -- scans this tiny Herald Square park for an empty bistro seat. Just as he finds one, a man picks up on the other end.

HENRY (O.S.)
H. Harrison.

The abrupt and formal voice belongs to an older gentleman.

LOUIS
Hello, uh -- I'm calling about the
room? My name is--

HENRY (O.S.)
(abruptly)
Can you pay the rent?

LOUIS
Yes -- I think so. I see it's very
reasonable--

HENRY (O.S.)
What type of work do you do?

LOUIS
Well, I *was* a teacher--

HENRY (O.S.)
Then come right now. I don't want
to talk on the phone. I can't stand
all these calls.

LOUIS
Actually, I just arrived in town--

HENRY (O.S.)
From?

LOUIS
New Jersey.

HENRY (O.S.)
I like New Jersey. Your state
government's a mess but the people
are solid. How soon can you arrive?

LOUIS
Actually, I have a job interview at
one. So two maybe?

HENRY (O.S.)
Three Ninety East Ninety-Third.
Buzzer Four.

And with that, a dial tone. Louis thinks for a moment,
intrigued by this odd-sounding man.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. 93RD STREET AND PARK AVENUE -- DAY 17

LOUIS strolls along the silk stocking street in awe of the
ritzy buildings and even ritzier RESIDENTS. He stops in front
of a majestic pre-war to glance at the address: *290 East
93rd*. He looks down at a crumpled VILLAGE VOICE page.

ANGLE ON VILLAGE VOICE PAGE: The address scribbled there says
390 East 93rd. Fantasies dashed, Lewis continues eastward.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. EAST NINETY THIRD STREET AND 1ST AVENUE -- DAY 18

The neighborhood has deflated from mansions in the sky to
down-to-earth walk ups. In fact, this seems like the street
that gentrification forgot.

With some disappointment, LOUIS approaches a dilapidated, five-story building with an Art Deco facade. Before he reaches the buzzer, a burly, bear of a man (GERSHON) comes out of the door wheeling a beat-up bicycle. With his wild mane of hair and curly beard, Gershon gives off a Cro-Magnon vibe, though his eyes are soft and penetrating. Gershon stops to watch which buzzer Louis will push.

LOUIS
... Hi.

No response. Louis pushes buzzer four. Gershon makes an indecipherable face, then wheels away.

HENRY (O.S.)
(through intercom)
ARE YOU THE TEACHER?

LOUIS
Yes, yes -- it's me!

The buzzer buzzes.

CUT TO:

19 INT. HENRY'S STAIRWELL -- DAY

19

A winded Louis trudges up a narrow, lopsided stairwell. As he nears the top, a door creaks open. On the landing looms HENRY HARRISON, hand outstretched.

HENRY
Harrison, Henry. Henry Harrison.

Henry is strikingly handsome even though he has an air of decay about him. He boasts thick black hair (as in dyed black) swept back like a 30's movie star. Donning a frayed blue blazer and stained tan pants, Henry's style resembles a rattier version of Louis'.

LOUIS
Louis. Louis Ives.

A cursory shake, then Henry steps inside. Louis follows.

CUT TO:

20 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- DAY

20

LOUIS and HENRY enter a disastrous, pre-war apartment cluttered floor to ceiling with junk: wine bottles, books, newspapers, a stationary bike, etc.

HENRY

This is it. It's horrible, but it has a certain ambience and mad gaiety.

Henry follows a serpentine path of parquet floor through the mess. Louis ducks past an old New Year's Eve balloon, and struggles for something pleasant to say.

LOUIS

The floors are very nice...

HENRY

Let me show you the room. If you can't stand it, we don't have to bother with the interview.

They pass a living room sofa covered in pillows and sheets.

HENRY

Obviously I sleep out here. It's barracks-style living, but it can be done.

They squeeze through a filthy kitchen -- suitcases and an old steamer trunk pile on the counters. Next, they enter a tiny bedroom with no door. The closet-sized room has a ratty bed, a battered ply-wood armoire, and an old night stand.

HENRY

These would be your chambers. It's not very beautiful I'm afraid. But it's difficult to find good staff to keep things in shape.

Louis notes a single sooty window that looks out on an air shaft. Pigeons perch outside moaning loudly.

LOUIS

You can certainly hear the pigeons.

HENRY

Yes, it's nice to have access to nature... If you need more drawer space, I have some empty file cabinets in the kitchen.

Louis tentatively steps towards the bedraggled bathroom adjacent to his room. The shelves contain ancient ointments and trial-size toiletries from international hotels. Louis scans the room -- a shower and toilet but no sink.

LOUIS

Where do you brush your teeth -- the kitchen?

HENRY

When I remember to. So, I'd need to know a few things about you -- if you haven't lost interest. Would you prefer to leave or continue?

LOUIS

No, no -- we can talk.

CUT TO:

21 INT. HENRY'S LIVING ROOM -- MINUTES LATER

21

LOUIS sits uncomfortably on Henry's sleeping sofa. HENRY takes an ornate corner chair, which is positioned like a throne. He's rather intimidating, sitting there analytically.

Louis notices a large bowl of CHRISTMAS BALLS on the table to his right.

LOUIS

Christmas balls -- how interesting.

HENRY

I love them. I love the colors, the way they catch the light. If you ever want to give me something you can give me Christmas balls.

LOUIS

Okay...

HENRY

So tell me, Louis Ives. Why are you moving to New York?

LOUIS

Well, I've been teaching for several years and I want to try something new. Possibly writing. I'm sort of looking for myself.

HENRY

You won't find yourself in New York. New Jersey is much better for those things; much less depraved. If I had to move, I'd move to Russia. It's far less expensive and the people there still have a soul... what were you teaching?

LOUIS

English Literature.

HENRY

We're colleagues then. I teach composition at Queens College. It's nightmarish, but I try not to notice. Primarily, I'm a playwright.

LOUIS

Really. Have I seen any of your work?

HENRY

Sadly my opus was stolen by a hunchback, but that's all too tragic to get into now.
(changing subjects)
So you mentioned a job interview?

LOUIS

Yes. Unfortunately it didn't work out. But as far as the rent is concerned, I've saved enough from working in Princeton to-

HENRY

Princeton! How is Princeton these days? It was great once, but then they let women in.

LOUIS

Oh, you mean the University. It's still excellent. And there's no reason women shouldn't go--

HENRY

I'm against the education of women. It numbs their senses and affects their performance in the boudoir. The women I like best are the Hasidim. They have great style. They wear wonderful gingham gowns like Mary Pickford.

Louis stares at Henry, unsure of whether he's serious.

HENRY

You know, Fitzgerald wrote about Princeton with great love in *This Side Of Paradise*.

LOUIS

Do you like Fitzgerald? He's one of my favorite authors.

HENRY

(insulted)

Of course I like Fitzgerald. But there won't be any more of his kind coming along soon. You need an all-male environment to shape up a young writer. The Muslims might produce a Fitzgerald. They're excellent at separating the sexes.

LOUIS

(growing anxious)

On the subject of the sexes, what is your policy regarding guests?

HENRY

As in overnight guests?

Louis nods shyly.

HENRY

NO! Absolutely not! This place is far too small! There's to be no fornication! I wouldn't even conceive of having sex in here. I'm retired from all that anyway.

LOUIS

I didn't mean to be rude, I just--

Henry stands.

HENRY

This has gone on long enough. We're obviously compatible. You're the only person who's come for the room who speaks English, plus you're from New Jersey, which is the best reference one could possibly give. So what will it be? Yes or no?!

Louis is unprepared for this response. He hesitates.

LOUIS

Well -- If it's okay with you, I'd prefer to think about it...

SMASH CUT TO:

22

INT. LOUIS' PRINCETON STUDIO -- EVENING

22

LOUIS sits on the edge of the bed, "thinking about it." He looks tortured by indecision. After a few more moments of nothing: *RING! RING!* The telephone sounds. Louis answers.

LOUIS
Hello?

 OPERATOR (O.S.)
I have a collect call from an H.
Harrison.

 LOUIS
Oh -- really? Er, put him through I
guess.

INTERCUT WITH:

23 INT. BEMELMANS BAR / CARLISLE HOTEL -- EVENING

23

HENRY, dressed in a three piece suit, sips vermouth as he
talks on a pay phone. Just beyond him, an ELDERLY FEMALE
PIANIST tickles the ivories, while a few OLDER COUPLES dance.

 HENRY
So? Have you thought about it?

Louis stands, formally.

 LOUIS
Oh, hello. Actually, I just was.

 HENRY (O.S.)
And?

 LOUIS
Well, I'm feeling I should wait
until I'm certain about a job--

 HENRY
No no, we should do it. We should
settle now. You can pay weekly
until you have a job. Plus there's
much I can teach you about New
York. I can advance you socially.
All this will be very good for you.

For some reason, Henry's determination appeals to Louis.

 LOUIS
Wow. That's certainly considerate
of you to think that way...

 HENRY
Very good, then. We'll see you the
first of the month. I'm glad this
worked out.

Henry abruptly hangs up. Louis stands there a moment, working out what has just transpired.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (O.S.)
*The Young Gentleman was troubled
 that the decision was made for him.
 Yet, it had been some time since he
 felt this wanted. And as strange as
 it all seemed, he was inexplicably
 drawn to this Mr. Henry Harrison.*

Louis sits back down. He smiles, actually excited.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE -- DAY

24

MUSIC CUE: One Ring Zero's "A Moving World." A gloriously golden day. The sun flares in an autumn blue sky.

OVERHEAD SHOT: An '81 TEAL PONTIAC PARISIENNE CONVERTIBLE crosses the George Washington bridge. At the wheel, LOUIS -- surrounded by boxes -- whistles a happy tune. THE CAMERA sweeps past him, taking in the Manhattan skyline just beyond. The music swells to a dramatic peak, then:

SMASH CUT TO:

THE UNUSUALLY LOUD SOUND OF URINATING

25 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT / LOUIS' BEDROOM -- NIGHT

25

LOUIS lies uncomfortably on his rickety bed, an unexpected look of regret settles on his face. The urinating continues. THEN A QUICK, FORCEFUL FLUSH sounds, followed by more urinating. A second flush unfortunately doesn't come.

HENRY steps out of the bathroom, stopping at Louis' door. He wears a tuxedo shirt and a blue bathing suit instead of pajamas. An eye mask rests on his forehead.

HENRY
 Tell me your name again?

LOUIS
 (insulted)
 ... Louis. My name's Louis.

HENRY
 Don't worry, it will eventually
 sink in. Did I mention, Louis, that
 you should never answer the door?
 (MORE)

HENRY (cont'd)
 It could be the landlord or the IRS. It's against the rules to rent spare rooms, so if anyone should question you on the staircase, tell them you are my illegitimate son and that we've only recently reunited. We'll consider your rent a gift to me.

LOUIS
 Sure -- Okay. And speaking of which, here's the rent.

Louis hands him an envelope from his night stand. Henry yells towards the door, for anyone in the stairwell to hear:

HENRY
 SO KIND OF YOU! SO UNEXPECTED!
 (turns back to Louis)
 I see you've moved in quite nicely. I apologize that Gershon couldn't help carry your things. He's not speaking to me.

LOUIS
 Who's Gershon?

HENRY
 A friend who helps carry things. And fix my car. Which reminds me, I was admiring *yours* earlier. What make is it?

LOUIS
 A Pontiac Parisienne. It was my father's. In a weird way, it's all I have left of him. He died my freshman year of college. My mother passed only a few years after.

Louis' sad story seems to have no impact on Henry.

HENRY
 Well... I drive a Skylark.
 What are you reading there?

Louis is taken aback by Henry's lack of reaction. He checks the book on his chest: *Washington Square*.

LOUIS
 Um, Henry James?

HENRY
 I hate James. He's unreadable. His early work wasn't as bad. He burned himself, you know. Sat on a stove and shriveled his testicles.
 (MORE)

HENRY (cont'd)
That may account for the sudden
change in style.

LOUIS
I -- I didn't know that.

HENRY
Well, get some sleep. I imagine
that you're still growing.

Henry slips down his eye mask, but still manages to walk away safely. Louis shakes his head, and turns out his lamp.

FOUR SECONDS OF BLACK AND THEN...A BLAST OF MUSIC! ETHEL
MERMAN WARBLING: "MAKE IT ANOTHER OLD-FASHIONED, PLEASE!"

CUT TO:

26 INT. LOUIS' BEDROOM -- MORNING

26

LOUIS rubs his eyes, extremely confused. He gets out of bed to see what all the racket is.

Leaning in the door frame, he discovers HENRY dancing wildly -
- thrusting his arms, twisting his neck, crisscrossing his
legs like a spastic Fred Astaire. Henry catches Louis
watching. He snaps.

HENRY
STOP IT!! I don't like you standing
there in the shadows! Get back in
your room!

Terrified, Louis ducks back in.

LOUIS
I-- I'm sorry. I didn't know what
was happening--

HENRY
(yelling, breathless)
I cannot be seen when I dance! No
one can see me! ... In the future,
I'll exercise when you're not here,
but sometimes the need is too
great!

LOUIS
It's no problem, Henry. Really...

Louis sinks back on his bed. He can still see Henry gyrating
via the bathroom mirror. He can't help but watch.

HENRY
ONE MUST STAY IN SHAPE YOU KNOW! I
MOVE WHATEVER I THINK IS ROTTING!

CUT TO:

27 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE OFFICE -- DAY

27

GEORGE, a mid-forties Birkenstock type, interviews LOUIS. ON the walls hang enlarged covers of TERRA MAGAZINE, an environmental journal featuring animals, landscapes, and issues on living "green."

GEORGE
Look, I'd like to hire you. For now it'll mostly be phone sales to businesses and museums. But it goes without saying -- this being an environmental journal -- that you're green? That you live a pro-environment lifestyle?

LOUIS
Yes -- of course. I'm very environmental. I'm always thinking about how the world is falling apart. And then I get depressed and I think about ... Well, if I think about *myself* that's also depressing. Actually, it's hard to know where to turn sometimes...
(realizing he's losing George)
But I would love to work here and do something positive--

Thankfully, MARY POWELL interrupts, knocking on the door. She's a radiant blonde beauty, full of enthusiasm (naively perhaps) to change the world. She carries TWO PHOTOS OF OWLS.

MARY
Sorry to interrupt, George, but I need you to look at these right away so I can get them scanned.

She leans down and places the two pictures on George's desk. As she does, Mary's sweater slips a bit, revealing her BRA STRAP. Louis can't help but fixate on it. His neck twitches.

George points to the photo on the left.

GEORGE
I like this one.

MARY
Great.

Mary smiles at Louis.

LOUIS
I agree. That's an excellent owl
photo.

GEORGE
Mary, this is Louis. Louis is going
to be working here.

MARY
Oh. Nice to meet you.

Louis leaps up to shake her hand formally. Mary giggles.

MARY
You don't have to get up.

LOUIS
I look forward to working with you,
Mary. And with you, George. TERRA
seems like a wonderful magazine.
Thank you for taking me on.

CUT TO:

28 INT. PASTRY SHOP -- LATE AFTERNOON

28

A happy LOUIS pats dry his mouth, just finishing a
celebratory tart. Suddenly he sees something through the
window. His eyes light up.

ANGLE THROUGH WINDOW: MARY from the office, steps under a
glass bus shelter.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. MIDTOWN STREET -- LATE AFTERNOON

29

MARY waits for the downtown bus. Tears stream down her
cheeks.

LOUIS (O.S.)
Hi Mary. Taking the bus home?

Mary turns, surprised to find Louis there. She struggles to
present herself like nothing's wrong.

MARY
Oh. Hi Louis. Yes, I -- I can't
deal with the subway today.

LOUIS
I must say, Terra seems like a
fascinating place to work. I'm very
excited...

Louis finally notices that she's crying.

LOUIS
...Is something wrong?

MARY
I'm sorry. I just saw something so
horrible. I can't shake it.

Mary drops her face in her hand.

LOUIS
What -- what was it?

MARY
I -- I just saw a homeless woman --
here on Lexington Avenue -- and she
was... *defecating*. Right in the
middle of the street!

Mary's shoulders shake. Louis doesn't know how to react.

LOUIS
Oh no. That *is* disgusting.

Suddenly, Mary raises her head and decries.

MARY
And to make matters worse, this
other woman -- in a full length
mink and Prada boots -- was yakking
away on her cell phone only a few
feet away. I mean, what's wrong
with this city? There's so much
wealth next to so much suffering.
Why can't we provide the most basic
human services for our needy? I
just can't understand it.

LOUIS
You're really upset. I feel bad.

Mary is full on waterworks now.

MARY
I AM upset, Louis. Y'know why?
Because doing the right thing is
NOT that hard. It's just not. Ugh!

Suddenly Mary embraces a stunned Louis, seeking comfort in
his arms.

Louis can't believe this beautiful woman's actually touching him, let alone hugging him. He gently pets her back -- sheer paradise.

DISSOLVE TO:

30 EXT. EAST NINETY THIRD STREET AND 1ST AVENUE -- DAY 30

Walking on air, LOUIS struts past a HOMELESS MAN and hands him a quarter. As he reaches his building, a rather fancifully dressed HENRY steps out of the door, awkwardly lugging a garbage bag.

LOUIS
Hello. Let me grab that for you.

Louis hops up the step and takes the bag.

HENRY
Such service. You'd make an excellent squire or valet.

Louis carries it to the designated cans. He can see bottles and cans through the clear plastic.

LOUIS
Henry, we really should recycle your wine bottles.

HENRY
Why? Recycling is the most insidious idea of this generation. That and helping the homeless, most of whom deserve the position.

Louis nervously glances over at the Homeless Man to make sure he didn't take offense.

HENRY
What politicians really need to focus on is sex. If we could control that, we could solve anything.

LOUIS
So you see sex as the cause of all of society's problems?

HENRY
Absolutely. You'll find I'm to the right of the Pope on most of these issues.

Louis laughs, then eagerly changes the subject.

LOUIS

Anyway -- if I may change the subject -- you look very nice. Are you going out?

HENRY

Yes. I'm seeing the billionaireess Vivian Cudlip tonight. She phoned about an event only ten minutes ago, but the queen must be obeyed. I'm to be picked up at any moment by her driver.

LOUIS

Wow -- a billionaireess. And to think a lowly fellow like me was about to treat you to dinner. I had a banner day. I even got a job.

HENRY

Congratulations! I knew you were a man who could pay the rent. What type of position?

LOUIS

It's at a magazine. An environmental journal.

HENRY

Hence your righteous little lecture. I'm sure it's all just a front for pornography.

LOUIS

I don't think so. It's in a very nice building on Lexington.

HENRY

That means nothing.

Suddenly a posh limo manned by a chauffeur pulls up.

HENRY

My ride has arrived. But let's celebrate your securing a job tomorrow evening, yes? We'll go the opera! My treat.

Henry waves, then ducks into the back seat of the Limo. Louis watches him pull away, filled with both disbelief and awe.

CUT TO:

A LIGHT RAIN FALLS ON A GARBAGE PILE

31 EXT. PARK AVENUE -- NIGHT

31

A DOWNTOWN HIPSTER rummages through a posh building's trash. A PUSHY WOMAN runs up just as the Hipster pulls a beautifully-framed, landscape oil painting from the garbage.

PUSHY WOMAN
Hold on! I had my eye on that first!

DOWNTOWN HIPSTER TYPE
You snooze you lose, lady.

Meanwhile, LOUIS and HENRY stroll past garbage piles wearing jackets and bow ties. Both also clutch black umbrellas.

HENRY
Dammit. I forgot it was trash night. And we could really use that chair over there. Go sit on it and see if it works.

Louis gazes over at a dilapidated chair.

LOUIS
But one of the legs is broken.

HENRY
Just try it. All my furniture comes from Park Avenue, so it will match perfectly.

Louis gives in. He sits, then nearly tumbles over.

LOUIS
Uh -- I don't think so, Henry.

HENRY
Yes, you're right. It's a shame chairs need four good legs. Humans only need two. Chairs should be more human.

They resume walking.

LOUIS
Are you sure about going to the opera tonight? I hear it's astronomically expensive.

HENRY
Don't be so middle-class. The aristocracy never pays.

They arrive at a disastrous 1972 Buick Skylark -- brown with a white vinyl roof. The entire hood looks like it may fall off at any moment.

HENRY
Here's my car.

LOUIS
Whoa. Maybe we should take a cab?

HENRY
Don't be ridiculous. I go everywhere in my Skylark. I drive around Manhattan looking for "it." And I mean "it" in the Kerouac sense. (patting his pockets) Where are my keys? Kerouac never mentions losing his damn keys...

LOUIS
Why do you have Florida plates?

HENRY
I live there part-time, in Palm Beach. That's where the social life goes in the winter. One must follow the circus! You should take note that I'll be gone from Christmas 'til March.

LOUIS
Are you serious?

HENRY
Now that you have a job I know you can be trusted with the apartment -- if our arrangement continues that long.

Henry locates his keys and opens the driver side. He motions for Louis to get in first.

HENRY
Slide in. I can only afford one working door.

CUT TO:

32 INT. HENRY'S SKYLARK -- EVENING

32

HENRY maneuvers like a Nascar driver through Central Park.
LOUIS holds on for dear life.

LOUIS

Henry, please slow down! You don't even have seat belts in this thing.

HENRY

Don't be such a milquetoast. As Napoleon said, "If rape is imminent, relax and enjoy it." Or at least focus on something else.

Embarrassed, Louis attempts to relax.

LOUIS

I'll try ... Well the park is certainly beautiful at this hour. Even with the rain.

HENRY

That's what's nice about having children; you get to reexperience things.

Henry swerves, almost hitting a delivery biker.

CUT TO:

33

EXT. LINCOLN CENTER SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

33

Each under his own umbrella, HENRY AND LOUIS make their way towards Lincoln Center.

HENRY

Now this is how it works: the first act will be letting out soon. So when someone leaves, you say to them "Excuse me, are you leaving the opera?" If they say yes, you say "May I have you re-entry stub?" You have to get that re-entry stub, otherwise the ticket is meaningless. Understand!?

LOUIS

Why would people leave after the first act? Isn't that a waste of money?

They hop up the steps to the plaza.

HENRY

There are three acts, and most tourists can barely handle one.

(MORE)

HENRY (cont'd)
 They prefer to grab their culture
 quickly then go eat dinner, which
 is all they really wanted to do in
 the first place.

34 INT. LOBBY LINCOLN CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

34

LOUIS and HENRY enter the grandiose Metropolitan Opera House. Two giant Chagalls frame the modernist lobby and its free-form staircase. The opera hasn't let out yet, but SIX ELDERLY PEOPLE -- five men and one woman -- stand beneath a huge Austrian crystal chandelier.

HENRY
 (whispering with disgust)
 There's our competition -- vultures
 and opera addicts. That one old
 woman has been at it for years. She
 really should be put in a rest
 home. We must distance ourselves
 from them. The security has
 memorized their faces.

The doors to the opera open and PEOPLE stream out. The USHERS hand them REENTRY STUBS.

HENRY
 See? They're all getting their
 stubs. Now I'm sorry to pull rank,
 but you're obviously the junior
 officer here. I need you to stand
 outside in the rain and stop people
 who get past me. Intermission lasts
 only fifteen minutes, so get out
 there and serve your country well.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. PLAZA -- CONTINUOUS

35

LOUIS approaches TWO MEN by the fountain and fails miserably. He tries another COUPLE, and they nearly bite his hand off. A THIRD COUPLE veer out of the way as he approaches. Louis sighs. He spots TWO YOUNGER WOMEN under an umbrella crossing the plaza. Determined, he races towards them.

CUT TO:

36 INT. LOBBY LINCOLN CENTER -- NIGHT

36

LOUIS rushes into the lobby towards HENRY. THE LIGHTS ARE FLASHING, warning that intermission is officially ending.

LOUIS
Henry, Henry! I got two tickets!

HENRY
Shush! *With* the reentry stubs?

LOUIS
Well, only one stub, but--

HENRY
I told you the reentry stub was crucial! What part of that didn't you understand?!

LOUIS
But one of the women didn't take hers. Why are you yelling at me?! You didn't get anything!

HENRY
That has nothing to do with it. The point is, your tickets are useless!

Henry sighs, frustrated that the line is moving in.

HENRY (CONT'D)
We're left with no choice now; we have to try sneaking in. Grab a program -- it's good to have a program. Okay, you go first and give your ticket and stub. I'll act like I can't find my mine, and then you -- impatient with my senility -- will angrily demand to know what I did with it.

Henry pushes Louis on line before he can respond. When Louis approaches the USHER, he gives him his ticket and stub. Then Henry begins frantically searching his jacket pockets.

HENRY
Where's my reentry stub? Where is it? I'm so confused lately. Maybe I handed it to you?

LOUIS
(quite a performance)
No Father, you didn't! For heaven's sake, try and remember where you put things! Check your pants!

Henry pats himself silly. The usher grows tired of it all, and just pushes them both through. On the way in, Henry sidles up next to Louis' shoulder.

HENRY

Not bad! With some direction from me you could land a few walk-on parts.

CUT TO:

37 INT. THEATER -- NIGHT

37

LOUIS and HENRY sit side-by-side in the breathtaking, four-thousand-seat, multi-balconied theater. Louis beams as the DIVA offers up an aria. Henry whispers to him:

HENRY

She's Russian, you know. Only Russia can still produce women like that.

Louis nods in agreement. Why not? This is thrilling. The Diva hits a high C, and holds it for an impossibly long stretch.

SMASH CUT TO:

38 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

38

LOUIS and HENRY each lie in their respective sleeping quarters. Louis is still on cloud nine from the opera. Henry slips on his eye mask, settling into his lumpy couch.

HENRY

So there we are. Where are we?

LOUIS

Sorry?

HENRY

I like to say that sometimes before retiring... By the way, did you let the cat in?

LOUIS

What cat?

HENRY

Many people say *that* before sleeping. We should try to fit in with society more.

LOUIS

Okay. I let the cat in.

HENRY

Perfect. I'm about to put in my earplugs. Any final thoughts or questions?

LOUIS

Yes. Can we go to the opera again soon?

HENRY

Why not? We can afford it.

Henry begins putting in his earplugs.

LOUIS

Oh -- one more thing. I never asked how your evening went with the billionaireess.

HENRY

With Vivian? It was alright, except she stopped breathing for a minute. That was upsetting. But then she rallied -- she always does.

LOUIS

How old is she?

HENRY

Ninety-two.

LOUIS

Ninety-two? That's a little old for a girlfriend, don't you think?

HENRY

Unfortunately she is not my girlfriend. I'm just one of twenty sycophants, really. For years I've been her first choice, but I could be on the outs at any minute. Barry Barbarash desperately wants me omitted. He's a dedicated pederast, but Vivian likes to have him around because he's always introducing her to new people. He's scheming to be installed permanently as the resident rosen knight.

LOUIS

What's a rosen knight?

HENRY

A knight who brings roses. A Rosenkavalier. An escort.

LOUIS
Henry... are you a gigolo?

HENRY
Don't be disgusting. I am an Extra Man. Although I'd argue I'm so much more than "extra." I'm *essential*.

LOUIS
Do these old ladies pay you?

HENRY
Of course not. Except in pleasure...

DISSOLVE TO:

A FEMALE SINGER CROONS "*SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME*" INTO A MICROPHONE...

INT. SUPPER CLUB - NIGHT

The music fills a dimly lit, elegant old supper club.

HENRY (V.O.)
The pleasure of a free meal, good champagne, an orchestra perhaps.

ANGLE ON A BANQUETTE: HENRY -- handsomely dressed in black-tie -- sits at a banquet with three bejeweled GRAND DAMES and two other EXTRA MEN.

HENRY (V.O.)
You see, all their husbands are deceased. Women outlive men. That's why there's always a need for an extra man at the table. It maintains a proper seating arrangement -- boy-girl, boy-girl.

JUMP CUT TO THE DANCE FLOOR: HENRY now waltzes with a different AGED WOMAN. However, it's less like dancing and more like dragging. Henry concentrates, sweat beading on his forehead, as he attempts to hold her up by her waist.

HENRY (V.O.)
But it isn't all fun and games. One must be very vigilant, especially when dancing.

His date nearly falls, but Henry gracefully turns her spill into an elegant dip.

HENRY (V.O.)
That's why escorts are sometimes called walkers.

JUMP CUT TO SUPPER CLUB ENTRANCE: An ANCIENT HAND, bedecked with diamonds of massive proportion, clutches onto a tuxedoed arm for dear life.

HENRY (V.O.)
*The women need an arm to hold, or
 else they could collapse.*

WE PULL OUT TO REVEAL... A line of ELDERLY HEIRESES clinging onto their WALKERS.

HENRY (V.O.)
*I, however, am no mere walker.
 Walkers don't even have jobs.
 They're a hundred percent
 freeloaders, with nothing but arms
 to offer. What I bring is the
 complete package: wit, conversation
 -- an uncommon joie de vivre.*

WIDE SHOT: Henry on the dance floor, twirling and twirling his ELDERLY PARTNER.

BACK TO:

39 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

39

LOUIS looks beguiled by this whole arrangement.

LOUIS
 I wish I had a joie de vivre. Then
 I could be your assistant.

HENRY fluffs his pillow.

HENRY
 You're very young. And from what I
 gather you never dance. But Vivian
 does have a very attractive niece.
 Perhaps she might like you.

LOUIS
 That would be incredible...

Henry suddenly looks startled.

HENRY
 Are we having a conversation?

LOUIS
 Yes, I'd say so.

HENRY

Well it has to stop. It's best to know as little about each other as possible; good relationships have this foundation. Now good night.

Henry puts in his ear plugs. Louis smiles, too excited to sleep.

LOUIS

Good night, Henry.

CUT TO:

40

INT. TERRA ELEVATOR -- DAY

40

MARY rushes into the elevator with a take-out bag. LOUIS holds the door, excited to see her.

LOUIS

Hi, Mary. Eating in today, too?

MARY

Oh, hi... Yeah. I'm really behind.

Louis notices their previous intimacy has all but vanished. He struggles to reinstate it.

LOUIS

What did you get?

MARY

Zen Palate.

LOUIS

Oh. Are you vegetarian?

MARY

Vegan, actually. I'm pretty active in animal rights and all.

LOUIS

I wish I could be vegan, but I really like eggs, although I do try to order only free-range chicken... today I got an order of ribs. I feel embarrassed.

Louis' conceals his Chinese take-out bag.

MARY

(disappointed)

If you work at Terra, you should really try to be Vegan.

Louis feels chastised. The doors open.

CUT TO:

41 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

41

LOUIS trails MARY to the office door, eager to try again.

LOUIS
So I went to the opera last night.

MARY
Oh -- really? That's cool.

LOUIS
It was amazing, actually. Tosca.

MARY
I don't know it. I'm pretty opera illiterate, sorry to say.

LOUIS
I could take you some time. I know how to get in for free.

Mary looks confused by this offer.

LOUIS
-- Or we could just get a drink somewhere one night. Maybe even this weekend?

MARY
Oh... Thanks Louis, but I'm going upstate this weekend. We're protesting the building of this cement plant on the Hudson River. Actually, I just started seeing this guy, who's taking me ...

Now Louis' heart drops. Mary feels bad for him.

MARY
But -- maybe you and I can grab lunch out together one day, okay?

LOUIS
Sure. Thank you.

Louis feels ridiculous for thanking her. Mary smiles sweetly anyway. She heads into the office.

CUT TO:

42 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE OFFICE -- DAY

42

Hiding at his desk, LOUIS spots a *Village Voice* on a nearby chair. He leans over to reach it, knocking his CHINESE TAKE-OUT BAG onto the floor. Chewed-up rib bones spill everywhere.

Simultaneously, MARY heads towards the copier. She stops abruptly before the pile of bones.

MARY
Ugh -- God.

LOUIS
Sorry sorry sorry--

Louis leaps over the desk to pick them up. Mary offers a queasy smile, then heads over to the copier.

Louis sits back down with his bag, humiliated. Yet he can't stop watching Mary at the copy machine.

VARIOUS CLOSE UPS OF MARY: Her graceful neck, her curved back, her round buttocks.

As she gathers her finished copies and walks past, Louis hides his blushing face behind the *Village Voice*. Then something in the paper catches his eye:

ANGLE ON AD: **RECESSION SPANKOLOGIST! SPANKING AND CROSS-DRESSING AT RECESSION PRICES! 212-555-4480.**

CUT TO:

43 EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE STREET -- DAY

43

An apprehensive LOUIS gets off the bus and checks a crumpled piece of paper in his hand.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
Two competing fantasies co-existed within Louis Ives. A sort of bipolar condition that wasn't mood-related, but sex-related.

He makes his way down a residential Upper West Side Street made up of doormanless, non-luxury apartment buildings.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
On the one hand he longed to be a young gentleman, one who wears ties and enjoys the opera.
(MORE)

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
*But sometimes he yearned to look in
 the mirror and see a pretty girl --
 one filled with adoration and love --
 - smiling back at him.*

He approaches a rundown building and scans the list of names on the buzzer.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
*For some reason, he believed the
 woman in the ad might help with his
 confusion.*

LOUIS locates 6B which reads "Katherine Hart." He rings. A melancholy voice soon follows.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 Hello?

LOUIS
 Yes -- I'm the one who called
 before. The one who saw your ad?

KATHERINE (OS)
 Which ad?

A twenty-something YOUNG WOMAN and her PUG approach. Louis waits until they enter the building before answering.

LOUIS
 Um....Recession Spankologist?

The BUZZER sounds. Louis enters.

CUT TO:

44 INT. HALLWAY -- A FEW MOMENTS LATER

44

LOUIS exits a dark elevator and walks fearfully down the hall. He raps lightly on door number 6B.

The door opens a sliver, revealing KATHERINE HART(60's). She wears an ALL-BLACK outfit consisting of a bra, panties, garters, mid-thigh stockings and BLACK-RIMMED glasses. Her large milky breasts spill over the bra. Despite her age, she's not unattractive; she was once quite beautiful.

KATHERINE
 If I'm too old, it's all right. You
 can turn around and go.

LOUIS
 No, no -- you're fine, Ma'am. More
 than fine, I mean.

She opens the door and lets him to enter.

45

INT. KATHERINE HART'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

45

A long, narrow studio. Near the front door is the BED, to the side a kitchenette, and at the far end is a small sitting area. The furniture and colors are very 1970's.

Katherine's gentle, with sad but sweet eyes. Overall, she gives off a strange brand of weariness.

KATHERINE

I'm Katherine, but you can call me Miss Hart. What's your name again, sweetheart?

LOUIS

... George.

KATHERINE

So we'll call you Georgina. Unless you're not interested in the cross-dressing part.

LOUIS

Oh, I *am* -- that's really why I called.

Louis glances at a table. An "Alcoholics Anonymous" book rests there.

KATHERINE

Have you dressed up a lot?

LOUIS

(looking down -- shyly)
No -- hardly at all ... it's weird--
I don't really have anyone I can talk to about this ... urge.

KATHERINE

You can talk to me, honey. That's why you're here. Tell Miss Hart everything.

Katherine's empathy makes Louis feel comfortable.

LOUIS

Well... I think it all started when I was a little boy...

CUT TO:

46 INT. IVES FAMILY REC ROOM -- MORNING

46

YOUNG LOUIS (8) lies in front of a TV in footsie pajamas.
ANGLE ON TV: We see the actual cartoon Louis describes.

LOUIS (V.O.)
I saw this cartoon where a duck
wearing a tuxedo was pushed off a
cliff. As he fell endlessly
through the air, his clothes were
whipped about him, and somehow --
through the miracle of cartooning --
he was magically transformed into a
beautiful girl. Watching that did
something to me. I wanted it to
happen to me.

Young Louis' stares at the TV, transfixed.

LOUIS (V.O.)
Soon after, I discovered a book.

DISSOLVE TO:

47 INT. LIBRARY / CHILDREN'S CORNER - DAY

47

WE PAN ALONG A TABLE OF SCHOOL KIDS... A NERDY BOY reads a
dinosaur book, a PRISSY GIRL reads NANCY DREW, A YOUNGER
CHILD has GREEN EGGS AND HAM. FINALLY WE REACH YOUNG LOUIS,
who's transfixed by a thick text entitled: PSYCHOPATHIA
SEXUALIS by Dr. Richard Kraftt-Ebing.

YOUNG LOUIS' POV: The chapter heading reads "Case #130,
Delusions of Sexual Change."

BACK TO:

48 INT. KATHERINE HART'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

48

LOUIS blushes, finishing his story. KATHERINE may or may not
be listening -- hard to tell.

LOUIS
Over the years, I've had very few
lovers, and--

KATHERINE
You're lonely. You want a woman's
company. That's as good a reason as
any to cross-dress.
Now I'm sorry I'm so old, but you
do get a lot of experience with me.
I used to be very beautiful.
(MORE)

KATHERINE (cont'd)
I was in Hollywood, you know. I
slept with Ricardo Montalban in the
seventies.

LOUIS
Oh, from *Fantasy Island*. What was
he like?

KATHERINE
A gentleman. Now how's about we get
you into some lingerie, sweetie.

LOUIS
Okay. Sure...

CUT TO:

49 INT. KATHERINE HART'S APARTMENT -- MINUTES LATER 49

LOUIS stands awkwardly in a cheap BRA, PANTIES and SLIP. As
he waits patiently for Miss Hart to return, he glances up at
the wall by the phone. A large card reads:

**1)Find out what they're calling for. 2)Give a price. 3)Give
the address. 4)Set a time. 5)Repeat address.**

SUDDENLY A TOILET FLUSHES. Katherine comes out of the
bathroom, and heads towards Louis to resume business.

KATHERINE
Okay, let's teach you how to be
feminine. The first thing you have
to learn is how to sit. Go ahead.

Louis sits, badly.

KATHERINE
See? A woman just doesn't plop
down. When a lady sits she presses
her calves against the couch and
keeps her knees together at the
same time. Try again.

Louis tries again.

KATHERINE
Better! Now cross your legs.

Louis crosses his legs.

KATHERINE
No, no. See how your foot points
up, full of tension and aggression?
Men's feet are like that because
they're always trying to get
somewhere.

(MORE)

KATHERINE (cont'd)
Let your foot relax *down*. That
shows you're open to a man's
advances.

LOUIS
That's not really what I'm after--

KATHERINE
(snapping)
Don't interrupt, Georgina. It's
rude. (looking him over)
Maybe it's time we spanked you.

LOUIS
Actually, we don't have to--

But his protests only serve to make Katherine more dominant.

KATHERINE
You're just God awful, aren't you?
Get over here and lie across my
legs.

Afraid to make waves, Louis obeys. She spanks him. Hard.

LOUIS
(in genuine pain)
Ow! Ow! Ow!

Suddenly she stops.

KATHERINE
Are you Jewish?

LOUIS
Um, actually I am --

KATHERINE
I thought so. You remind me so much
of an old boyfriend.

She resumes her spanking -- harder.

LOUIS
Excuse me ... Miss Hart? Can we
stop for a second?

Louis gets up. Katherine checks her watch.

KATHERINE
We have a lot of time left.

LOUIS
Would you mind ... would you mind
if I just kissed you?

KATHERINE
 (flattered)
 You don't have to ask, sweetheart.
 You're *paying*.

Katherine slowly closes her eyes. Louis moves in and softly kisses her. Katherine half opens her eyes, looking far off. She says nothing for a beat, and then:

KATHERINE
 Slip outta that slip and get into
 my bed, honey...

DISSOLVE TO:

50 INT. BUS -- NIGHT 50

Back in his gentleman garb, LOUIS rides the cross-town bus, staring out at the city lights. For some reason he seems even sadder, more empty than before.

CUT TO:

51 INT. HENRY'S STAIRWELL -- NIGHT 51

LOUIS climbs the last few stairs, clutching the mail. He reaches the apartment door. He takes a deep breath, suddenly ashamed of facing Henry. Finally he puts his key in the lock.

CUT TO:

52 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT 52

LOUIS is immediately greeted by HENRY in his bedtime attire, carrying a tray of wine and cheese towards his couch/bed. The British sitcom "You're Being Served" is on the television.

HENRY
 You're home later than usual.

LOUIS
 Yes. I went out for drinks ... I'm
 kind of seeing this girl from work.

HENRY
 Sounds like a lie, but that's good--
 it shows that you're growing up.
 Have you seen my eye mask? It's
 disappeared somehow.

LOUIS
 No.

HENRY

God, I hope it turns up. I can't sleep without it. Anyway, if you like you can join me for some wine and cheese. Free of charge.

LOUIS

(sitting)

Thank you. By the way, I got the mail on my way up. Who is...
(reading) *Otto Bellman?*

HENRY

Your predecessor.

Henry snatches the Bellman letter and heads for the kitchen.

LOUIS

How long did he live here?

HENRY

Two years. It was a great mistake. At first it wasn't awful; he looked like Bridgette Bardot in profile. Of course he had a hunchback.

Henry puts Bellman's letter in the FREEZER, which is caked with a foot of frost. Inside, it's packed with mail.

LOUIS

You're putting his mail in *there*?

HENRY

I can't risk losing them. He's already hell-bent on revenge against me.

LOUIS

Why?

HENRY

I kicked him out for being a sexual deviant. He had a bondage magazine. He's Swiss; they like all that S&M.

Henry returns to his wine, cheese and TV. Louis shifts uncomfortably.

LOUIS

That doesn't sound fair. You shouldn't just kick someone out because they have odd sexual tastes.

HENRY

If he had that magazine, he was probably going to those clubs, whipping people or being whipped on his hump. He probably could take a lot of lashes on that hump... Anyway, you pick up all kinds of germs in those places. So I kicked him out, and he's been exacting revenge on me ever since. Believe it or not, he's living with Vivian Cudlip's granddaughter. I made the mistake of introducing them. If Vivian ever finds out, *I'll* be the one who gets whipped.

LOUIS

So you believe he's with her to revenge you?

HENRY

Of course. He also stole the only copy of my greatest play, *Henry and Mary Are Always Late*. The degenerate will probably have it illegally produced in Zurich and make a grand fortune.

LOUIS

I think you're being unreasonable. You're the one always citing these great writers -- most of them had all kinds of unusual kinks.

HENRY

That's irrelevant. I am a follower of the Church of Rome. One should only have sex when married.

LOUIS

But you've never been married. Are you saying you've never had sex?

HENRY

You'll get nothing out of me. And try to think about more important things once in a while! Think about your soul -- your character. Think about defrosting that ice box to make room for more mail. Maybe a steak's in there somewhere! If you concentrate on things like that, there might be a meal in it for you! That's the way I am. I don't go around needing sex. I don't need any love.

LOUIS
You're being dishonest. Everyone
needs something.

HENRY
All I need is pleasure.

LOUIS
Okay, so what gives you pleasure?

HENRY
You not asking me personal
questions.

Louis finally laughs. But then Henry offers something
unsolicited. He sighs, actually seeming vulnerable.

HENRY
I'd like to go back to Anapa. It's
a small town on the Black Sea in
Russia. Vivian and I went there two
years ago on our world tour. A
bottle of champagne only costs four
dollars. In my mind's eye, that's
where I think I'd be happiest...

Louis watches Henry, suddenly feeling compassion for him.
Henry sips his wine, way off in Anapa somewhere.

CUT TO:

53 EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE -- DAY 53

GERSHON rides his bicycle down Lexington Avenue, passing
fancy shops and eateries. His bulk and girth barely balance
on the tiny bike seat, yet somehow he comes off as graceful.

Suddenly Gershon stops, seeing something in a coffee shop
window. His face grimaces.

ANGLE ON COFFEE SHOP WINDOW: LOUIS AND HENRY sit side-by-side
at separate tables, eating breakfast. Henry's engrossed in
the New York Post. Louis glances up towards Gershon.

54 INT. COFFEE SHOP -- CONTINUOUS 54

LOUIS taps HENRY's shoulder.

LOUIS
Who is that man?

Henry looks up from his reading glasses.

ANGLE ON GERSHON THROUGH WINDOW: When he sees Henry looking, Gershon immediately bikes away.

HENRY
That's Gershon Gruen.

LOUIS
Your friend who carries things?

HENRY
And fixes my car. It's obvious he's still not speaking to me.

LOUIS
He always seems to be on that bike.

HENRY
Yes, cycling away his sex drive.

Louis gives Henry an incredulous look.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Gershon was a slave to his libido. He used to bring prostitutes from Spanish Harlem into his apartment, and they'd steal from him. He couldn't stop, so he turned to me for help. I told him to develop other interests, like reading the dictionary to improve his vocabulary, and bicycle riding, which so far has worked wonders. Of course, he's still an obsessive masturbator...

LOUIS
If your advice worked, then why isn't he talking to you?

HENRY
He accused me of not really valuing his friendship and only using him for his mechanic skills. He was also jealous of my relationship with Otto Bellman.

LOUIS
You have quite a strange power over people, Henry.

HENRY
It's my constant disapproval. Some find it fatherly.

THE WAITRESS brings over their eggs, placing each down at their respective tables.

LOUIS
I think it's silly you made us sit
at separate tables like this.

HENRY
Men of any worth sit across from
women. If you ever hope to be an
Extra Man, you have much to learn
about boy/girl propriety. Which
reminds me -- what are you doing
this evening?

LOUIS
(lighting up)
....No plans. Why?

Henry nonchalantly digs into his omelette.

HENRY
I have two lady friends that need
escorting. To an event at the
Historical Society.

LOUIS
Vivian Cudlip and her niece?

HENRY
No no, but almost as important. One
of the women, Lois Huber, has given
me a room in her Palm Beach home
for the last four seasons.
Unfortunately we had a falling out
when I insulted her. I desperately
need to get back in Lois' good
graces. Your youth might have a
positive effect on her.

LOUIS
Would this officially make me an
Extra Man?

HENRY
Extra yes, but nowhere near
essential.

CUT TO:

55 EXT. MADISON AVENUE -- DAY

55

HENRY and LOUIS saunter down the street past expensive
designer shops -- Ralph Lauren, Aquascutum, Calvin Klein.

HENRY
First we need to get you some
proper attire.
(MORE)

HENRY (cont'd)
 You need a jacket that will seduce
 Lois Huber. She's drawn to bright
 colors.

Louis stops in front of Peter Elliot, an upscale men's shop.
 He focuses on an elegant, plaid jacket.

LOUIS
 I could see myself in something
 like that.

HENRY
 This is not about fashion. It's
 about *survival*.

Henry yanks him away.

HENRY
 The price of that jacket could feed
 us for an entire year.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE THRIFT SHOP -- DAY 56

An establishing shot of SPENCE CHAPIN THRIFT SHOP.

HENRY (O.S.)
 Now this is more like it. Welcome
 to Brooks Brothers North.

57 INT. UPPER EAST SIDE THRIFT SHOP -- DAY 57

HENRY and Louis peruse the offerings of this cramped, messy
 store.

HENRY
 Why buy new? The clothing here has
 character and is of the highest
 quality.

LOUIS
 Yes, I can see that...

Louis tries on a jacket, while Henry rummages through ties.
 He holds them up against Louis, to see if any match.

LOUIS
 By the way, what exactly was it you
 said that insulted Lois Huber?

HENRY

I told her she has no taste in clothes, that she's vulgar in response to things, that she has no sense of social strata, that her ass is big, that she's a saddle-back and possibly a moral imbecile.

LOUIS

That seems like a lot to recover from.

HENRY

You have your work cut out for you.

Henry chooses yellow paisley.

CUT TO:

58

58

59

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN -- EARLY EVENING

59

Dressed for the evening, LOUIS pulls a pair of socks out of the file cabinet that actually holds up the kitchen table. Meanwhile. Henry paints BLACK SHOE POLISH on his ankles.

LOUIS

Henry -- what are you doing?

HENRY

I forgot to buy socks. Mine are all threadbare. Don't worry, no one will notice. And who knows, maybe this will help kill the fleas.

LOUIS

Fleas?

HENRY

The dermatologist confirmed I have them. Everything is going wrong these days. No socks, no room in Palm Beach, taxes, fleas -- my life has become a veil of tears.

CUT TO:

60

INT. SKYLARK -- NIGHT

60

HENRY, heavy footed as ever, drives LOUIS across the park.

HENRY

Now, you should be aware that the other woman -- Meredith Lagerfeld -- has nothing to offer socially. She's dirt poor. In fact, we often work in unison at events. She's the one who alerted me that Lois may forgive me.

LOUIS

That was nice of her.

HENRY

Not really. Lagerfeld uses me for rides. She's quite enormous and has trouble getting around town. Speak of the devil...

Henry pulls over to a West Side brownstone. LAGERFELD (60's), a large woman with flowing Brunhilde locks, a cape and a cane, waits by a basement apartment. She waves and hobbles towards them. Henry watches her sympathetically.

HENRY

She does have a nice face, Lagerfeld. I suppose we all have something ... Even Lagerfeld.

CUT TO:

61 INT. NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY -- NIGHT

61

HENRY, LOUIS and LAGERFELD station themselves by the cheese table in a museum-like room. Lagerfeld scans the fancy CROWD while Henry makes himself an enormous cracker sandwich.

HENRY

Who was it that said "He saw a piece of cheese and made havoc with it?"

LOUIS

I don't know -- who?

HENRY

It was Hazlitt about Wordsworth! And you call yourself a teacher of literature.

Lagerfeld rolls her eyes, finding Henry insufferable.

LAGERFELD

Henry, stop pontificating and focus. The George Gillies just arrived.

(MORE)

LAGERFELD (cont'd)
 She's involved with Lincoln Center
 and is hosting quite a big party
 Thursday. We should try to speak to
 her.

HENRY
 Fine, but where the hell is Lois?

Lagerfeld points across the room. A solitary woman (LOIS)
 studies one painting on a wall of many.

HENRY
 Okay. Louis and I will say hello to
 Lois. I'll leave him alone with
 her, then circulate back to pursue
 the Gillies. I'll let it slip to
 them that I know Vivian Cudlip, and
 we'll be fine for Thursday.

Lagerfeld nods, accepting the plan. Henry and Louis make
 their way to LOIS, a heavily made-up septuagenarian who's
 tightly wrapped in an electric blue leopard print dress.
 Henry steps up first.

HENRY
 (studying the painting)
 How strange. There's a dwarf in
 that picture!

Lois turns to discover it's Henry. She's less than thrilled.

LOIS
 It's a *child*, Henry. Why must you
 make everything grotesque?

HENRY
 You're absolutely right, Lois. It's
 only a child with a large head.
 Speaking of children, let me
 introduce you to my young house
 guest, Louis Ives. Louis has moved
 to New York to find himself, and
 currently he's involved with
 magazine publishing. Lois Louis,
 Louis Lois. How nicely that rolls
 off the tongue!

Louis offers his hand, and Lois shakes, curiously.

HENRY
 Excuse me. I think I'm in need of
 some wine...

Henry makes eyes at Louis, then steps away, leaving Lois and
 Louis alone. Louis clears his throat.

LOUIS
I really like these paintings.

LOIS
I don't. But it's ridiculous how
nobody here looks at them.

Louis nods. She's a tough cookie. He tries again.

LOUIS
I was admiring your dress before.
It's very interesting. And a good
color for you, too. May I ask who
designed it?

Lois turns and raises an eyebrow, now intrigued.

ANGLE ON THE WINE TABLE: Henry flirts with a lovely young
WINE POURER, who offers him a Chablis.

HENRY
Tell me, are you by chance from
Russia?

WINE POURER
Me? God no. I'm as American as they
come.

Henry takes the wine, then also her hand. She blushes.

HENRY
Not to me. I will always think of
you as Russian...

ANGLE BACK ON LOUIS AND LOIS: They stroll to another
painting. Things have loosened up.

LOIS
And what exactly do you do with
magazines, Louis?

LOUIS
I work on the marketing side of
things. But I'm hoping to be an
editor or a writer someday.

LOIS
Henry's an excellent writer -- a
talented playwright. But he can be
a very rude man, you know.

LOUIS
Well, he can be a bit cranky
sometimes.

LOIS

He insulted me terribly last summer. Meredith suggested that I give him a second chance tonight, but I have no need for friends who criticize me the way he did.

LOUIS

I'm surprised to hear this. He speaks so highly of you.

Lois smirks. Henry and Lagerfeld arrive, interrupting.

HENRY

With the exception of that Russian bartendress, I've never experienced such a dreary crowd.

LOIS

Stop complaining, Henry. It's tiresome.

LAGERFELD

There's another opening at the Whitney, but it's not until nine.

LOIS

Then I'll need dinner first. We'll eat at my place. Meredith will ride over with me, Henry and Louis can go pick up the food.

The mighty Lois has spoken.

CUT TO:

62 INT. "PLUCK YOU" CHICKEN -- NIGHT

62

In a rather low-rent, take-out joint, HENRY and LOUIS wait on line to pick up rotisserie chickens. Henry looks despondent.

HENRY

Things with Lois are worse than I thought. I can see the disdain in her eyes.

LOUIS

She's definitely angry with you, Henry. She told me as much.

HENRY

Your youth has failed us and I'm off my game.

(MORE)

HENRY (cont'd)
 I haven't been sleeping right since
 my eye mask disappeared. We have no
 choice but to implement plan B over
 dinner.

LOUIS
 What's plan B?

HENRY
 I'll tell Lois that I'm organizing
 a reading in Palm Beach of my play
Dead Hand, and that I'd love her to
 play the George Eliot role. She's
 always wanted to be an actress and
 she's taken great interest in my
 work over the years. I'm sure the
 promise of a great part will secure
 me the room.

CHICKEN MAN
 NEXT!

Louis and Henry take one step forward, only two behind now.

HENRY
 Ugh. There's no bathroom in here
 and I have to piss. If I'm not back
 in time, just get two roasted
 chickens. Lois has millions, but
 there's nothing she loves more than
 a roasted chicken.

Henry steps away, leaving Louis alone on the line. Suddenly
 we hear:

ENGLISH NARRATOR
*As the Young Gentleman stood there
 on line, he couldn't help but play
 the first half of the evening over
 and over in his mind. In doing so,
 something became very clear about
 the nature of his relationship with
 Mr. Henry Harrison --*

HENRY (O.S.)
 I'm back.

Startled, Louis turns around. Henry steps back in the shot,
 causing the narration to stop mid-thought.

LOUIS
 Did you pee already?

HENRY
 Don't say "pee." You sound like a
 school girl. Say *piss*.

LOUIS
Fine. Where did you piss so fast?

HENRY
In the street.

LOUIS
No you didn't.

HENRY
Of course I did. True aristocrats
know they can piss on the street
any time they wish, day or night.

CHICKEN MAN
Next!

CUT TO:

63 EXT. "PLUCK YOU" CHICKEN -- NIGHT

63

HENRY carries the chicken bag out, but LOUIS can't let the
pissing subject go.

LOUIS
I want to see where you peed.
Pissed.

HENRY
This is ridiculous. Right there! By
the bumper of that car.

ANGLE ON CAR BUMPER: There is a small puddle.

LOUIS
How did you do it without being
seen? You could have been arrested!

HENRY
It happens to be an acquired art.
(he sighs)
Follow me and do exactly as I do.

Henry puts the chicken bag down on the hood of a nearby car.
He motions for Louis to stand by his side.

HENRY
Now, walk into the street as if
you're going to cross...

Louis does, mimicking Henry's every step and movement.

HENRY (CONT'D)

... then abruptly stop -- thinking better of crossing in traffic -- and start stepping *backwards*. As you step backwards, you undo your pants through your coat pockets, freeing yourself. Next -- keeping those hands in your pockets -- make a wide arc with your raincoat as a shield. This way, nobody knows you're pissing, and the walking backwards part keeps you from pissing on your legs, not to mention stepping in it.

Louis and Henry end up back by the curb. Louis is impressed.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Now -- do you understand?

LOUIS

(actually impressed)

... I think I actually do ... thank you for teaching me that.

Henry snatches the chicken bag.

HENRY

You're welcome. And keep the change.

CUT TO:

64

INT. LOIS' ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

64

HENRY, LOUIS and the chickens ride the elevator of a Park Avenue Apartment building.

HENRY

Now, whatever you do, don't mention the fleas. If Lois catches them, she'll know they were from me and I'll never get the room. Wait -- she has a dog! If I can transfer my fleas to the dog, that will surely save us!

Henry smiles, excited by his own genius. Louis wonders if he's truly lost his mind.

CUT TO:

65

INT. LOIS' APARTMENT -- NIGHT

65

A trembling, yapping YORKIE wearing an Elizabethan collar greets HENRY, LOUIS and the chickens. LOIS and LAGERFELD wait inside as the uniformed MAID shows them in. The apartment is enormous, the epitome of WASP aesthetic and filled with threadbare but priceless antiques. Henry immediately goes for the Yorkie.

HENRY

Lovie! Look at you in your royal
bib! I've missed you!

Henry scoops up the Yorkie, and rubs the dog all over his mid-section, hoping to transfer fleas.

LOIS

Henry! Put the dog down and bring
me those roasted chickens.

Lois turns and heads into the kitchen. Henry obediently follows, leaving Louis alone with a couch-bound Lagerfeld. She just stares out at the lovely Manhattan view; taking little interest in Louis -- never even making eye contact.

Louis steps towards the large picture window. He gazes out at the New York skyline hoping to make small talk.

LOUIS

What an amazing view. You can see
everything from here.

LAGERFELD

Oh, yes. I grew up in this
neighborhood...

Startled to learn this, Louis turns around.

LOUIS

Did you really?

But Lagerfeld still doesn't see him, off in her own universe.

LAGERFELD (CONT'D)

It was wonderful. We were the most
popular family. All the children
wanted my parents to be their
parents. We were always doing the
funnest things, taking everyone to
plays or concerts or going to Coney
Island on Sunday afternoons. We
never had a dull moment. I thought
all families were like that. I
thought life would be like that...

Lagerfeld's eyes well up. Yet her sad little soliloquy has an odd, rehearsed quality. Louis studies her sympathetically, wondering which parts -- if any -- were true.

CUT TO:

66

INT. LOIS' KITCHEN -- NIGHT

66

HENRY arranges the chicken parts on a platter, while LOIS waits seated at the table.

LOIS
I don't like the dark meat touching
the light.

Henry steals this opportunity to speak to Lois alone.

HENRY
Lois, did I mention that I'll be
staging a reading of the Eliot play
in Palm Beach this winter? Vivian
Cudlip secured a ballroom for me at
the Colony.

LOIS
Oh, are you going to Palm Beach
this winter?

This response worries Henry.

HENRY
...Of course. And I was wondering
if you'd like to play George Eliot--

LOIS
If you're angling to stay in my
guest room, Henry, I can't have you
this season. I've invited Meredith.
I think the sun will be good for
her bad knee.

Exasperated, Henry slips:

HENRY
Lagerfeld!?

Lois flashes him a confrontational look.

LOIS
That's correct. *Meredith.*

CUT TO:

67 INT. LOIS' DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

67

A silent HENRY fumes, devouring a drum stick. LOUIS shifts uncomfortably. LOIS eats nonplussed, while LAGERFELD glances around, wondering what's caused the tension.

LOUIS
This is delicious roasted chicken.

No response from anyone. Lagerfeld clears her throat, then:

LAGERFELD
Henry, I was wondering if you're
free tomorrow. I found an
inexpensive sports doctor for my
knee in Brooklyn, and I was hoping
you might drive me--

HENRY
(snapping)
Find someone else. I'm teaching
tomorrow.

Lagerfeld shrinks back in fear. Henry wipes his mouth, then looks at his watch.

HENRY
And I don't think I can make it to
the Whitney tonight, either. Every
exhibit is the same: sex organs and
toilet seats. I'm no longer in the
mood for those things. Let's go,
Louis. Now.

Henry throws his napkin down and rises. Mortified, Louis follows. Lois licks her greasy fingers, sated and smiling.

CUT TO:

68 INT. UPSTATE BARN - NIGHT

68

A CROWD of YOUNG, HIPSTERS and ACTIVISTS gather at a rally / concert. A sign above the rustic stage reads: "No Consent To Cement." Beneath it, a PHISH-ESQUE BAND prepares to play.

ANGLE ON MARY. A little tipsy, she holds hands with BRAD -- a slightly arrogant hottie with a social conscience.

BACK ON STAGE: The band's FRONTMAN bends over his guitar towards the microphone.

FRONTMAN

Do we need another cement plant
polluting this beautiful valley!?

MARY & GROUP

NO!!

FRONTMAN

Are we gonna just bend over and let
industry have their way with us?!?

MARY & GROUP

NOOO!!!!

FRONTMAN

Are we gonna get rough and tough
and stand up for our rights!?!?

MARY & GROUP

YES!!!!!!

The band kicks into a bluesy fusion jam. Mary is one with the music, flailing her arms and writhing transcendently. She screams to Brad above the din.

MARY

Omigod. This has been the best
weekend of my life! Thank you so
much for taking me!

BRAD

Are you kidding? I want to take you
everywhere. I wanna jump right into
your life, open up your world and
just lift it all way up to the sky.

MARY

That is such a nice thing to say.

BRAD

In fact, how would you like to go
away with me someplace super
special? Someplace even beyond your
wildest dreams?

MARY

Omigod -- Where?

BRAD

Jamaica

Mary winces a bit.

MARY

Queens?

BRAD
No no no, baby. Jamaica as in
reggae, sunshine, and weed.

Mary shrieks and leaps into his arms.

CUT TO:

69 INT. SKYLARK -- NIGHT

69

LOUIS slides into the car, followed by a fuming HENRY, who slams his only functional door. Louis feels bad for him.

LOUIS
I'm sorry things didn't work out
tonight.

HENRY
Nothing works out anymore. It never
used to be this way. My bills
always got paid, I always had rooms
in Florida, the IRS left me alone.
In the last ten years things have
greatly deteriorated.

LOUIS
I did have a very nice time at the
Historical Society.

Henry shakes his head, angrily.

HENRY
The whole damned evening was
engineered by Lagerfeld to get me
to drive her to Brooklyn. Of course
she doesn't want to ask Lois! She
wouldn't do anything to jeopardize
that room, now that she's gotten
her fat little hands on it.

LOUIS
Don't dwell on it, Henry. Focus on
something positive, like you tell
me.

Henry sighs.

HENRY
Yes, I suppose you're right...
That roasted chicken tonight was
good. I'll try to focus on that.

Henry turns the ignition. The Skylark makes A HORRIBLE
SPUTTERING SOUND, THEN A FINAL SCREEECH! Smoke rises from the
hood. He tries again. The car sputters once more then dies.

HENRY
WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING NOW??!

Henry gets out. Louis follows.

CUT TO:

70

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

70

HENRY and LOUIS circle the smoking car.

HENRY
This can't be. If I lose my
Skylark, I lose everything.

Henry lifts the hood a bit. SMOKE BILLOWS UP INTO HIS FACE.
He closes it quickly, waving and choking.

LOUIS
Leave it, Henry. There's nothing we
can do tonight. We'll have it towed
and repaired in the morning.

HENRY
Really? With what money?

LOUIS
We'll figure something out. Let's
get a taxi home.

HENRY
You go. I can't now. I need to walk
this whole evening off.

LOUIS
C'mon. You can't do such a long
walk alone.

Louis reaches for Henry's arm, but Henry angrily yanks it
away. He turns around, his face now red and enraged.

HENRY
Do I look like a feeble old man!?
You've been in Manhattan ten
minutes, and you're going to tell
me what to do?! I told you I want
to walk home! Alone!

LOUIS
I only --

HENRY
GO! GO! I DON'T NEED YOU!

Shocked, hurt and devastated, Louis steps back. Henry turns and storms off in the opposite direction.

DISSOLVE TO:

71 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- MORNING 71

LOW ANGLE ON LOUIS' WINDOW: The morning sun breaks through the long, dirty air shaft.

ANGLE ON SLEEPING LOUIS: A ray of light hits his face. He rubs his eyes.

He gets up from bed. He peeks through his door to find HENRY, in reading glasses, marking students' papers. Louis waits a beat, then cautiously speaks.

LOUIS
Morning.

No answer. No gesture. Louis waits, then tries again.

LOUIS
No dancing today, huh Henry?

Henry finally answers coldly, not looking up.

HENRY
As you can see, I'm trying to get some work done. Allow me to finish, please.

Louis sighs. He turns and heads into the bathroom.

72 INT. BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS 72

LOUIS takes off his shirt, preparing to shower. He leans towards the tub to start the water. Suddenly he hears something strange. The sound comes from the water pipe.

He presses his ear up to it, now hearing clearly: A DEEP, RESONANT, AND RATHER BEAUTIFULLY MASCULINE VOICE (GERSHON) SINGING A MOURNFUL RENDITION OF COLE PORTER'S "I LOVE PARIS."

CUT TO:

73 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE OFFICE -- DAY 73

LOUIS sips a take-out coffee at his desk, flipping through a *New York Press*. An ad catches his eye.

ANGLE ON AD: A voluptuous "woman" poses like a 1940's Vargas pinup. The byline reads *SALLY'S; New York's Hottest Tranny Bar!* The small print features a downtown address.

Louis freezes mid-sip, transfixed by the ad. Suddenly:

MARY (O.S.)

Louis?

Louis fumbles with the paper as if getting caught in some act. He looks up to find MARY standing over him.

MARY

I'm sorry -- were you reading something? I didn't mean to interrupt you.

LOUIS

No -- not at all. I wasn't reading anything.

MARY

I realize that we never went out and had that lunch. Are you by chance available today?

LOUIS

(dumbfounded)

Uh, sure. Absolutely available.

Mary smiles an irresistible smile.

CUT TO:

74

INT. VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT -- DAY

74

LOUIS struggles to eat brown rice with chopsticks. MARY slurps some miso, watching him curiously.

MARY

Did I mention that a few of us from work are going to see *I Am Cuba* at the Film Forum tonight? You should come.

LOUIS

Really? That sounds wonderful. Thank you.

Louis smiles, feeling very included today. Mary smiles, too, finding him humorous.

MARY

I find you funny, Louis.

LOUIS
(worried)
In what way?

MARY
I mean you're interesting.
Sometimes you remind me of a guy
from another time period. Like -- I
don't know ... the twenties?

Now Louis smiles again, actually flattered.

LOUIS
It's funny you should say that. I
love that era -- the literature
from that era. (a beat)
I never told anyone this, but
sometimes -- in my head -- I
actually imagine someone's
narrating my life, as if I'm the
protagonist in a classic novel.

Mary makes a concerned face. She chuckles.

MARY
Okay...

ENGLISH NARRATOR (O.S.)
*The Young Gentleman immediately
regretted this confession. He
struggled to quickly change the
subject.*

LOUIS
So -- I never asked you. How did
the whole upstate thing go?

MARY
Amazing. It turned into quite a
party, actually. Some really good
bands showed up -- you should come
to the next one! And bring somebody
of course. Do you live alone?

LOUIS
No. I have a roommate. He's much
older. *Old*, actually. I rent a room
in his apartment.

MARY
Really. What does he do?

LOUIS
He teaches and other things. To be
honest, it's not going so well. He
hasn't spoken to me in days.

MARY
Oh no. Why?

LOUIS
It's kind of a long story. He gets
irrationally mad at me.

Mary raises an eyebrow, sipping more soup.

MARY
Are you sure he's not in love with
you?

LOUIS
NO! ... no. I would never want to
think of him like that. I mean,
there was *one* time it crossed my
mind, but --

MARY
Why? What did he do that made you
wonder?

LOUIS
Well it's kind of strange but we
were drinking wine together and
watching TV...

DISSOLVE TO:

75 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- DAY

75

LOUIS lies on the ground before the television, fighting off
sleep. He's obviously had one glass too many. His shirt is
pulled up just a bit, revealing his belly button.

LOUIS (O.S.)
*I was exhausted and a bit tipsy
lying on the floor, working up the
energy to get up for bed. Then,
something very odd happened.*

LOUIS' POV: Almost in slow motion, a puce, polka-dot necktie
slowly descends inches away from his face. Louis watches it
curiously, confused by what is happening. The tie dips lower,
lower, then softly rests, right in his exposed belly button.

Louis glances up to see HENRY hovering over him, dangling the
tie with an odd, almost demonic smile on his face.

Alarmed, Louis sits up and pulls his shirt down. Henry
chuckles, then turns and heads to the bathroom.

BACK TO:

76 INT. VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT -- DAY

76

MARY puts her spoon down.

MARY
... That's it?

Louis blushes.

LOUIS
I guess it was nothing. I don't know why I just told you that. I'm really fond of him either way. He's probably the most interesting person I've met. Brilliant, really.

MARY
Wow. Maybe I'll get to meet him someday...
So Louis, there was something I wanted to ask you.

Louis is thrilled that she's changed the subject.

LOUIS
Sure, sure.

MARY
Well, that guy I started seeing? He offered to take me to Jamaica! Next week! I really, really wanna go -- I've never been out of the country and I'm SO into Bob Marley -- but George is giving me a hard time about all the photo clearances piling up. So -- I convinced him that you could handle them for me while I was away...

As Mary makes a "pretty please" face, Louis' heart sinks.

LOUIS
... Sure.
Whatever you need.

Mary leans across the table to kiss his cheek.

MARY
You're the best. I owe you a major favor in a major way!

CUT TO:

77 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- DAY

77

A sullen LOUIS enters the apartment, surprised to find HENRY winding up some bizarre calisthenics. Henry rises to greet him, suddenly chipper.

HENRY
Oh! How are you?

Louis is taken aback by this mood swing.

LOUIS
I'm all right...
You certainly seem better.

Henry lifts the needle off his current Cole Porter record. He towels off his forehead and neck.

HENRY
Yes, my funk has lifted, though I couldn't tell you why. The gas station informed me that just getting my car to run will cost a small fortune. I did hear about a promising room in Palm Beach however.

LOUIS
Good for you.

Louis hangs up his overcoat.

HENRY
Which reminds me: I actually came up with a proposal that may save you money. How about if I pay for your car insurance, in exchange for you letting me take the Parisienne to Florida? Just for two months.

LOUIS
(perturbed)
So that's your motivation for talking to me again?

HENRY
Of course not. I just thought it's an idea that could benefit us both.

LOUIS
I don't see how. Chances are you'd destroy my car.

HENRY
I know how to care for a car.

LOUIS
 Why don't you follow through on
 your offer to introduce me to
 Vivian Cudlip's niece? That would
 be of more use to me right now than
 insurance money.

HENRY
 ...I can't. It wouldn't be right.

LOUIS
 Why? Is there something so wrong
 with me?

Henry doesn't answer, which infuriates Louis further.

LOUIS
 Well I can't lend you my car. It
 has special meaning to me. My
 father left it to me, and I can't
 risk anything happening to it.

HENRY
 I understand. I didn't mean to
 upset you. Let's just sweep my
 mentioning it under the carpet,
 with everything else that's there.

Henry's sincerity makes Louis instantly regret being harsh.
 Suddenly the TELEPHONE RINGS. Henry grabs it.

HENRY
 H. Harrison.... Why hello, Gershon!
 What a surprise!

Henry makes wild eyes at Louis.

HENRY (O.S.)
 ... Yes actually it did! Who told
 you? You will? No, no -- I'll
 be right down!

Henry hangs up, all excited. He gathers a few things and
 races to the door.

HENRY
 You'll never believe this: Gershon
 biked past my car at the Citgo. He
 invited me to come down for dinner
 to discuss repairing it. He can fix
 anything. The curse on the House of
 Harrison may be lifting!

The door slams. An emotionally spent Louis stands there, alone. After a beat, he grabs his coat.

CUT TO:

78 INT. PARISIENNE / EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET -- NIGHT 78

A distraught LOUIS cruises the city streets alone. He glances down at the passenger's seat.

ANGLE ON PASSENGER SEAT: A crumpled newspaper ad for the tranny bar SALLY'S is laid out for reference. Louis pulls over to the curb and peers out the window...

LOUIS POV: In scarlet scripted letter's, an old neon announces "SALLY'S."

WE TILT DOWN from the neon to find THREE TRANSVESTITES -- all very attractive -- smoking and chatting by the entrance. One of them stamps out her cigarette and steps inside. A BUSINESSMAN follows suit. The other two glance seductively towards LOUIS in the Parisienne. They make kissing gestures. Louis panics and immediately pulls away.

CUT TO:

79 EXT. FILM FORUM MOVIE THEATER-- NIGHT 79

The marquee on the trendy downtown art house theater advertises "I AM CUBA."

CUT TO:

80 INT. PARISIENNE -- NIGHT 80

LOUIS gazes out of the side window, searching for something.

INTERCUT WITH:

81 EXT. FILM FORUM MOVIE THEATER -- NIGHT 81

A CROWD spills out of the theater. Louis' Parisienne creeps along slowly. Finally he spots her! Mary! She's alone.

LOUIS
(yelling out the window)
Mary! Mary!

Mary turns towards the car. She bends a bit to see in.

MARY

Louis? Is that you?

LOUIS

Sorry I couldn't make the movie.
But I was in the neighborhood, so I
thought you might like a ride home.

MARY

Oh - wow. I'm pretty religious
about taking public transportation.
You don't actually *drive* around the
city, do you?

LOUIS

No, no -- of course not.
(thinking fast)
I was helping out my friend
Lagerfeld. She's quite enormous,
and has trouble getting around.

MARY

Oh -- that's nice of you.
Um, Okay. Since you're already out
and about, what the hay.

Mary hops in.

CUT TO:

82

INT. PARISIENNE / EXT. EAST VILLAGE -- NIGHT

82

MARY rides in the passenger seat, while LOUIS' heart beats
through his chest.

MARY

Now I owe you two favors. I'm not
sure I can handle all this.

LOUIS

You don't owe me anything. Really.
It's my pleasure --

MARY

Whoa -- What's that?

Mary leans down to pick something up from the floor of the
car. It's the SALLY'S AD. She reads it, grinning.

MARY

"Sally's -- New York's Hottest
Tranny Bar." Omigod -- Genius!!

Louis blushes and panics.

LOUIS
People are always leaving stupid
things on my car. Just throw it
out.

He snatches the paper from her and rolls down the window.

MARY
Hey hey, don't litter! Have you
lost your mind?

Mary grabs the ad and shoves it into her pocket.

MARY
Besides, I might like to go there
someday.

... Really? LOUIS

MARY
Sure, why not?
Oh -- make a left, make a left!
This is Brad's street; I'm staying
there tonight.

LOUIS
No problem...

Louis heart sinks. But just as he turns the corner, HE
FREAKS:

LOUIS
YAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!!

MARY
WHA-WHAT!?!?

LOUIS
(screaming)
A LION!!!!

Louis swerves the car to the right, as if to avoid something. BAM!!! An object thuds onto his windshield anyway, something orange and furry. It bounces down onto the street.

ANGLE ON TENEMENT FIRE ESCAPE: TWO TEENAGERS laugh hysterically. They duck back into the window to avoid getting caught.

Louis and Mary both catch their breath, each struggling to regain composure.

MARY
Omigod. I seriously just had a
heart attack.

Louis shakes his head in disbelief.

LOUIS
 I'm sorry. I'm so so sorry. I'm
 just -- I'm just having the worst
 day ever.

Impulsively, awkwardly, Louis bends across the seat and hugs Mary, similar to the way Mary hugged him the day they met. But unlike Louis, Mary doesn't reciprocate. Instead, she goes all rigid. Finally she opens the door to escape.

MARY
 Hey. Let's see what it was.

Mary gracefully slips out the car, leaving Louis high and dry. She lifts A LARGE STUFFED LION off the sidewalk, carries it back to the car, then seats it on the passenger's seat.

MARY
 Somebody's idea of a joke. It is
 kind of cute, though.

Louis is totally mortified. By everything. He glances at his new passenger.

LOUIS
 It is...

MARY
 Y'know Louis, I think I'll just
 walk the rest of the way from here,
 okay?

LOUIS
 Oh -- Sure.

MARY
 Bye you two! Thanks a million for
 the lift.

Mary chuckles and shakes her head a bit, then saunters off.

CUT TO:

83 INT. HENRY'S STAIRWELL -- LATER THAT NIGHT

83

Upset and confused, LOUIS slips into the stairwell and walks up a flight, cradling the STUFFED LION under his arm. Simultaneously, HENRY walks out of Gershon's apartment. He doesn't see Louis at first.

HENRY
 (too loud for a stairwell)
 So we'll talk in the morning,
 Gershon! Go get some sleep, you're
 looking more haggard than usual!

Henry closes Gershon's door, then turns, startled by Louis on the landing.

HENRY

Dammit! You startled me, standing in the shadows again. This is becoming a serious character flaw.

LOUIS

Sorry. I just got in.

Henry steps up, whispering. He doesn't even acknowledge Louis' lion.

HENRY

My evening was a disaster. First of all, Gershon made a boiled tongue. Then, after dinner, we taxied over to peek at my Skylark, and he confirmed that it's completely beyond repair.

LOUIS

I'm sorry to hear that.

HENRY

But later I remembered something: the last time I was in East Hampton, I saw an elegant vehicle for sale not far from Vivian's place. So I've decided to go see it tomorrow with Gershon. Would you like to join us?

They get to the door. Louis gets out his keys.

LOUIS

I take it you're looking for a ride.

HENRY

Yes, but why focus on it that way? Think of yourself! It's supposed to be an unseasonably nice day tomorrow courtesy of global warming. And something tells me you'd enjoy meeting Gershon...

Louis sighs and unlocks the door.

LOUIS

Sure. Why not.

Henry smiles eagerly as they go in.

HENRY
Where did you find that Lion? Is it
worth anything?

CUT TO:

84 INT. PARISIENNE -- DAY

84

LOUIS pulls the Parisienne up to the building. HENRY hops into the passenger's seat, wearing a pair of tortoise shell vintage sunglasses. The convertible top is noticeably down.

LOUIS
Where's Gerson? You said he'd be
waiting.

HENRY
Gershon's pathologically late. Go
in there and urge him on.

LOUIS
Why me? I don't even know him.

HENRY
Because you really should see his
apartment; it's very interesting.

As Louis gets out of the car, Henry rests his head back to catch some rare November rays. He fiddles with the radio.

HENRY
AM and FM, quelle luxe...

CUT TO:

85 INT. HENRY'S STAIRWELL -- DAY

85

LOUIS raps on an apartment door. We hear "thump thump thump." The door opens -- slowly and shyly -- revealing GERSHON.

Up this close, Gershon's enormous, robust presence is overwhelming. The rivulets of his long hair and curly beard make him seem Bacchus-like.

LOUIS
... I'm Louis. Henry's roommate? He
wanted me to check on you.

GERSHON
Please please, come in. I
apologize. I was just getting my
shoes on.

Gershon's voice is even more off-putting -- a soft yet deliberate near whisper. As Louis steps in, the gentle giant sits to lace up his boots.

Although the apartment has the same layout as Henry's, every wall holds crooked shelves cluttered with hundreds -- maybe thousands -- of GAUDY SOUVENIRS from all over the world.

LOUIS
Look at this... You have so many interesting things.

GERSHON
Yes, I collect souvenirs.

LOUIS
You must have gone everywhere.

Louis trips over a BIKE FENDER.

GERSHON
No, no -- they're other people's mementos. I've actually never been anywhere. I'm always working.

Louis peeks into the bedroom. A LARGE OXFORD DICTIONARY rests on a lectern. Dozens of used, crumpled tissues clutter his carpet. A PENTHOUSE magazine peeks out from under the bed.

Suspicious, Gershon leans over to watch Louis. Louis quickly grabs a CUBA CIGAR BOX from a nearby shelf. He pretends to be interested in it's cheesy beach-scene decal.

LOUIS
Um, what kind of work do you do, Gershon?

Gershon rises and quickly moves towards him.

GERSHON
I'm a subway mechanic. And I do love my job...

Politely, Gershon removes the box from Louis' hands. He gingerly returns it to the shelf. He then turns, hovering awfully close to Louis' face.

GERSHON (CONT'D)
... But it's always been my dream to buy a sailboat, and sail off with a beautiful woman to the Mediterranean. We'd travel straight to the Blue Grotto where tiny rowboats wait.

(MORE)

GERSHON (CONT'D)
 We'd paddle one into the warm dark
 cave, then kiss and sing and
 harmonize with our own echoes. I
 think that would be paradise. And I
 still believe it can happen -- the
 boat and the woman.

Gershon smiles sweetly. Unnerved, Louis does his best to
 return the smile.

CUT TO:
 CAR WINDOW POV: A MOVING SHOT OF AN ENDLESS CEMETERY...

86 INT. PARISIENNE / EXT. LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY -- DAY 86

A smiling GERSHON leans forward and folds his arms over the
 front seat like a giddy, enormous man-child. LOUIS drives,
 while HENRY offers endless, unsolicited commentary.

HENRY
 Between Manhattan and the East End,
 there's nothing but cemeteries and
 strip clubs. Did you know that
 topless bars do their best business
 on Mother's Day? It's the udders --
 that's the day men most need to see
 them.

GERSHON
 Actually, that makes lots of sense.

LOUIS
 Do you think we should put up the
 top? It *is* November.

HENRY
 Don't be an old woman. It's a
 remarkable day -- show some spirit!

Henry starts belting out an odd French song.

GERSHON
 What song is that, Henry? It's
 quite beautiful.

HENRY
 It's from a French Operetta I saw
 while living in Paris: *Pas Sur La*
Bouche. It's about a man who
 doesn't like being kissed on the
 mouth. That's the whole plot.

GERSHON
 Nooo -- That's insane!

HENRY

Why? I happen to agree. The mouth is used for eating. Rubbing noses is a far more sanitary greeting. Or rubbing nipples perhaps.

GERSHON

I like the idea of rubbing nipples.

HENRY

Don't be disgusting, Gershon.

LOUIS

How did you afford to live abroad?

HENRY

I had an inheritance. Both my parents were dead by the time I was twenty-two. So I moved to Europe and spent every last cent.

LOUIS

Both of your parents died at the same time?

HENRY

No. My father died when I was two. I was actually raised by my bohemian aunt.

LOUIS

Why not your mother?

HENRY

She was afraid of me. While the other kids were outside playing, I was inside drinking her perfume.

LOUIS

So, your aunt wasn't scared of you?

HENRY

My aunt *understood* me.
(a rare moment of emotion)
She taught literature at Johns Hopkins. She was ahead of her time. She was always taking ships to Europe and having affairs. She was quite beautiful but never married. She was fascinating.

LOUIS

Sounds like you really loved her.

Henry suddenly snaps out of his sentimental mood.

HENRY

This feels like an interview. I don't like it. Are you planning to write the unauthorized biography of an obscure playwright whose masterpiece was stolen by a Swiss hunchback?

Gershon giggles.

LOUIS

Is it so wrong to be interested in you?

HENRY

Yes! From now on I will give you the most misleading image as possible. No one will ever capture my soul.

DISSOLVE TO:

87 EXT. HAMPTONS ROAD -- DAY 87

THE PARISIENNE cruises down a beautiful, arching road along Shinnecock Bay. White boats bob in the steel blue water, each of them tied and docked for winter.

88 INT. PARISIENNE -- DAY 88

HENRY points to a quickly approaching street.

HENRY

Oh oh -- make a left here. I want to show you Vivian's estate.

LOUIS cuts the wheel sharply, while GERSHON holds on.

89 EXT. HAMPTONS ROAD -- DAY 89

THE PARISIENNE hangs a sharp left, disappearing down a long, wooded road.

90 EXT. CUDLIP SOUTHAMPTON ESTATE -- DAY 90

HENRY, GERSHON and LOUIS stand before an enormous arched iron gate. Through this gate -- across a lawn lined with mature specimen trees -- stands a 1920's brick and cedar mansion.

All three are rapt.

HENRY
A decent enough dwelling, no?

LOUIS
It is beautiful.

GERSHON
I believe the appropriate word is *baronial*, an adjective meaning "stately" or "grand." There are many great words found in the B's. My personal favorite is "bisextile," which is nothing like it sounds. Believe it or not, bisextile means "of or pertaining to a leap year." So -- on the next February twenty-ninth -- let's all remember to wish each other a Happy Bisextile Day!

Henry and Louis stare at him, dumbfounded.

CUT TO:

91 EXT. SOUTHAMPTON TOWN STREET -- DAY

91

THE PARISIENNE pulls up to a modest village house in the town of Southampton, where a taupe, 1970's Cadillac Eldorado is parked. Needless to say, this car's seen better days. A FOR SALE sign with a phone number hangs crookedly in its window.

HENRY, LOUIS and GERSHON hop out of the Parisienne.

HENRY
Thank goodness. It's still here.

They circle the enormous monstrosity.

GERSHON
The 1972 Cadillac V-8 Eldorado...
400 horsepower, 550 pound-feet of
torque, and single digit gas
mileage.

LOUIS
That's terrible for the
environment.

HENRY
And your car's better?

Louis blushes. Gershon glances towards the uninhabited house.

GERSHON

I guess the owners have left for the season. But the number here's a Manhattan one, so that's good news.

Gershon pulls out a pen and jots down the number.

HENRY

We came all this way, we should at least peek under the hood. Louis, get in and see if you can open it.

Finding the driver door open, Louis slips inside. He quickly peeks his head out again.

LOUIS

I can't find a hood release.

HENRY

Let Gershon do it. He's the mechanically inclined one.

As Gershon heads to switch places with Louis, Henry examines the large CADILLAC CROWN HOOD ORNAMENT.

HENRY

Maybe this is a secret hood-handle.

Henry yanks on it. Hard.

LOUIS

Uh, Henry I wouldn't --

SNAP!! The hood ornament comes off Henry's hands.

HENRY

SCHEISSE!!

Henry struggles to slap it back on, but it can't be done. Gershon hops out to see what happened. Henry hides it behind his back as a car drives by rather slowly, suspiciously.

HENRY

Come! Let's vamoose before the polizei arrive!

The three of them scamper back to the Parisienne.

CUT TO:

HENRY, LOUIS and GERSHON stroll along the beautiful empty Southampton beach. Henry still holds the hood ornament.

HENRY

At least I got a *piece* of a new car. I'll call tomorrow to get a price for the rest.

LOUIS

You can't! That's like returning to the scene of a crime.

HENRY

They'd never suspect me. Who'd be crazy enough to deface a car then inquire about buying it?

(turning to Gershon)

Gershon, this young man might be very well read, but he knows nothing about real life.

GERSHON

Yes, I get that feeling.

Gershon pats Louis on the back affectionately.

HENRY

And he's such a sad, old soul, too. Do you know he's never even learned how to dance?

GERSHON

That's more than sad. It's tragic.

Louis smiles and plays along.

LOUIS

Well, if Henry would let me watch him once in a while, I might actually pick up a step or two.

HENRY

My steps can't be learned. They're entirely intuitive and based on jungle rhythms.

LOUIS

Try me.

HENRY

Alright then. Gershon, you have a nice voice -- we've all heard you go on and on in the shower -- sing us something danceable.

GERSHON

What genre do you prefer?

HENRY
I don't know! A waltz.

Gershon eagerly grabs the hood ornament from Henry. He holds it like a microphone, then clears his throat. Suddenly an enormous, operatic voice pours forth.

GERSHON
*SOMEWHERE MY LOVE, THERE WILL BE
SONGS TO SING, ALTHOUGH THE SNOW,
COVERS MY HOPES FOR SPRRRRIING ...*

HENRY
Now follow me, you.

Henry first offers an easy two step with a hand flourish. Laughing, Louis imitates him. As Henry adds a circular spin, Louis attempts the same.

HENRY
Loosen up! Don't be so square!

OVERHEAD SHOT: HENRY and LOUIS twirl and dance all over the wide deserted beach, as an orchestra rises behind Gershon's *Dr. Zhivago* theme. For several whimsical seconds, this very odd trio have a tremendous time.

Suddenly HENRY COLLAPSES. The music and magic abruptly end. Gershon and Louis race over to his side.

LOUIS
Henry -- omigod -- are you okay?

HENRY
Ugh! My sciatica! I -- I can't move!

Louis looks to Gershon for guidance.

LOUIS
What do we do?

HENRY
Get me off this beach is what you do! I need alcohol and civilization!

OVERHEAD SHOT AGAIN: Louis and Gershon lift Henry up, then carry him off the beach towards the car, their legs pounding the sand as fast as they possibly can.

CUT TO:

93 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

93

LOUIS and GERSHON stumble into the apartment dragging an immobile, moaning HENRY on their shoulders.

GERSHON

Put him on the floor. I know how to fix him. I did it two years ago.

HENRY

Not true! You made it worse!

Gershon and Louis lie Henry on the carpet -- face down -- beside his sleeping couch.

GERSHON

Don't be difficult, Henry. I was the one who got you walking again and you know it.

HENRY

This is a conspiracy. Otto Bellman hired you to kill me. Tell him he can keep the damn play!

Gershon kneels next to him.

GERSHON

Shh. Now I'll begin by applying sharp pressure, just above both buttocks.

Gershon cracks his knuckles.

HENRY

Not with your hands you aren't! I don't want your germs. Use that broomstick there!

GERSHON

Fine.

Louis hands Gershon an old broom.

LOUIS

(concerned)

I don't know, Gershon. This doesn't seem kosher.

GERSHON

We'll make it work.

Gershon straddles both legs over Henry and raises the broomstick, looking like a mad Gondolier.

He plunges the handle deep into Henry's back and twists it. Henry screams in agony.

HENRY
AHHHH! What the hell are you
doing?! How could that possibly
help me!?

Gershon scratches his head, then snaps.

GERSHON
I know: I need to go get my
acupressure book. I also have a
large vibrator downstairs. I'll be
right back.

Gershon rushes out of the apartment. Henry's eyes get wider.

HENRY
Louis, Louis. Under the couch ... I
-- I think I see my eye mask.

Louis crouches down to peek under the couch. He reaches deep and retrieves the eye mask. He hands it to Henry.

HENRY
Thank God...

Henry rolls onto his back, clutching the beloved eye mask to his chest. He pleads:

HENRY
Please don't let Gershon back in
with his vibrator. I really just
need to sleep. I need to put on my
eye mask. I've missed it so...

Louis slips a pillow under his tired head.

LOUIS
Don't worry. I'll handle Gershon.

Henry pulls Louis close to his face. He looks into his eyes, very seriously.

HENRY
Listen Louis. If by chance I die in
my sleep, make sure the funeral
mass is in Latin. And give all my
belongings to Catholic charities,
except the Christmas balls. Those
go to you.

LOUIS
You're not going to die, Henry.
Just get some rest.

Henry pulls the eye mask over his head, but not yet his eyes.

HENRY
Despite all your quirks, you really
are the sanest person I know. I'm
very lucky to have you here.

Louis smiles -- this means the world to him. Henry slips the
eye mask over his eyes.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE UP:

RING! RING! RINGS! A telephone rings off the hook.

CUT TO:

94 INT. HENRY'S LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

94

Still in yesterday's clothes and having slept on Henry's
couch, LOUIS jolts up. It's a very early call. HENRY -- on
the floor just below -- fumbles with his eye mask.

LOUIS
(into phone)
H. Harrison's residence. Oh -- Just
one minute, please.

Louis covers the phone. He whispers to Henry:

LOUIS
It's Vivian Cudlip's secretary...

Henry gasps, then maniacally motions for Louis to bring him
the phone. Louis rushes over and hands it to him.

HENRY
(into phone)
H. Harrison. Yes? Oh, Vivian! Yes,
yes dear... Of course, of course. I
look forward to it!

Henry hangs up the phone. He looks positively lost.

LOUIS
Is something wrong?

HENRY
Vivian's hosting a dinner party
tonight. At the Russian Tea Room.
She wants me to escort her. And
look at me, lying here like a
useless old man... It'll be days
before I can even sit in a chair.

LOUIS
You should have just told her the truth. She'd understand. I'm sure at her age she has health problems--

HENRY
She's had every cancer twice not to mention a hole in her heart. But none of it stops her from going out. If I let Vivian down, I'll be banished.

LOUIS
Henry, there's no way you can go.

HENRY
No But you can.

Louis face changes. He can't believe his ears.

LOUIS
Me?

HENRY
Her driver arrives at seven. We'll wait until the last possible moment to call her -- six, six-thirty maybe. That way, it will be too late for her to contact any of the other Rosenknights. It's my only chance. I can't afford to lose Vivian...

Henry looks as though his entire world is closing in. Louis feels awful, but he also can't conceal his own excitement.

DISSOLVE TO:

95 EXT. EAST NINETY THIRD STREET AND 1ST AVENUE -- DAWN 95

The door flies open and LOUIS -- looking ever so dapper in his thrift-shop evening clothes -- steps out. His expression says it all: he's accepted his mission with graceful determination. Tonight he will be "essential."

Simultaneously, an unusually well-dressed and groomed GERSHON gets out of a cab and hobbles over.

GERSHON
You look very handsome, all dressed up. Going someplace special?

LOUIS
Yes, I have a date. You look spiffy there yourself.

GERSHON

I just attended a lecture at the Freud Society. Sometimes it's a good place to meet beautiful women. Not today, though...How is Henry?

LOUIS

Still on his back.

GERSHON

Old people are like old cars. They need tune-ups to keep them running. Of course, they won't run forever.

Louis doesn't like hearing this.

LOUIS

In Cuba they still drive cars from the forties.

Gershon nods, though not convinced of anything.

GERSHON

Anyway, I'll check in on him later.

LOUIS

He'd appreciate that. Well, it looks like my ride has arrived. Goodnight, Gershon.

Louis hops down the steps towards the STRETCH LIMO pulling up. Gershon watches with envy.

CUT TO:

96

INT. / EXT. SUTTON PLACE TOWNHOUSE -- EVENING

96

CLUTCHING A DOZEN RED ROSES, Louis rings the doorbell of Vivian's mansion. A MAID answers, then ushers Louis inside, revealing a space out of a Slim Aarons photo circa 1955.

MAID

Come this way.

LOUIS

Thank you.

The maid leads Louis into a dark hallway, where he spots a woman's silhouette on a settee, bathed in an eerie glow from the Tiffany glass dome above. It's VIVIAN CUDLIP, the Holy Grail of Extra Men, perched there like the Queen of England.

Vivian wears a strawberry blonde wig, a shimmering lavender dress, and the entire window of Harry Winston.

MAID

Wait here.

The maid scampers over, takes Vivian's frail hand, and leads her to Louis. At ninety-two, Vivian's face might be ancient, but her eyes are alert as ever.

VIVIAN

You're Louis. Henry's young friend.

Vivian's rich old voice echoes off the marble walls.

LOUIS

Yes. It's a pleasure to meet you, Mrs. Cudlip. I've heard nothing but wonderful things.

VIVIAN

If they came from Henry, don't believe a word. Lately that man cannot be trusted. He introduced my granddaughter to a deformed Swiss con man, and I am not at all happy.

LOUIS

...Really.

VIVIAN

He can be a dear friend Henry, but he's annoyingly intent on being more. He always drops hints about marrying me, you know.

LOUIS

No, I didn't.

VIVIAN

My other friend Aresh is the same way. He was an Iranian diplomat years ago. Exiled now. You'll meet him at dinner.

Louis extends the roses, eager to change the subject.

LOUIS

I brought some roses for you.

Vivian reaches out a gnarled, bejeweled hand to accept them, then passes them straight to the maid without looking.

VIVIAN

Very thoughtful. The car's waiting. Let's go.

Vivian locks arms with Louis, and they walk -- albeit slowly --
- down the long corridor toward the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

97 INT. RUSSIAN TEA ROOM -- NIGHT

97

This dramatic old world haunt is awash in royal Russian reds and glittering golds. In a year-round nod to Tzarist Christmases, glass balls ornament a tree's bare branches.

In the middle of it all, VIVIAN holds court at a large banquette with LOUIS seated in prime position by her side. Two seats away, ARESH (60's, the Iranian gentleman) sits next to -- of all people -- LAGERFELD, who's on Louis' right.

EIGHT OTHER EXOTIC GUESTS, seated male-female, share in the caviar-and-blini appetizers. VIVIAN pats Louis' hand.

VIVIAN
So what do you think of The Russian
Tea Room, Louis?

LOUIS
Oh, this caviar is wonderful. The
champagne as well.

VIVIAN
Yes. I want more.

Vivian lifts up her glass. THE MAITRE D' races to refill it.

MAITRE D'
Right away, Mrs. Cudlip. Anything
you need, just ask.

The ever-serious Aresh stands and makes a toast.

ARESH
To Vivian: the most beautiful, the
most sophisticated, the most
cultured, the most prominent, and
the most popular grand dame in all
of New York--

VIVIAN
(interrupting)
I need a straw, waiter!

The WAITER immediately plops a straw in her Champagne flute, then hands her a tiny envelope.

WAITER
Of course. Also, you received a
phone message, Mrs. Cudlip.

Vivian snatches the envelope. As she struggles to read the letter, Louis smiles to Lagerfeld, who hardly recognizes him.

LOUIS

Nice to see you again, Meredith.

LAGERFELD

Oh -- that's right. Hi.

LOUIS

I'm sorry we couldn't accompany you and Lois to the Whitney that night. Henry was a bit out of sorts.

LAGERFELD

You mean rude. But I don't care. Henry's horrible to all women.

LOUIS

Oh, I don't think so...

LAGERFELD

He had his heart broken years ago when he was young and handsome and still had money, so he takes it out on all women. He was in love with a Catholic girl, but her family wouldn't accept him, and she ended up marrying a rich banker. Henry's Protestant, but pretends to be Catholic ever since because he thinks it has some kind of moral snob appeal.

Eager to join the Henry bashing, Aresh leans over.

ARESH

Spencer Mooney told me he suspects Henry is homosexual.

LAGERFELD

Well, people say that, too. He was in the theater you know, and theater types need to be a little homosexual so they can feel things more deeply. But Henry's the opposite; he has no feelings.

LOUIS

I don't think that's true.

Thankfully, Vivian interrupts.

VIVIAN

I give up. Will you read the name here for me, Louis?

LOUIS
Of course. *Barry Barbarash*.

VIVIAN
Ugh. I'm not calling him back. He hears I'm out with other men and gets wildly jealous.

She takes a long sip from her champagne straw.

ARESH
Yes, you shouldn't encourage that Barbarash. He is charming and has wonderful long legs, but he spies on you in Palm Beach, you know. He has binoculars and watches you undress in your room at the Colony.

VIVIAN
Now don't start, Aresh. Read your menu and pick an entree please.

ARESH
How about Barbarash's head on a plate!?

VIVIAN
See!? You're no better at all -- equally as jealous. Wouldn't you agree, Louis?

LOUIS
Well, wanting someone's head on a plate with flaming cognac does sound a little jealous to me.

ARESH
(furious)
What -- *Flaming cognac*!?

Vivian laughs hysterically.

VIVIAN
Oh, I like you, Louis. I like you very much.

Vivian hugs Louis's arm. Aresh has had enough. He throws his napkin down, stands and marches off.

LOUIS
I -- I didn't mean to offend him. Did I really hurt his feelings?

LAGERFELD
(mouth stuffed with
caviar)
(MORE)

LAGERFELD (cont'd)
Oh yes, I think so. Aresh offends easily.

LOUIS
I'm so sorry -- Please excuse me.

CUT TO:

98 EXT. RUSSIAN TEA ROOM -- NIGHT

98

LOUIS exits the restaurant to find a wounded ARESH, standing alone with tears streaming down his cheeks.

LOUIS
Aresh, I apologize. I thought we were all joking together in good fun. Please come back inside--

But Aresh barely registers Louis. Instead he stares out at the cruel city. His eyes turn to slivers, his voice trembles.

ARESH
She doesn't know how she hurts me. I've lost my country, my career, my identity -- everything. She could help me so easily, but she doesn't even consider it. I'm through with her. I'm through with Vivian Cudlip.

And with that, Aresh steps out into the night, leaving Louis alone and bewildered. Suddenly:

MARY (O.S.)
Louis?

Louis spins around to find a tan MARY -- with ridiculous Jamaican hair braids -- walking arm-in-arm with her hip, buff boyfriend BRAD.

MARY
Omigod, it IS you! Brad, this the guy from Terra I was telling you about. The one that covered for me!

Mary hugs Louis.

BRAD
Hey, man. Thanks a million.

LOUIS
Oh uh, sure.

MARY
We just got out of The Women Of
World Music show at Carnegie Hall.
What are you doing up here?

LOUIS
Oh, nothing. Just having dinner
with some friends.

MARY
Here? Omigod. That is SO perfect.

She flashes Brad an "I told you so" look. Suddenly:

VIVIAN (O.S.)
LOUIS!!!

Louis spins around to find a tipsy VIVIAN -- on the arm of
the MAITRE D' -- clutching a champagne flute at the door.

VIVIAN
Don't you DARE let Aresh and his
nonsense ruin our evening. I do not
love that Iranian and I never will.
Now get back in here and drink
champagne with me, darling.

And with that, Vivian retreats back inside. Horrified, Louis
looks back and forth between the door and Mary.

LOUIS
I-- I have to go. I'll see you at
work.

Louis rushes back in. Brad and Mary watch him go, speechless.

CUT TO:

99 INT. LIMO -- NIGHT

99

LOUIS is chauffeured home with VIVIAN, who's passed out on
his shoulder. He gingerly puts his arm around her.

CUT TO:

100 INT. SUTTON PLACE TOWNHOUSE -- NIGHT

100

DING DONG! The MAID rushes to answer the door. She opens it
to find LOUIS, carrying a passed out VIVIAN in his arms.

MAID
(nonplussed)
Upstairs. To the right.

Louis nods. He heads for the ornate, winding staircase and proceeds to carry her up. From this angle, with the lighting just so, it looks as if Louis carries a glamorous, beautiful woman to bed.

CUT TO:

101 INT. VIVIAN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

101

LOUIS carefully lowers VIVIAN onto the gold brocade bedspread. The MAID lingers quietly by the door. Suddenly Vivian's eyes flutter open. She studies Louis, mildly confused and very drunk. Louis whispers:

LOUIS
Good night, Vivian. Thank you for a
spectacular evening.

Then tears well in Vivian's eyes. She brushes Louis' young cheek with her hand. The moment seems almost romantic.

VIVIAN
No. Thank you young man. Tonight,
you were nothing short of a perfect
gentleman.

Louis beams with pride.

CUT TO:

102 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

102

LOUIS glides into the apartment to find HENRY -- slightly hunched over but up and about -- packing a suitcase.

LOUIS
Henry, you're walking!

HENRY
Yes, a miracle. Gershon and his
magic vibrators got me running
again, at least temporarily. How
was your evening?

Henry has a cool, distanced tone to his voice.

LOUIS
Wonderful. Vivian and I got along
beautifully.

HENRY
You weren't supposed to do *that*
well. I sent you to keep my rivals
at bay, not become one.

LOUIS
 Actually, I feel sorry for the woman. Everyone seems to want things from her, and somehow she's still so sweet.

HENRY
 She's not sweet. She's a monster. She treats her staff like something out of Peter The Great. Well, perhaps she's a sweet monster...

LOUIS
 Why are you packing?

HENRY
 I'm going to Florida. Sun, vermouth and codeine is my only hope for a cure.

LOUIS
 You're leaving tonight?

HENRY
 Yes. The midnight bus. I'd never find a car in time -- they wanted far too much for that damn El Dorado. Who knows, maybe I'll find one down there.

Louis looks crestfallen. Henry closes his suitcase and goes for his coat.

LOUIS
 Can I at least drive you to the Port Authority?

HENRY
 Certainly. But I insist on paying five dollars. I want no obligations.

CUT TO:

103 INT. PORT AUTHORITY -- NIGHT

103

LEWIS pulls up the busy station. HENRY turns to him.

HENRY
 So there we are -- where are we?

LOUIS
 I'm going to miss you, Henry.

HENRY
Don't be ridiculous.

LOUIS
But I am. Can I help with your bag?

HENRY
They make them with wheels now --
I'll manage. Try not to burn down
the apartment, and no guests. You
know the rules. See you in Spring!

And without even a handshake, Henry gets out. Tears well in Louis' eyes; he watches his friend disappear into the crowd.

DISSOLVE TO:

A WINTER MUSICAL MONTAGE:

104 EXT. CONSERVANCY GARDENS -- DAY 104

A HEAVY SNOW transforms the formal gardens into a winter wonderland. LOUIS strolls through the large iron gates, looking lost and aimless. To the left he sees: A NUTTY BRIDE AND GROOM -- wearing matching white parkas -- posing on skis for a WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER.

105 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT / LOUIS' ROOM-- DAY 105

LOUIS lies in bed staring at his laptop computer.

ANGLE ON COMPUTER: The "*NEW YORK SOCIAL DIARY*" website showcases photos from the Winter Ball in Palm Springs. In one snapshot HENRY stands behind a wheelchair bound woman.

106 INT. CENTRAL PARK -- DAY 106

A YOUNG FATHER squeezes behind his TODDLER SON on a toboggan. They shove off the tiny hill, squealing with glee. LOUIS passes by them at the bottom, deep in a funk.

107 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE OFFICE -- DAY 107

THE TERRA OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY IS IN FULL SWING. Lonely LOUIS slurps a cup of eggnog while sitting on top of his desk. MARY AND BRAD dance in the lounge area while GEORGE and OTHER EMPLOYEES AND SPOUSES mingle.

108 INT. KATHERINE HART'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS 108

MISS HART smokes in bed, looking disconnected. LOUIS rolls over on his side. He stares out her window, feeling empty.

109 INT. CENTRAL PARK -- DAY

109

BIRDS EYE VIEW: The snow is now patchy and melting. LOUIS, alone in a white field, attempts a few of Henry's steps he learned on the Hampton's beach. He slips and falls on a patch of ice.

END MONTAGE

110 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- DAY

110

LOUIS -- in his pajamas and looking dishevelled -- drinks wine alone in Henry's throne chair. He watches "ARE YOU BEING SERVED." Several empty bottles roll around the floor. Suddenly he spots something in the corner amidst all the clutter. He gets up to examine it.

ANGLE ON PHOTO ALBUM: A ratty old photo album has "HENRY HARRISON" embossed on the binding. Louis pulls it out of a pile of books. He sits down and opens it.

ANGLE ON PHOTOS: The first page features Henry as a young boy (8) sitting in the lap of a GLAMOROUS WOMAN. The photo is captioned, "Henry and Aunt Claire."

Louis stares at the smiling boy.

The next page reveals a large B&W glossy of Henry, age twenty-five, sitting shirtless on a bike. He's handsome and confident and totally lacking irony, posed against an exotic European seascape -- Monaco, perhaps. Louis flips the pages -- more photos of Young Henry in Europe with elegant people.

The next page has a yellowed newspaper clipping with the headline: HARRISON SHOWS GREAT PROMISE WITH FIRST PLAY. Tears well in Louis' eyes. Where did Henry's life go?

Suddenly a noise -- THE DOORBELL. Louis jumps up. He fumbles with the book, as if doing something illegal. He shoves it back into the pile, then answers the door to find... A strange, well dressed Aryan man in his late twenties. He has a Germanic accent. This is OTTO BELLMAN.

BELLMAN

I'm Otto Bellman. I lived here once with Henry. He is in Palm Beach, yes?

LOUIS

Oh...Yes he is.

BELLMAN

I would like my mail.

LOUIS
Sure. Come in -- and excuse my
appearance.

Louis watches him enter, then heads to the freezer. Bellman removes his winter coat, revealing a small hump on his right shoulder. Louis takes note.

BELLMAN
I don't forget this place. It is
most filthy home I ever lived in.

LOUIS
Yes well, the rent is very cheap as
you know.

Louis hands Bellman the frosty mail.

BELLMAN
Why is this so cold?

LOUIS
Henry kept it in the freezer. He
was afraid he'd lose them.

Bellman laughs heartily, then sits in Henry's throne to shuffle through his mail. Louis doesn't appreciate this arrogance; in fact, he'd like him to leave.

BELLMAN
What do you think of Henry?

LOUIS
I'm very fond of him.

BELLMAN
He is very original. Christmas
balls, very original. Dancing, very
original. Sneaking into the opera,
very original. He and I went six
times together.

LOUIS
(upset)
That many?

BELLMAN
What is your name?

LOUIS
Oh, I'm sorry-- Louis.

BELLMAN
Yes. Louis Ives. You are on
Vivian's list to attend my wedding.
(MORE)

BELLMAN (cont'd)
I will marry her granddaughter, you know.

LOUIS
(brightening)
Yes... I've heard. I'm flattered to hear I made Vivian's list. Please thank her for me.

BELLMAN
I would like Henry to attend. He introduced us. He is mad at me, though. He accuses me of stealing his play. (chuckles)
Anyway, I will track him down in Palm Beach to convince him.

Bellman gets up for his coat.

LOUIS
So the wedding will be soon?

BELLMAN
Yes. You will get invitation. Thank you for mail. I go see Gershon now.

Bellman heads out. Louis closes the door behind him, feeling a new pang of hope about the wedding.

CUT TO:

111 INT. HENRY'S STAIRWELL -- DAY 111

LOUIS opens the mail box and pulls out the mail. He shuffles through mostly bills, then stops on a large invitation with ornate calligraphy. It's addressed to *Master Louis Ives*. Louis smiles, excited.

CUT TO:

112 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE OFFICE -- DAY 112

LOUIS cautiously approaches MARY'S desk. He waits while she finishes a jokey conversation with TANYA, a co-worker, who's coat is on as she is ready to leave for the day.

MARY
... and he's always whining about the old undershirts I sleep in, so look what I went and got--

Mary yanks something out of a VICTORIA SECRET bag: a PINK AND BLACK BABYDOLL LACE TEDDY. Mary holds it against her body.

TANYA

Omigod. He's so gonna die.

Louis' eyes nearly bug out. Suddenly they both notice him. Mary bundles up the teddy. She stuffs it back in the bag.

MARY

(giggling)

Shit! Louis! How embarrassing.

LOUIS

Don't worry. I --
I have the same one.

The gals crack up. Proud of his humor, Louis chuckles, too.

LOUIS

Um, Mary, could I talk to you a second before you leave?

MARY

Oh, sure.

TANYA

I'll wait for you in the hall.

Tanya leaves, giving them privacy.

LOUIS

So remember at lunch, how you said you owe me a big favor? Well, I guess I was wondering if I might ask you for one.

MARY

Sure, Louis. What is it?

LOUIS

Well, as it turns out, I've been invited to a society wedding. I'd like to bring a date, and I don't really know many people my age in town, so I was wondering if maybe you'd accompany me.

MARY

Oh... I see...

Mary doesn't look thrilled. But Louis waits for a reply.

MARY

Um, Louis... I'm pretty serious with Brad now, so this is a little awkward for me.

LOUIS
 (blushing)
 I don't mean it in that way. I understand you're in a relationship. I just thought maybe we could go as friends. In fact, I'm supposed to get introduced to a young woman there -- the niece of the bride's grandmother.

Mary smiles awkwardly. Finally:

MARY
 I don't think it's the best idea. Please don't be mad. I just think honesty's super important, and the truth is -- it makes me uncomfortable. I'm sorry...

Louis nods, feeling incredibly rejected. Maybe even angry. He musters up the energy to respond.

LOUIS
 That's okay. I understand.

Mary struggles to say something else, but comes up short. She grabs her coat, then heads out to leave with Tanya, leaving her VICTORIA SECRET BAG behind.

MARY
 Have a good weekend. See ya Monday...

Louis remains there, alone at her desk, feeling awful. He stares down at the VICTORIA SECRET BAG on the chair. Suddenly, impulsively -- he reaches in and STEALS THE TEDDY.

He races back to his desk, stuffing it into his coat. His eyes dart back and forth.

Suddenly Mary rushes back in, grabs the forgotten bag off the chair, and races out again without acknowledging Louis.

CUT TO:

113 EXT. SALLY'S -- NIGHT 113

ANGLE ON LOUIS' PARISIENNE: It is parked on the city street. We tilt up to find the red neon SALLY'S sign.

114 INT. SALLY'S -- NIGHT 114

A dimly lit, smoky bar packed with gorgeous, provocatively dressed TRANNIES and grave-faced MEN. House music pounds.

LOUIS slips in awkwardly and finds an open stool at the bar. The BLONDE BARTENDER (halter top and tight jeans) approaches.

BLONDE BARTENDER
What can I get you?

LOUIS
Whatever beer's on tap, please.

While Louis fixates on the bartender's low cut top, a long Latina tranny, MISS PEPPER, sits next to him.

MISS PEPPER
Is this your first time here?

LOUIS
Yes, actually it is...

MISS PEPPER
But you know what kind of bar you're in. What kind of woman I am.

LOUIS
Yes. I -- I believe I do.

She squeezes Louis' leg. He smiles awkwardly.

MISS PEPPER
I'm Miss Pepper. If you're interested in being with a woman like me, you can. Lots of the girls in here are available to date. For a donation, that is...

Louis sighs.

LOUIS
I don't think so. They are beautiful, though. I don't understand how they do it.

Miss Pepper looks Louis over. She thinks she understands why Louis is here.

MISS PEPPER (CONT'D)
You know, you'd make a good Queen yourself. Get a fierce blond wig to go with those bright eyes. Contour your nose a bit. You could actually make some money at Sally's.

Louis grabs his nose.

LOUIS
My nose is very masculine, isn't it?

MISS PEPPER

That's why I'd contour it. Listen
honey, if there's a woman in there,
it will take more than a nose to
keep her down!

Miss Pepper pats him on the leg, then moves on to entertain a
SUBURBAN HUSBAND. Louis puts his hand in his coat pocket and
pulls out Mary's stolen TEDDY. He glances at it, then gets up
to leave.

ANGLE ON STAIRWELL: An ad with pull-off tabs catches Louis'
attention. It reads, "MAKEOVERS BY SANDRA 212-555-2929."

CUT TO:

115 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

115

Groomed and well dressed, LOUIS rushes around adjusting
lighting as if preparing for a date. The apartment is
noticeably cleaner than usual.

Suddenly the doorbell rings. Louis opens the door to reveal:
SANDRA (late 20's), a pretty downtown hipster with tatoos,
piercings and a Betty Page hairdo. She carries an antique
suitcase with travel stickers.

SANDRA

George?

LOUIS

Yes. You must be Sandra. Please
come in.

Sandra's fearless and all business.

SANDRA

Where do you want to do this? I
usually suggest the kitchen.

LOUIS

Okay. That's fine.

SANDRA

Great. Strip down to your underwear
and we'll get started.

CUT TO:

116 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN -- LATER

116

LOUIS sits on a file cabinet in his underwear, clutching
something in his hands. SANDRA rummages through her suitcase.
When she finishes, Louis hands her MARY'S TEDDY.

LOUIS
This is what I'd like to wear.

SANDRA
Uh, sure, if it fits. Have you
given any thought to the wig? I
brought three.

LOUIS
I'd like blonde, please. In fact...

Louis reaches over for his cell phone. He shuffles through
it's menu, then:

LOUIS
... I'd like to look as much as
possible like her.

Sandra takes the phone. She looks at the screen, then makes a
doubtful face.

ANGLE ON THE PHONE SCREEN: A PHONE PHOTO OF LOVELY MARY,
smiling at her Terra desk.

SANDRA (O.S.)
We'll see what we can do...

MAKE UP MONTAGE: EXTREME CLOSE UPS of false eye lashes
getting pasted on, lips glossed, cheeks rouged, wigs fitted,
etc. Over these images we hear the following conversation:

SANDRA (O.S.)
This is your first time, isn't it?

LOUIS (O.S.)
Yes -- all the way I mean.

SANDRA (O.S.)
But you've always wanted to, right?

LOUIS (O.S.)
I guess I've always wondered what
it would be like to look in the
mirror and see a beautiful woman
staring back, with love in her
eyes.

SANDRA (O.S.)
Huh. That's very different from
what I usually hear.

Hearing this makes Louis uncomfortable. He changes the
subject.

LOUIS (O.S.)
Do you enjoy doing this?

SANDRA (O.S.)

I'm a theatrical make-up artist. I cross-dressed a few actor friends for fun, and they suggested I start a business. It's creative and I like to make people feel good, but I don't get off on it or anything like that.

LOUIS (O.S.)

Aren't you ever afraid?

SANDRA (O.S.)

Nah. I can tell a nut immediately over the phone. Most of the guys are great... Okay, this teddy will never fit you, but maybe I can rig it to your front for effect.

LOUIS (O.S.)

Okay... thanks.

LOUIS (O.S.)

Okay... thanks.

CUT TO:

117 INT. MARY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

117

MARY sits on the edge of a futon with an acoustic guitar, strumming a song and singing earnestly.

MARY

*A plume of doom will rise
Polluting Hudson skies
destroying eagles' eyes
While we all lament this business
of cement....*

Brad comes in, brushing his teeth and wearing only pajama bottoms. Mary abruptly stops.

BRAD

What was *that*?

Mary blushes a bit.

MARY

I don't know. I thought maybe I could contribute a song for the next rally. I think it kind of works, maybe.

Brad makes an "I don't think so" face.

MARY

What?

BRAD

It's a little corny, no?

MARY

(hurt)

Well it's not finished. God. That's not very nice.

BRAD

Okay. I'm sorry. I just think honesty's super important.

Mary considers this statement for a moment -- it's the same she said to Louis.

BRAD

Come on, let's go to bed. I'm dying to see that surprise you got.

Brad turns for the bedroom. Mary places the guitar down, sighs, then meanders towards the front door to pick up her Victoria Secret bag. She's conflicted whether she even wants to put it on. But then she decides to.

She glances inside. Nothing. She rummages around the tissue paper. Nothing. Mary drops the bag down, thoroughly confused...

CUT TO:

118 INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT -- APARTMENT

118

LOUIS stands with his back to us, which is bare save some ribbons holding the teddy in place. Blonde tresses cascade down his neck. He struggles to maintain balance in heels.

SANDRA

Ready?

By the armoire door, Sandra prepares for the big reveal. She swings open the left side, which has a long mirror on the inside door.

CLOSE ON MIRROR: Louis is now in full drag, with Mary's teddy stretched across his chest, a full face of make-up, heels, etc. He looks bad. Really bad. Awful.

SANDRA

Well? How do you like yourself?

Bitter disappointment registers through Louis' made-up face.

ENGLISH NARRATOR

The Young Gentleman's heart sank. He looked nothing like what he had imagined. In fact, he was horrified by what he saw.

SANDRA

(sensing conflict)
...Take a minute to adjust. You should be comfortable before we snap photos.

ENGLISH NARRATOR

But with this crushing disappointment came a great revelation: despite his occasional penchant for woman's clothing, Louis Ives did not want to transform himself. There was no woman inside him dying to get out. He did not long to be beautiful like Mary, or the girls at Sally's. This was not his path to love. In fact, standing there dressed as a woman, he never felt more like a man in his life.

LOUIS

(dazed)
This is wrong. All wrong...

Sandra rubs her client's shoulder sympathetically.

SANDRA

No, no. You look really nice!

Eager for comfort, Louis turns to face Sandra. He moves in closer, then kisses her on the mouth.

SANDRA

What -- what the hell are you doing!?

Sandra shoves Louis into the end table, causing the BOWL OF CHRISTMAS BALLS to spill and crash, sending dozens rolling towards the door. We follow them all the way there, hearing:

LOUIS (O.S.)

I'm sorry-- I thought I didn't need to ask if I was paying!

SANDRA (O.S.)

What?! YOU ASSHOLE!

THE FRONT DOOR OPENS. We tilt up from the floor to find HENRY coming in. A look of horror registers on his face.

HENRY'S POV: SANDRA SMACKS LOUIS' MADE-UP FACE.

HENRY
WHAT -- WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE!?

Louis, in full drag, and his punk rock make-up artist spin around, startled. Louis gasps.

LOUIS
Henry!?!?

HENRY
OUT!! GET THE HELL OUT OF MY HOME!!

Enraged, Henry picks up a Christmas Ball from the floor. He flings it maniacally at them. The ball smashes against the wall, nearly hitting Sandra in the head.

SANDRA
Yahhh! What's going on?!

Henry fires off another. SMASH! Sandra grabs her suitcase.

SANDRA
Shit! FREAKS! Fucking *Freaks!!*

She yanks her wig off Louis' head and races for the door. Henry spins around, his back to Louis, refusing to look anymore. Louis rushes into the bathroom to change.

HENRY
(seething)
I trusted you. I trusted you here
with everything I own.

LOUIS
Henry, I'm sorry! But you -- You
came back so early!

HENRY
Yes. I had to. Vivian died.

A silent beat. Louis peeks out of the bathroom, stunned. He only gets Henry's back.

LOUIS
Oh my God. I am so so sorry. You
have my deepest sympathy--

HENRY
(bitter)
I don't want your sympathy. I only
want your absence. I'm going for a
walk, and I want you out of my
apartment by the time I get back.

Henry takes a step towards the door. Louis rushes out of the bathroom, now clothed.

LOUIS
WAIT!

Henry stops, but refuses to look back at him.

LOUIS
(pleading)
Can't you--Can't you for once be...

Louis struggles for the right thing to say. He fights tears.

LOUIS
...I don't know what to say, Henry.
Obviously I have some -- some
issues. I tried my best to hide
them, because I desperately wanted
your friendship. But the real truth
is, I don't even know who you are.
Nobody seems to... And at your age,
that's pretty damn tragic.

Henry's heard enough. He leaves, slamming the door.

CUT TO:

119 INT. PARISIENNE -- NIGHT 119

LOUIS slams the door of his parked car, shaken, unsure of what to do. He spots a PARKING TICKET on his windshield.

LOUIS
Dammit dammit dammit!

Louis reaches around to snatch it, then starts the ignition.

CUT TO:

120 EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE STREET -- NIGHT 120

THE PARISIENNE PULLS away and turns the corner for downtown.

121 INT. PARISIENNE -- NIGHT 121

LOUIS drives aimlessly through midtown. He attempts to wipe some make-up from his face, checking himself in the visor mirror. Suddenly a DELIVERY BICYCLIST comes out of nowhere in the opposite direction. Louis swerves the car, then SMASH!!! He collides with a lamppost! CRASH!!! Another cab hits him!

A GIANT SNOWFLAKE DECORATION falls from the lamppost above onto his shattered windshield.

CUT TO:

122 EXT. MIDTOWN STREET -- NIGHT

122

Stunned, LOUIS watches his cherished PARISIENNE -- now totaled -- getting hauled away by a tow truck.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)
*As Louis Ives' vehicle was hauled
away, so was his entire foundation.*

C.U. ON LOUIS: A few police sirens wipe intermittent red light across Louis' mascara-streaked face. He remembers something long ago...

DISSOLVE TO:

123 EXT. RAMAPO MOUNTAINS -- DUSK

123

A forgotten summer evening. A little boy (YOUNG LOUIS, 8) leans forward in the convertible's back seat towards his FATHER -- a borough guy turned businessman. His suburban MOTHER rides shotgun.

YOUNG LOUIS
Dad, why are you driving up this
mountain? I have clarinet practice.

FATHER
No worries kiddo. Just a quickie
detour.

MOTHER
I hope this old car makes it.

FATHER
"This old car" is a classic which
happens to be in excellent shape.
In Cuba they still drive cars from
the forties.

MOTHER
We move to Bergen County and your
father turns communist.

CUT TO:

124 EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK -- DUSK 124

THE PARISIENNE reaches the summit. Louis' FATHER eagerly hops out.

FATHER
C'mon, guys! Follow me!

He heads to a clearing where a big lookout rock sits. LOUIS and his MOTHER follow. Once there, Louis' father puts an arm around each of them.

FATHER
And there she is... The greatest city on earth.

ANGLE ON VIEW: From way up here we see, miles and miles away, A TINY MANHATTAN SKYLINE lighting up the horizon. Louis smiles in absolute awe.

BACK TO:

125 EXT. MIDTOWN STREET -- NIGHT 125

LOUIS finally turns away from the accident, heading home.

ENGLISH GENTLEMAN
And for the first time since he moved there, Louis Ives considered giving up on Manhattan altogether.

CUT TO:

126 EXT. CENTRAL PARK -- NIGHT 126

Wrapped up in a coat and hat, LOUIS rests on a park bench in a fetal position -- just like back in Princeton. A COP comes by and nudges him. He finally gets up and moves on.

CUT TO:

127 INT. DUANE READE DRUG STORE -- NIGHT 127

At an all night drug store, an exhausted LOUIS peruses the make up aisle. He adds nail polish remover to his basket. Then cold cream. Another SHOPPER passes by quickly, almost afraid of his make-up streaked visage.

128 EXT. MIDTOWN STREET -- DAWN 128

RED STREAKS THE DARK BLUE SKY, although the sun has yet to rise. During the quietest hour New York offers, LOUIS -- a mere zombie -- marches towards his deserted office building.

129 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE BUILDING -- DAWN 129

LOUIS flashes his building pass to the nighttime SECURITY GUARD. The Guard double-takes when he sees Louis' face.

130 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY -- DAWN 130

LOUIS slides his building pass into the electronic reader. The office door opens. Louis goes in, closing the door behind him. We hold there just a beat, and he comes out again, clutching the giant MENS ROOM KEY.

CUT TO:

131 INT. OFFICE BATHROOM -- DAWN 131

LOUIS sits up on the counter removing toe nail polish. The sink around him is splattered with make-up mess. But his face is clean and familiar once more.

CUT TO:

132 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE OFFICE -- DAWN 132

A zombified LOUIS walks over to MARY'S CUBICLE. He removes the disheveled TEDDY from his pocket and drops it on the floor under Mary's desk.

He walks to his chair, sits, rests his head on the desk and closes his eyes.

EXTREME CLOSE UP LOUIS' FACE: The light slowly changes from sunrise red to morning orange -- INDICATING A TIME LAPSE. Finally, Louis' eyes open! We hear the sound of EMPLOYEES. Louis sits up, alert, as if nothing's wrong. He shuffles papers. GEORGE passes by first.

GEORGE
Morning, Louis.

LOUIS
Morning, George.

ANGLE ON DOOR: MARY rushes in looking preoccupied. She passes Louis without saying hello, bee-lining straight to her desk.

AT MARY'S DESK: Mary bends and finds the TEDDY on the floor. She folds her arms, thinking. For some reason, she glances over at Louis suspiciously. They stare each other down for a moment. Nothing is said. Louis finally picks up the phone to dial a client.

CUT TO:

133 EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY

133

In a Long Island cemetery, A LINE OF UPPER CRUST MOURNERS approach a casket that's about to get lowered into the ground. Each mourner clutches a single red rose, which they place on the casket lid, taking a moment for final good-byes.

HENRY waits on line, slowly approaching. Despite his Florida tan, he somehow still looks ashen. His eyes -- for the very first time -- look like those of a lost, helpless child. The flower trembles in his hand.

Henry finally steps up to the casket with his rose. He bends towards the grave. His eyes well up, struggling for meaning in all this. A single tear actually falls. He whispers, his voice breaking:

HENRY
Farewell, my Vivian... I -- I will
always be your most devoted
rosenknight.

He caresses the coffin, then offers Vivian his final rose.

DISSOLVE TO:

134 INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE -- DAY

134

GEORGE flips through some copy. LOUIS enters sheepishly, rapping softly on the door.

LOUIS
You wanted to see me, George?

GEORGE
Yes, yes. Sit down, please.

Louis sits. He's nervous, not knowing what may happen here.

LOUIS
Is something -- wrong?

GEORGE
There's something I need to talk to
you about.

Louis prepares for the hammer to fall.

LOUIS
Okay...

GEORGE
Louis, I just don't think phone
sales are really right for you.

Louis clutches onto his seat.

LOUIS
...No?

GEORGE
No. You're not the right --
personality type. As you know, our
magazine's doing very well, and the
editing staff can barely keep up
with all the unsolicited
manuscripts coming in. So, what I'd
prefer to do, is start you copy
editing. Your quiet, keen insight
is an asset here, and we should
groom you to be a writer, not a
salesman. I guess what I'm saying
is, I'm offering you a promotion.

Louis' eyes widen with disbelief. EVERYTHING FADES TO SUNNY
YELLOW...

CUT TO:

135 INT. TERRA MAGAZINE OFFICE -- DAY

135

Dazed and relieved, LOUIS softly closes George's door behind
him. All around, TERRA EMPLOYEES busily dismantle the office
Christmas decorations. Suddenly:

MARY (O.S.)
Louis? Louis I need to talk to you.

Louis turns to find a very determined MARY clutching a clear
plastic garbage bag of Christmas balls. He steps back,
terrified by what she may bring up. But her face softens.

MARY
Listen, I've been thinking.
You did me a really selfless favor,
and it was selfish of me not to
return it.

(MORE)

MARY (cont'd)
 I thought I was being honest, but
 the truth is I was just plain rude.
 So, if you still need a date for
 that wedding, I'd be happy and
 honored to fill the position.

Mary smiles sweetly. Louis is dumbstruck. He struggles to respond but can't find the words.

LOUIS
 Wow. I...Um...

To avert Mary's eyes, he glances down at the bag in her hand.

LOUIS
 ...Are you throwing those Christmas
 balls out?

MARY
Huh? Oh -- yeah. We're doing a more
 eco-friendly tree next year with
 recycled decorations -- y'know,
 crushed foil, paper chains, old
 CDs. These are so tacky anyway.

A ponderous silence follows. Louis gazes at the beautiful, shimmering balls, then up at Mary's lovely face. Finally:

LOUIS
 You know Mary, I really appreciate
 you offering to be my date. But I'm
 not sure it's the best thing for me
 anymore.

MARY
 Oh. Okay... *Really?*

LOUIS
 I think I should keep my options
 open. For some reason, I'm feeling
 more optimistic about my prospects
 today, as strange as they may seem.

Now Mary looks thoroughly confused. But for the first time, Louis is anything but. He smiles broadly -- a confident smile we've never seen before.

DISSOLVE TO:

136 EXT. HENRY'S STREET -- EARLY EVENING

136

Still wearing his funeral suit, HENRY sits on the step of his building, eating Fiddle-Faddle popcorn out of a bag. A DOZEN PIGEONS flutter around him, devouring his sloppy seconds.

Henry looks far off and emotionally raw.

Suddenly LOUIS turns the corner carrying the garbage bag of Christmas balls. He cautiously approaches. The birds flutter away momentarily, but immediately return.

LOUIS
Hello, Henry.

Henry barely looks up. Instead he just starts talking.

HENRY
(indicating the birds)
Look at them. They strut around like they own the whole city, and yet they're totally dependent. Not a pot to piss in.

LOUIS
They do look awfully proud, with their big, puffed-out chests.

A silent beat passes. Then:

LOUIS
Henry, I want to apologize for last night.

HENRY
You're always apologizing. Don't be so obsequious.

LOUIS
But it's your apartment. They're your rules. I broke them.

HENRY
Yes, that's all true. But it's also true that I'm fond of you.

Louis' eyes widen. This is the biggest admission of friendship he's ever received from Henry.

LOUIS
Does that mean you're not kicking me out for good?

HENRY
Don't be ridiculous. I'm not as old fashioned as you think.

LOUIS
You kicked Bellman out for less.

HENRY
I know. But there's a difference: it would be sad to lose you.

Suddenly feeling comfortable enough, Louis sits at Henry's side. He hands Henry the bag of balls. Henry smiles, then offers Louis some popcorn, which he accepts.

HENRY

But you really do need help, you know. You might try going to the American Legion for counseling. They'll get you thinking right.

LOUIS

Actually, what I've decided to do is devote more time to writing -- professionally and personally. I think it may be therapeutic.

HENRY

It helps. But I wouldn't rule out psychoanalysis, either.

LOUIS

Well, I've thought about that, too.

HENRY

I went once myself. The doctor said "there's nothing I can do for you."

SUDDENLY GERSHON STEPS OUT TO THE STOOP FROM INSIDE.

Louis and Henry look up -- he's gotten a haircut! Even more shocking, he totally shaved his beard! For the very first time, Gershon looks clean cut.

HENRY

Gershon! My God! You look practically middle class!

LOUIS

Hey. You do look great, Gershon.

GERSHON

Thank you. I -- I did it for the wedding.

But Gershon doesn't look at all happy. In fact, he looks positively distraught. Then he extends a large manila envelope towards Henry. He's so nervous that the envelope trembles and shakes. Henry accepts it.

HENRY

What is this?

ANGLE ON THE MANILA ENVELOPE: Henry opens it, then slides out a manuscript. He flips it over to read the cover: *Henry And Mary Are Always Late*.

Henry stands.

HENRY
My play... You, Gershon?

Tears stream down Gershon's face.

GERSHON
I was angry. I was hurt. I wanted
to hurt you back. But I'm sorry,
Henry. It was wrong of me, and I
deeply regret it. Can you find it
in your heart to forgive me?

Henry lays both hands on Gershon's shoulders, preacher-like.
He looks deep into his eyes.

HENRY
I forgive you, Gershon. But you
mustn't sin anymore. No sins
against your fellow man, no sin
against your body. Follow the
bible. Work! Work on your soul! And
pray for enlightenment. Maybe Louis
and I will get some too, being that
we're all in the same damn
building.

Henry smiles. Relieved, Gershon smiles, too. Louis shakes his
head, laughing, then eagerly grabs the play.

DISSOLVE TO:

137 INT. CHURCH -- DAY

137

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON A PREACHER:

PREACHER
By the power vested in me by The
Almighty God, I now pronounce you
man and wife!

We pull out to reveal OTTO BELLMAN and his bride -- VIVIAN
CUDLIP'S GRANDDAUGHTER -- standing before the upscale
congregation. But this blushing young bride is an easy fifty.

PREACHER (CONT'D)
May your days be good and long upon
this earth. You may now kiss the
bride.

BELLMAN lifts her veil and kisses her.

ANGLE ON A PEW: HENRY stands with LOUIS on his right and
GERSHON on his left. Just behind them is LAGERFELD and ARESH.

ANGLE ON MAID-OF-HONOR: An attractive woman, though the same age as the bride. She offers a little wave to Henry.

BACK TO HENRY: He smiles and waves back, then leans down to Louis, whispering.

HENRY
Vivian's niece.

LOUIS
Henry! She's a little old for me,
don't you think?

HENRY
The woman's barely fifty!

Lagerfeld pushes him from behind.

LAGERFELD
Henry! Shush!

Henry straightens up, but winks to his comrade.

CUT TO:

138 EXT. PARK AVENUE CHURCH -- DAY

138

HENRY, LOUIS, GERSHON, LAGERFELD, ARESH and THE REST OF THE WEDDING PARTY stand on the steps, waiting for the bride and groom to emerge.

Henry leans over to Louis and Gershon:

HENRY
I've been thinking. When I'm
finished teaching in August, the
three of us should go to Russia.
Three can operate very well over
there. We really won't need much.
After all, a bottle of champagne
only costs four dollars on The
Black Sea...

Louis and Gershon gaze at each other, shrug, then nod in agreement.

ANGLE ON THE MAID OF HONOR (Vivian's niece): She smiles coyly at Louis, then hands him a bag of rice. He accepts it graciously, smiling back at her. SUDDENLY, BELLMAN and CUDLIP'S GRANDDAUGHTER hop down the steps filled with glee. Everyone tosses rice their way.

ENGLISH NARRATOR (V.O.)

*And as the Young Gentleman threw
rice with the rest, he finally
understood those words of his dear
and essential friend, Henry
Harrison, "So there we are. Where
are we?"*

ANGLE ON CHURCH ROOF: A slow motion shot follows a swarm of PIGEONS fluttering down from the steep church roof to the SIDEWALK, where they squeeze and peck together in a huddle, each one more desperate than the next to get some of that free rice.

FADE OUT: