

The Last Resort

By

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Cast of Characters

Alex Jamison - (30-45) An engineer; successful, self-centered and cocky. In his own mind he's God's gift to women.

Bellhop - (20's) An obnoxious, smart-mouth resort employee.

Lynn Morrison - (25-35) Lynn is attractive, bright, sensitive, but unsure of herself when it comes to relationships. She is the current "other woman" in Alex's life.

Mike Scott - (45+) A personable middle-aged man who makes a good living writing gothic paperbacks under the pen name, Mildred Hearn. He's intelligent, has a quick wit, and a good sense of humor. (*When the play was written, this was the dinner theatre "star" role.*)

Cynthia Jamison - (28-40) Alex's wife. A very sweet, if not overly attractive or bright woman--she could stand to lose a few pounds and get a nose job. She is totally devoted to her husband and her children, and is somewhat naive.

Evelyn Scott - (40+) Mike's wife. A successful clinical psychologist. Smart, attractive; a good match for Mike.

The Setting

The Last Resort takes place in the living/dining room of a one bedroom suite in a comfortable but not luxurious ski resort motel somewhere outside Denver. Stage right is the entrance to the suite, which comes in from an exterior walkway. Upstage of the front door is a rack for holding skis, and downstage of the door is a stool or chair for sitting to take off boots. Stage left is the door to the bedroom. Upstage is a swinging door that goes to a kitchen. There is a sitting area with a sofa bed and one or two overstuffed chairs stage right. An afghan is laying over the back of the sofa. Stage left there is a dinette; and further left, against the wall is a sideboard of some kind that functions as a bar. Against the upstage wall, approximately centerstage, there is a writing desk with a lamp and the telephone. The desk has a couple of drawers at least. Some inexpensive framed prints are on the walls.

The Last Resort is written so that set, costumes, and props can all be effectively produced on a limited budget.

Author's Note: *The Last Resort* has a running time of approximately ninety-five (95) minutes, plus intermission(s). It is structured to be performed in either two acts (50-45 minutes) or three acts (35-30-30 minutes), as desired by the theatre.

ACT I, Scene 1

(It is Friday evening, around six-thirty. When the lights come up, no one is on stage. **ALEX JAMISON enters** from the bedroom, singing to himself. He wears jeans, cowboy boots, and a short bathrobe. he has just finished shaving and is wiping the last of the shaving cream from his face. He opens a gift box on the sofa and pulls out a classy black lace peignoir to admire it. Note: It is important that the peignoir—gown and wrap—be sexy in a classy way, not pornographic. He lays out the gown on the sofa, as if Lynn were in it, waiting there for him, and then leans over the back of the sofa, "talking to her".)

ALEX

(He growls sexily.)

A whole weekend. No interruptions, no worries, no problems. Just me and you and the Rocky Mountains.

(The telephone rings.)

Ah, game time.

(He answers it, in his best Cary Grant voice.)

Hello gorgeous.

(Embarrassed)

...Oh, hi Ralph. Thought you were Lynn. ...No, nothing's wrong. Her bus is running late and I left a message for her to call me. ...It's great. fifteen inches of fresh powder, if we ever get around to skiing. How's Salt Lake?

(The door buzzer sounds.)

BELLHOP

(Offstage) Room Service.

ALEX

Come on in. It's open.

(The **BELLHOP enters** with a sack containing bottles.)

BELLHOP

You call in an order to the liquor store?

ALEX

Just a sec, Ralph. (To the Bellhop) Right. Put it over there. Got everything?

BELLHOP

(Crossing to the dinette.)

They pack it. I deliver. Here's the bill.

(Handing him a bill as he passes.)

ALEX
(Into the phone.) No, it's not her. Just a bellhop.

BELLHOP
Gee, thanks. Just a bellhop. Just a bellhop!

ALEX
(Trying to keep up with both conversations.)
Huh?

BELLHOP
You got any idea what it's like, to be "just a bellhop?" Huh, do you?

ALEX
(Into the phone.) What was that, Ralph?

BELLHOP
To have to put up with every obnoxious jerk and rude SOB that comes along. Just because he's got the bucks and you need 'em. Suitcases that feel like they're loaded with rocks.

ALEX
(Into the phone.) You what?

BELLHOP
The cute little kids with snowballs that are loaded with rocks. And for what? Tips!

ALEX
Hey look, will ya'? I'm on the phone.

BELLHOP
Did you know that skiers are some of the worst tippers in the world?

ALEX
Huh?

BELLHOP
I did a paper on it. I go to college. Gettin' a degree in business administration.

ALEX
(Into the phone.) Listen, hold on a minute, while I get rid of this guy.

(He puts the phone down and moves to do a quick check on the order of bar stock.)

BELLHOP

Last quarter I did a paper on the psychology of tipping. Figured I might learn something that'd help me out around here. Did you know that...

ALEX

Looks like it's all here.

(He pulls a nice, expensive pen from the pocket of his coat, which is over one of the dinette chairs and signs the check.)

There you are.

(He hands the bill to the bellhop, who looks at it and then back to Alex.)

Oh yeah, I forgot.

BELLHOP

That happens thirty-six percent of the time.

(Alex places the pen down on the table, turns and reaches for his wallet in his coat pocket.)

Need your room number on this. I'll fix it.

(The bellhop picks up the pen, makes a note on the bill, admires the pen, and puts it in his pocket.)

ALEX

(Hands him five bucks then puts the wallet in his pocket.)

Here you go.

BELLHOP

Above average. You're all right, Mister.

(He starts out, but notices the negligee.)

Wow! Nice. Who does this belong to?

ALEX

It's mine. Listen, I'm on the phone. Long distance. Okay?

BELLHOP

Sure, no problem.

(He goes to the door and opens it, then turns back.)

Hey, Mister, does it fit?

(He smirks, and exits. Alex grabs the phone to continue his conversation. As he talks, he puts the negligee back into the box, then crosses to the bar to unload the sack. It contains a bottle of Chivas, a bottle of tequila, a bottle of vodka, a bottle of Margarita mix and a bottle of bloody Mary mix. He puts everything on the bar and discards the sack.)

ALEX

Hello, Ralph? Still there? ...Sorry 'bout that. ...Yes, I know what long distance costs. Look, I'll pay for the phone call, okay? ...Right. If there are any calls for Ralph Hunsdorfer, like your wife for instance, I tell her you're out, I call you, you call her back. ...If my wife calls? She won't. She doesn't know where you and I are staying. ...If she did? Guess I'd go find a cliff and jump. ...Hold it. I need that number.

(He looks for his pen. He can't find it, and then realizes where it went.)

Damn! That jerk swiped my pen. Let me find something to write with.

(Looking around, in drawers, wherever.)

...Lynn? Met her a couple of months ago. She works in the bookstore in the building where my office is. This weekend, we're finally going to...get acquainted. She's fantastic. Beautiful, so sexy I can hardly stand it, a great sense of humor...

(The front door opens and **LYNN MORRISON enters**, loaded down with luggage, and very upset.)

LYNN

Where the hell were you?

ALEX

Lynn! What are you doing here?

LYNN

Who were you expecting? Your wife?!

ALEX

But I...

LYNN

I thought we had a date! Guess I made a mistake. Good-bye!
(She turns and starts to go.)

ALEX

Ralph, hang on.

(Alex drops the receiver on the desk and rushes after Lynn.)

Lynn! Lynn!

(He catches her just outside the doorway.)

LYNN

(Offstage) Leave me alone! Let me go!

BELLHOP

(Offstage, from a distance.)

Hey, Lady, is anything wrong?

ALEX

(Offstage) No! Everything is fine! I'm helping her with her luggage.

(To Lynn.)

Will you please get back in the room before that guy calls the police?

(Lynn pauses a second, then drops her luggage and enters the room. Alex appears in the doorway.)

Now if you'll just cool it, I'll get your luggage and we'll get this mess straightened out.

(He moves out onto the landing to gather her bags.)

LYNN

Cool it? All right I'll cool it!

(She slams the door and locks it.)

ALEX

(We hear Alex try the door. Then, from offstage.)

Lynn, open the door. ...Lynn. ...Lynn! Open the damn door! It's cold out here!

LYNN

They keep it that way so the snow won't melt.

(She crosses to the telephone.)

ALEX

(Offstage) Lynn, be reasonable. Come on. Let me in.

LYNN

(Picking up the receiver.)

Hello? I'm sorry, but Alex stepped out for a minute and I need the phone. Bye.

(She disconnects Ralph and dials the front desk.)

ALEX

(Offstage, sweetly) Baby, will you please open the door?

(A pause, then not so sweetly.)

Open the door! Now!

LYNN

Hello, operator, I'd like the number for the bus station.

ALEX

(Offstage) Dammit, open the door!

BELLHOP

(Offstage) What's all the racket, Mister?

ALEX

(Offstage) I, uh, got locked out, "accidentally". Was trying to get my...wife's attention, so she'd let me in.

BELLHOP

(Offstage) Here, I'll get it.

(He opens the door with a passkey.)

ALEX

(Entering with the luggage.)

Thanks

(He puts the luggage down, his back to the bellhop who stands in the doorway, waiting for a tip.)

That was a stupid thing to do.

(He turns to shut the door, sees the bellhop, and reaches for his wallet. Meanwhile the operator gives Lynn the number.)

BELLHOP

Hey, Mister...

ALEX

(Digging for a tip.)

Huh?

BELLHOP

I bet that black thing would look better on her.

ALEX

That's the general idea.

(Handing him a buck.)

Here.

BELLHOP

Enjoy.

(He exits.)

LYNN

(Into the phone.) Thank you.

(She disconnects and dials again.)

ALEX

Who are you calling? My God! Ralph! What happened to Ralph?

LYNN

Who?

ALEX

They guy on the phone. He was giving me a very important phone number.

LYNN

Oh, I cut him off. You'll have to call him back.

ALEX
That's the number he was giving me!

LYNN
(Into phone.) Hello? ...Yes, when does the next bus leaves for Denver?

ALEX
What?!

LYNN
Thank you.

ALEX
Angel, will you please tell me what's wrong?

LYNN
Nothing. I need a favor.

ALEX
Of course, Baby. Anything.

LYNN
(Crossing past him to her luggage.)
I need a ride to the bus station.
(She picks up her luggage.)

ALEX
(Moving past her to block the door.)
Lynn, will you please listen...

LYNN
If you don't give me a ride, I'll hitch-hike. That's how I got here.

ALEX
You hitch-hiked?!

LYNN
On a snow plow.

ALEX
You rode from Denver on a snow plow?

LYNN
From the bus station, idiot!

ALEX
But you were supposed to call me!

(Lynn gives up on trying to get past Alex. She drops her luggage, the bigger piece hitting Alex's foot. Then she moves back into the room.)

LYNN

Of course. Why didn't I think of that? "Hello? I know my...boyfriend is staying at your establishment. Unfortunately I don't know how he registered, to keep his wife from finding him, but he's six foot tall and has a mustache. Would you connect me please?"

ALEX

Baby, didn't you get my message?

LYNN

Oh, I got the message, all right. "Dear Lynn: Drop dead. Love, Alex."

ALEX

No. I left a message at the bus station telling you I registered as Ralph Hunsdorfer, and was in room three-twelve. You were supposed to call me to come pick you up. Sweetheart, could we please sit down and straighten this mess out?

LYNN

...All right.

(Alex hurriedly helps her out of her coat.)

But make it fast. My bus leaves in seventeen minutes.

ALEX

If you still want to go after we've talked, I'll drive you back to Denver. Okay?

LYNN

It's your gas.

(She sits on the sofa.)

ALEX

Great. Now, just relax, and we'll get this little misunderstanding all cleared up. How about a drink?

LYNN

Sounds good. A quick one, "for the road", as they say.

ALEX

(Crossing quickly to the bar supplies.)

Margarita on the rocks, right?

LYNN

As always, with lots of salt.

ALEX
(Realizing he's in trouble again.)

...Uh...salt.

LYNN
You do have salt, don't you?

ALEX
Well...

LYNN
(Jumping up, furious again.)
You came up her without salt?!

ALEX
I haven't stocked the kitchen yet. I figured we'd want to do that together.
(Moving to the phone.)
I'll call room service. They'll bring some up.

LYNN
You don't pick me up at the bus station! You don't get salt for my margaritas...

ALEX
(Into the phone) Room service. Now!

LYNN
You don't give a damn about me, do you?!
(Retrieving her coat; on her way out again.)

ALEX
(Grabbing the coat too; a tug of war.)
How can you say that? I care about you very much.
(Into the phone.)
No, not you, dammit! This is room three-twelve. I need some salt. ...No, just salt.
...I don't care how much. A cup, a pound, whatever's convenient. ...I realize it's
not on the menu. ...I don't care how much extra it'll cost! I need salt and I need it
now!

(He slams the receiver down, then sweetly.)
They'll be right up with it.
(Lynn turns away, giving him the silent treatment.)
Can I mix you something else while we wait?

(No response. He tries to put his arms around her,
comforting her. She pulls away.)
No. I tell you what. I'll mix the margaritas and when the salt gets here, it'll be
ready to pour. Okay...

(Lynn doesn't respond. Alex tries once again to put his arms around her. This is about as gentle and caring as he is capable of being. It finally works, and Lynn turns into the embrace. She is close to tears.)

LYNN

You don't know what I went through.

ALEX

It's okay.

LYNN

The trip was awful. The bus was full of nothing but teenagers. There was a snow slide. We had to sit there for over an hour. It was horrible.

ALEX

That's all over now.

(He leads her to the sofa and seats her.)

LYNN

I got here and you weren't there, and I couldn't find you.

ALEX

But you're here now. That's what matters. That's all you have to think about.
(Picking up the gift box.)

Look what I got for you.

LYNN

Whatever it is, I bet the guy on the snow plow made a better offer.

ALEX

Go on, open it.

(He sits down beside her as she opens the box.)

Tell me, how did you find me?

LYNN

I told them that I'd side-swiped a Mercedes in the parking lot, and gave them your license number.

(She pulls out the negligee part of the peignoir.)

ALEX

You like it?

LYNN

It's beautiful.

(The door buzzer sounds.)

BELLHOP

(Offstage) Room service.

ALEX

That'll be the salt. Go put on your what-ya-ma-thing.

(Pointing toward a door.)

That's the bedroom.

(Alex gives her a quick kiss. She exits to the bedroom, and he crosses toward the door.)

I'll get your margarita ready, with lots of salt.

(He opens the door. The bellhop is standing there with a bottle of champagne in an ice bucket and two champagne flutes on the tray.)

Where's the salt?

BELLHOP

With champagne? Tequila, yeah, but champagne? Bletch!

ALEX

But I didn't order champagne. I ordered salt!

BELLHOP

(Crossing past him to place the tray on the table.)

I don't know nothing about no salt. They just gave me this and said it was for three-twelve. Oh, and there was this note.

(He pulls a note out of his pocket. Alex reaches for it, but the Bellhop gestures with his other hand for a tip. Alex pulls some coins out of his pocket, puts them in the Bellhop's hand, and grabs the note. The bellhop looks at the coins.)

Your average is dropping, Mister. First time I came up here, you gave me five bucks.

ALEX

And you ripped off my pen.

BELLHOP

Was that yours? When I realized I had it, I couldn't remember where I got it. So naturally I turned it in down at lost and found.

ALEX

Sure you did.

BELLHOP

No problem. I'll go get it right now.

ALEX

Fine. And would you check on our order of salt?

BELLHOP

Salt?

ALEX

You know. It's white and grainy; like snow, but warmer.

BELLHOP

...Right. Whatever.

(He exits.)

ALEX

(Taking a deep breath; shrugging off the irritation.)

About through in there?

LYNN

(Offstage) Almost. Was that the salt?

ALEX

No. A bottle of champagne.

(Looking at the note.)

Compliments of the guy you hung up on. The note says, "Sounds like you might need this. Enjoy, Ralph." And it's got his phone number on it.

(To himself.)

"P.S. you owe me thirty-eight-fifty for the phone call."

(Alex starts to put the note on the tray, then decides to put it in his robe pocket for safekeeping. He starts to open the champagne.)

LYNN

(Offstage) Who is this Ralph person?

ALEX

Ralph Hunsdorfer. One of our clients. He and I set up this little "business trip" together.

LYNN

(Offstage) Where's he?

ALEX

Some resort in Utah, cheating on his wife.

LYNN

(Offstage) Him there, you here...

ALEX

(Pouring two glasses of champagne.)

We weren't going to get into that, remember?

LYNN

(Offstage) Sorry.

(She enters, wearing the peignoir. A knockout.)

Subject's changed. Well...?

ALEX

Wow!

LYNN

That good, huh?

ALEX

I love the way it looks. Come here.

(She crosses into his arms for an embrace.)

It feels even better.

LYNN

Where's my champagne?

ALEX

Coming up...

(He grabs the glasses and hands her one.)

A toast. To an exciting and memorable weekend.

(They toast, then go into a long kiss, during which Alex manages to get rid of the glasses, and with both hands free, things begin to warm up a bit. Meanwhile the front door opens and **MIKE SCOTT enters quietly**, carrying an overnight bag and a briefcase. He sees them, and watches silently for a moment.)

MIKE

(Controlling a chuckle.) Excuse me.

ALEX

What the...?

(Alex and Lynn jump apart. Lynn grabs Alex's coat from the back of the dinette chair and pulls it around her shoulders, covering herself as much as possible. Alex moves to confront Mike.)

MIKE

Sorry to interrupt.

ALEX
Who the hell are you?

MIKE
The name's Mike. Mike Scott. I'm your roommate.
(Extending hand to shake.)

ALEX
Roommate?! What do you mean, you're our "roommate"?

MIKE
You're the Hunsdorfers, right?

ALEX
Er, yeah...sure.

MIKE
They told me downstairs that you'd be sharking the suite with us till Monday.

LYNN
"Us"?

MIKE
Evelyn, my wife, is joining us later.

ALEX
But there's only one bedroom.

MIKE
Right. You're on the sofa bed here.

ALEX
Sofa bed?!

MIKE
Yes. He said there are extra blankets and pillows in the bedroom closet.

ALEX
He did, did he? He who?

MIKE
The clerk down at the desk.

ALEX
I think I better have a little talk with that guy.
(Grabbing the phone; dialing the desk)

MIKE

(Hanging up his coat) Didn't you know you'd be sharing this place?

LYNN

No, we didn't.

ALEX

(Into the phone) Hello. Get me the manager.

MIKE

That's odd. When I made our reservations they emphasized they had this option during the heavy season. Keeps costs down, and probably makes them a lot more money.

ALEX

Hello, are you the manager? ...Are you running some kind of concentration camp here, or what? ...What I mean is, what's the idea of putting somebody else in my room?! ...I most certainly did not say it would be all right! ...My name is Alex Jamison, and I'm in three-twelve.

(Lynn and Mike both notice the slip. They make eye contact. Lynn tries to get Alex's attention to remind him. Mike pulls out a notepad and pen and begins to make a few notes.)

Okay, pull up your damn record, but hurry up!

(To the others)

He's got to pull up the file. Probably leave me holding till hell...

(Back into the phone)

Hello? ...Yes, I'm still here. What do you mean there's no Alex Jamison in three-twelve? I most certainly...

(He remembers)

Oh, yeah, that's right. I'm Hunsdorfer. My secretary made the reservations last week. ...Yes, I'm sure my name is Hunsdorfer. ...Ralph Hunsdorfer! ...She did what?!

(To Lynn)

I'll murder her.

(Back to the phone)

Look, she made a mistake. I've got to have my own room. ...Well, what about another hotel?! ...Okay, listen—don't move. I'm coming down there and we'll straighten this out, one way or another.

(He hangs up.)

MIKE

No luck, Ralph? Or was that Alex?

ALEX

Say, uh, Mike—about the Hunsdorfer bit. It's for...for business reasons. We're Alex and Lynn Jamison

MIKE
Whatever you say.

ALEX
I've got to get dressed.
(He exits to the bedroom.)

LYNN
I'll change and go with you.

ALEX
(Offstage) No need. I can take care of it.

LYNN
But...

ALEX
(Offstage) Besides, I may have to bounce that jerk off a few walls, and I wouldn't want you involved.

MIKE
(Talking to himself while making another note.)
Macho adolescence.

LYNN
What?

MIKE
I was just observing how mature and considerate Ralph...uh, Alex is.

LYNN
Oh.

ALEX
(Returning, sans robe and wearing a sweater.)
Have another glass of champagne. I'll be right back.

LYNN
But I...

ALEX
I'll need my coat.
(He takes his coat from her shoulders, heading for the door.)

LYNN
Alex!
(She tries to adjust the peignoir to be less revealing.)

ALEX

If that guy can't come up with another room, he'd better have his insurance paid up. Oh, uh, Mike...

(Indicating the bar setup, in front of which Lynn happens to be standing.)

Help yourself.

MIKE

(Looking at Lynn)

That's very generous... Oh, you mean a drink. I'll do that. Thanks.

ALEX

Be right back.

(He exits. There is an awkward pause.)

LYNN

(Moving to the dinette and sitting)

Alex will be right back.

MIKE

(To himself, almost) That's too bad.

LYNN

What?!

MIKE

Nothing. Just mumbling. You two been here long?

LYNN

He came up earlier. I just arrived.

MIKE

You didn't drive up together?

LYNN

No, I came by bus. Alex thought it best if we...

(Deciding not to complete that explanation.)

Actually, I've only been here a few minutes.

MIKE

Just long enough to slip into something more comfortable?

LYNN

...Yes.

MIKE

(Moving to the bar) I think I'll make myself that drink.

LYNN

Please do. I think everything's there.

MIKE

(At the bar, but focused on Lynn, who has her back to him.)

Oh, it's all there, all right.

(Turning to the bar)

Chivas. Alex has good tastes.

(Glancing over his shoulder at Lynn again)

Very good tastes.

(Mixing himself a drink)

You and Old Alex get up here often?

LYNN

No. He can't get away very often... From his work, I mean.

MIKE

What kind of work does he do?

LYNN

He's a construction engineer.

MIKE

Good field.

LYNN

What about you? Up here for a skiing vacation with your wife?

MIKE

Actually it's more of a research expedition.

LYNN

What kind of research?

MIKE

(He sips his drink, then moves to pour Lynn a refill on her champagne. A bit tongue-in-cheek)

I'm studying the sexual habits and preferences of ski enthusiasts.

LYNN

Oh, really? Chasing ski bunnies? At your age?

MIKE

Not chasing. But if I happened to stumble over a beautiful young woman wearing a seductive peignoir... It wouldn't be polite not to show a little interest, now would it?

LYNN

(Rising and crossing away from him. Grabbing the afghan from the back of the sofa and wrapping it around herself.)

Consider your interest noted, and cancel further research in the immediate area. I have no intention of being one of your “experiments.” Tell me, how does your wife feel about your little hobby?

MIKE

Evelyn and I have a very understanding relationship.

LYNN

Oh? And what does she do?

MIKE

I guess you might say that she’s sort of a professional Peeping Tom.

LYNN

Right, and I’m a sumo wrestler.

MIKE

No, honestly. She’s a clinical psychologist, at the Institute for Rehabilitation of Dysfunctional Relationships. She works with...physically dysfunctional couples.

LYNN

(Not believing this) Must be fascinating.

MIKE

She seems to enjoy it.

LYNN

With both of you involved in...those fields, your own...relationship must be incredible.

MIKE

Naturally. However, my work isn’t quite a scientifically precise as hers. It’s more...layman’s work.

LYNN

Keep playing your little word games, Mister, and my blanket and I are going to go fine Alex.

MIKE

(Chuckling) Sorry. It’s a habit—the word games I mean. I’m a writer. The research is background material for my next book.

LYNN

(Not believing this either) What do you write?

MIKE

Garbage. Gothic romances mostly.

LYNN

Mike Scott. I've never heard of a Mike Scott, and I work at a bookstore.

MIKE

Ever hear of Mildred Hearn?

LYNN

Oh, yeah. I've read some of her books.

MIKE

I'm her. Or should I say she's me. Anyway, how do you like our books?

LYNN

They're not bad, for Gothics. But I'm still not sure I believe you.

MIKE

Why not? What else would I be? A private detective?

LYNN

(Thrown by that possibility)

No. Of course not. Why should you be a private detective?

MIKE

I don't know. Why should I be a private detective.

LYNN

You shouldn't! I mean, there's absolutely no reason for you to be a private detective. It's just that this is such an awkward situation.

MIKE

Affairs with married men often are.

LYNN

What?!

MIKE

Look, I'm not disapproving of what you're doing. It's none of my business. But you're handling it so badly.

LYNN

Mr. Scott, I don't know what the hell you're talking about.

MIKE

Oh, come on. Coming up separately? The Hunsdorfer alias, for..."business reasons?" Monkey business reasons.

LYNN

But...

MIKE

No wedding rings.

LYNN

Lots of people don't wear wedding rings.

MIKE

Lots of people do.

LYNN

What makes you so sure he's married?

MIKE

If neither of you were married, there'd be no need to hide; I mean who'd care?

(The door buzzer sounds.)

BELLHOP

(Offstage) Room service.

LYNN

(Relieved by the interruption; moving to the door.)

That'll be the salt.

MIKE

Salt?

LYNN

For Margaritas. Alex forgot it so he ordered some from room service.

(Lynn opens the door and the bellhop enters, carrying a white plastic five gallon bucket.)

BELLHOP

Where do you want it?

LYNN

What?

BELLHOP

The salt.

LYNN

Salt?! That? I only wanted enough for my Margarita.

BELLHOP

The guy on the phone said any convenient size. This is how the kitchen gets it, so this is the convenient size. Forty pounds.

LYNN

But...

BELLHOP

Listen, Lady, this thing is heavy.

(He moves past her, crossing to the dinette and placing the bucket in one of the chairs.)

The guy said all he wanted was salt. This is the only way the kitchen knew how to charge for it. Here's the bill. Seventy-four-ninety-five, plus tax and fifteen percent gratuity.

LYNN

But I don't want that much salt.

BELLHOP

Well, somebody should have decided that before, because, now you got it.

MIKE

(Stepping in) No, she hasn't. She doesn't need it. She only needs a cup full. Lynn, hand me a glass.

(While Lynn gets a glass from the bar, Mike pulls the lid off the bucket. He takes the glass and dips out a glass of salt.)

That should be plenty.

BELLHOP

Hey, who are you? What happened to the other guy?

MIKE

He had to take care of something.

(Placing the glass on the table, Mike pulls out a money clip and peels off five bucks.)

Here's five bucks. Now take your salt, your bill and your gratuity, and get the hell out of here.

(He crosses to open the door for the bellhop.)

BELLHOP

(Putting the lid back on the salt and heading out—stopping just at the doorway.)

Mister, if I leave here with this salt, I'm going straight to the manager.

MIKE

You do that. I'm sure he can tell you where to put it.

(Mike shuts the door in the bellhop's face.)

LYNN

...Thanks.

MIKE

My pleasure. Now, where were we? ...Listen—we may be seeing a lot of each other this weekend. Truce?

LYNN

...Okay.

MIKE

Good. If you'll sit down, I'll prove to you that I am Mildred Hearn.

(She sits on the sofa. Mike grabs his briefcase and joins her.

He opens the briefcase and pulls out a contract.)

Here you go. The royalty contract on my newest book. See—Mildred Hearn—registered pen name of Mike Scott. Feel better?

LYNN

You're a good man, Mildred Hearn.

MIKE

How about a copy of my latest effort? "Escape to Woodburn Manor." I just happen to have a few copies with me.

LYNN

I'd love one.

MIKE

Autographed?

LYNN

Of course.

MIKE

Then I'll need your real name.

LYNN

...It's Morrison. Lynn Morrison.

MIKE

That's a lot nicer than Hunsdorfer.

LYNN

It is, isn't it?

MIKE

(Saying it as he writes the autograph.)

"To Lynn Morrison, a lovely young woman who will someday discover just how interesting and exciting she really is."

LYNN

Can you always read a person's insecurities so well?

MIKE

It's how I make my living.

(He gives her the book.)

Now, in payment for that grand masterpiece of the grocery store checkout stand, I'll take one kiss, right there.

(He indicates his cheek. A pause. Then Lynn smiles and leans over and kisses Mike on the cheek. It's very innocent, and, of course, Alex chooses that moment to storm in.)

ALEX

That jerk! He... What the hell is going on here?!

(Mike rises and moves away.)

MIKE

I gave her an autographed copy of my new book, and she gave me a thank-you kiss. A harmless one.

LYNN

(Opening the book to read the autograph.)

"To Lynn...Jamison. All the luck in the world to you and your loving husband, Alex.

(Closing the book quickly.)

Isn't that nice.

ALEX

...Yeah.

(He takes off his coat, studying Mike and Lynn—still trying to decide what was actually going on when he came in.

MIKE

What'd you find out?

ALEX

The nearest available room is back in Denver.

MIKE

Ah, what a shame. Looks like you're stuck with me.

ALEX

Yeah. ...Hey, Mike, I've got an idea. Why don't we trade rooms? I mean, since there's only one of you, and there are two of us, and...well, you understand, don't you, Mike?

MIKE

(Collecting his suitcase and briefcase.)

I do. And I'd like to accommodate you. But I'm up here to work and I'll need the bedroom to have some privacy for my writing.

ALEX

For your writing? Well, we need some privacy too, dammit!

LYNN

Alex, calm down.

MIKE

(Crossing to the bedroom door.)

Don't worry. I won't be here much. And when I am, I'll stay in my room. You won't even know I'm around.

(He exits to the bedroom.)

ALEX

I'll know. Believe me, I'll know. (To Lynn) Do something!

LYNN

For instance?

ALEX

You two seem to hit it off. Talk him into giving us the bedroom.

LYNN

We'll just have to make the best of it. Your secretary blew it. It's not Mike's fault.

ALEX

(Loudly) Well it's not my fault either, dammit!

LYNN

Don't yell at me, Alex Jamison. I'm not your wife.

(Moving to the table for more champagne.)

ALEX

That's right! You're not my wife, and that's the reason...

(He stops because Mike has just entered with their luggage;
with Alex's robe draped over his suitcase.)

MIKE

Sorry to interrupt. Where should I put your things?

ALEX

Uh...anywhere.

MIKE

How about right here?

(He puts them down.)

LYNN

Thanks, Mike.

MIKE

I'd better grab something to eat before the restaurant closes. See you later.

LYNN

Bon appétit.

MIKE

Merci, ma Cheri, et aurevoir.

(Mike exits.)

ALEX

(Mutilating the French) Bon appétit! Aurevoir! He wrecks our entire weekend
and all you can say is bon appétit?

LYNN

Calm down. There's nothing we can do about it tonight. And the slopes are going
to be fantastic tomorrow.

ALEX

At least we can still ski. He can't mess that up.

LYNN

(Taking off the afghan. Seductive)

...He'll probably be gone for hours.

ALEX

(Picking up on her idea immediately.)

Yeah, he probably will, won't he? Let's see what kind of bed this thing is.

(He removes the sofa cushions—tossing them anywhere—and tries to open the sofa bed. It won't budge.)

Great. The damn thing's busted.

(He grabs the phone.)

Let's see what our happy host has to say about this. Hello, get me the bozo that calls himself the manager of this "resort."

(Alex has his back to Lynn and the sofa bed. She tries the sofa bed and opens it easily. It is already made up.)

LYNN

Alex, hang up.

ALEX

Hello? ...Yeah, if you're the manager, you're the one I want to talk to.

LYNN

Alex...

ALEX

This is...

LYNN

Alex, hang up!

ALEX

(Turning to see the open sofa bed. Into the phone...)

...somebody who wanted to tell you what a fantastic time we're having here this weekend. Just wanted to say thanks to you personally. So...thanks.

(He hangs up.)

LYNN

Let's see; he said the pillows were in the bedroom closet.

(She exits to the bedroom. Offstage)

Ah, here we are.

ALEX

(Climbing in, trying out the sofa bed.)

Hey, this isn't that bed. It's not posturepedic, but...

LYNN

(Returning with pillows. She throws him one.)

Here.

ALEX

Let's see if it will hold two.

(She gets into bed. They kiss. Alex is startled by something.)

What was that?

(He jumps up and crosses to the door.)

LYNN

What?

ALEX

I thought I heard a key in the door.

(He jerks the door open and looks outside.)

LYNN

I didn't hear anything. Be reasonable. He just left for dinner. He'll be gone for at least an hour.

ALEX

I think we ought to wait till he comes back, so we can lock him in his room.

LYNN

(Exasperated, but making the best of it.)

In that case, I'll just curl up with Mike's book.

(She picks up the book.)

ALEX

Now, Baby, don't get upset.

LYNN

Who's upset? It's no big deal.

ALEX

The hell it's not! I take a chance on wrecking my marriage; spend a fortune on half a room; and you're spending the night curled up with another man's book!

LYNN

(Sweetly—sarcastic as hell)

Look on the bright side. Like you said, we can always...ski.

(Blackout)

End of Act I, Scene 1

(It is later—much later—Friday night. When the lights come up Lynn is onstage alone, curled up in the lounge chair, reading “Escape to Woodburn Manor.” She’s chuckling a good bit, obviously enjoying the book, which she has almost finished. She reads something and laughs out loud.)

LYNN

How does he get away with this stuff?

(She begins to read, pushing the absurdity and the melodrama of what she’s reading to the max.)

“It wasn’t true. It couldn’t be. There was no way that she could bring herself to accept the possibility that her husband—the man who seemed to love her more than life itself—could be the monster that Allyson had described. No. She was wrong. Horribly wrong.

“Still, her bridegroom certainly hadn’t had much time for her since their honeymoon. More often than not she found herself all alone in this icy mausoleum of an ancestral family mansion. Woodburn Manor. If only it would burn. She’d love to strike a match to it and watch it vanish from the face of the earth. But it was stone. Cold, insensitive stone. And if Allyson were telling the truth, the only thing colder and more insensitive than this cursed house was the heart of the man to whom she was married.”

(She chuckles. Alex enters from the kitchen, having just reloaded the ice bucket so he can mix the latest in a long series of drinks. He’s wearing pajamas, his robe and cowboy boots. He is very aggravated and slightly loaded.)

ALEX

Is it midnight yet?

LYNN

(Glancing at an alarm clock on the sofa table.)

Twelve till.

ALEX

He’s doing this on purpose. All of this is intentional.

LYNN

You’re just being paranoid.

ALEX

I’m not paranoid! I’m pissed!

LYNN

(Referring to his alcohol intake) Yeah, I noticed.

ALEX
What do you mean by that?

LYNN
Nothing. Nothing at all.

ALEX
Where is he?!

LYNN
Am I supposed to be clairvoyant? I have no idea.

ALEX
And you don't care, either. You've got a book to read.

LYNN
It's your own fault. I told you he'd be gone long enough.

ALEX
Right, and if we'd... Just about the time things got interesting, he would have walked in and started taking notes.

(The sound of a key in the door; it opens and Mike enters.)

MIKE
Still awake?

ALEX
(In control of his temper—barely) Waiting up for you.

LYNN
Welcome home, Mildred.

ALEX
Who?

LYNN
Mildred Hearn. It's his pen name.

MIKE
I thought skiers liked to hit the slows bright and early.

ALEX
We couldn't sleep till you knew you were home safe, "Mildred."

MIKE
Mind if I mix myself a nightcap?

ALEX

Help yourself.

MIKE

(Crossing to the bar, he notices the book she's reading.)
Started my book already?

LYNN

Almost finished it. It's wonderful.

MIKE

Just another Gothic.

(As this conversation about the book continues, Alex turns down the bed, fluffs the pillows, sets the alarm clock, yawns —anything to get Mike to shut up and go to bed. Finally he takes off his robe and boots and starts to get into bed.)

LYNN

No. Most Gothics try to be deadly serious, and end up just being deadly. But not this one. Like, when Sheri sees the ghost of the first wife; what's her name?

MIKE

Allyson.

LYNN

I thought, what a cliché. But then, when they sat down and got to know each other, I laughed till it hurt.

MIKE

There's no law that says a ghost can't have a sense of humor.

LYNN

And when Allyson lets Sheri in on what a self-centered, egotistical, stupid, macho-stud jerk she's married to, I wanted to jump up and cheer.

MIKE

That is one of my favorite bits.

(A glance at Alex)

And I'll tell you a secret; guys like that actually do exist.

LYNN

I'll say. Millions of them.

MIKE

Women fall for them, and don't realize how rotten they are until it's too late.

ALEX

(Sitting on the edge of the sofa bed)

If this meeting of the Friday night literary society is going to go on much longer, could you move it to the kitchen?

MIKE

Sorry. It's bedtime anyway. Good night. Glad you're enjoying the book. See you in the morning.

(Mike exits to the bedroom.)

ALEX

He is weird. Just plain weird.

LYNN

I think he's nice.

ALEX

You would. At least he's finally in his room.

(Shifting into a sexier tone.)

Why don't you put that book down and...come to bed?

LYNN

(Setting the alarm clock.) What time do we need to get up?

ALEX

Let's see, we'll want breakfast, and we have to rent you some skis. Eight, I guess. Wow, that's going to come early.

(Mike enters from the bedroom.)

MIKE

Excuse me. Sorry to bother you, but I promised Evelyn that I'd call her tonight. There's no phone in the bedroom.

LYNN

(Grabbing her makeup case)

I forgot to brush my teeth anyway.

(Lynn exits to the bedroom.)

ALEX

You're calling your wife at midnight?

MIKE

She'll be up.

ALEX

Great.

(Alex climbs out of bed, heading to mix another drink.)

MIKE

(Into the phone) Evelyn, it's me. ...Fine. How was work today?

(As Alex passes by Mike, going to the bar, Mike holds out his glass.)

Do you mind?

ALEX

(He does.) No, of course not. I don't seem to be able to do much of anything else.

(He continues to the bar and fixes a couple of drinks.)

MIKE

So you still don't know when you'll be up? ...Okay, I'll look for you when I see you. ...It's great. ...Oh, yeah, the roommates are here. Alex and Lynn...Hunsdorfer. Lovely couple. ...Till Monday, it looks like. ...Oh, I went down and had dinner, and then to the bar for some preliminary research.

(Alex hands Mike a drink.)

Thanks.

(Alex sits at the dinette, and tries to demonstrate his irritation so that Mike will hurry up. Drum rolls on the tabletop, etc.)

Met a cute little brunette named Nan. She invite me up to her room for a nightcap. (He chuckles) ...I think this place is going to be a great source of material. ...Love you too, Darling. Good night.

(He hangs up)

ALEX

Do you always tell her about your...little conquests?

MIKE

(Tongue in cheek—he enjoys aggravating Alex whenever he can, as long as it's not too obvious...to Alex, at least.)

Our relationship is based on honesty and open communication. We never keep anything from each other.

ALEX

Nothing?

MIKE

Nothing.

LYNN

(Entering) What'd I miss?

ALEX

Nothing.

MIKE

We were just discussing the value of honesty in marriage. Your husband here agrees with me that it's very, very important.

LYNN

That's nice to know.

MIKE

I'm keeping you two up. Good night.
(He exits back into the bedroom.)

LYNN

Good night.
(To Alex, once Mike is gone)
He talked to his wife?

ALEX

Yes. Told her all about "Nan," the beautiful brunette he picked up in the bar.

LYNN

At least he's honest.

ALEX

What's that supposed to mean?

LYNN

Nothing. What he does is none of our business anyway.

ALEX

Okay, fine. Let's forget it.

LYNN

(She stretches out on the sofa bed)
Care to join me?

ALEX

Don't mind if I do.
(He gets on the bed. They embrace...and the phone rings.)

What the...?
(He gets out of bed and answers it.)

Hello? ...Just a minute.
(Calling off)

Mike! Telephone.

MIKE

(Offstage) Coming.

ALEX

(Into the phone) Hang on.
(To Lynn)
Do me a favor. Don't let me kill him.

LYNN

I'll do my best.

(Mike enters and crosses to Alex, who hands him the receiver only, holding onto the base of the phone, hoping to keep this conversation short. Yes, it's a old-fashioned phone with a cord to the receiver.)

MIKE

Thanks.
(Into the phone)
Hello? ...Oh, hi, Nan.
(To Alex)
It's Nan. The brunette.
(Back to the phone)
I'd better not. It's been a long day. Maybe tomorrow night. ...Sure; have fun.
(Dragging things out to aggravate Alex—Nan has hung up)
...Uh-huh...you too...right...right...bye.
(He puts the receiver onto the base, which Alex is holding out to him. Alex roughly puts the phone back on the desk and moves to the bed.)
She wanted me to take her to the disco.
(He starts toward the bedroom door.)

ALEX

At midnight?!

MIKE

In case you haven't noticed, Old Boy, this is a swinging place. But I need some sleep. Goodnight.
(He almost gets out, then stops and turns back.)
Say, could I ask a favor?

ALEX

(He's just gotten back to bed.)
What is it now?!

MIKE

I need a couple of aspirin. Had more to drink tonight than I usually do.

ALEX

Glad someone got a chance to overindulge.

LYNN

Got some with my vitamins in the kitchen. Be right back.
(She exits to the kitchen.)

MIKE

Great little wife you've got there, Alex.

ALEX

(Major hostility) Thanks for telling me. I'd almost forgotten. It's been a while since we've had any time alone together.

MIKE

Sorry to hear it. Then I can imagine how much this must be annoying you...

ALEX

I doubt it!

(Alex rolls over, covering his head with a pillow.)

MIKE

(Continuing his thought)

...but believe me, this is...

(Seeing that Alex is not listening.)

...the most fun I've had in years.

LYNN

(Returning from the kitchen) How many?

MIKE

Two should do it.

LYNN

(Pouring them into his hand)

Here you go.

MIKE

Thanks. I better get to bed before I turn him into a nervous wreck.
(He starts out.)

LYNN

Afraid it's a little late to worry about that. Good night.

MIKE

Sleep tight. (He exits.)

LYNN

(She watches him go until the door closes.)

I think he's gone for good this time.

LYNN (CONT'D)

(Alex does not respond.)

Alex, he's gone.

(No response. She lifts the pillow.)

He's gone.

ALEX

(Sitting up in bed.)

You think there's any way we can seal up that door?

LYNN

(Looking at the bottom of the door.)

He's turned out his light.

ALEX

That just means he's sneaking up on us.

LYNN

Oh, poor Alex. Come here.

(He turns to her, they embrace, and the phone rings.)

ALEX

It's fate. That's what it is. I should have read my horoscope. It probably said, "Avoid snow and Mike Scott."

(Answering the phone)

Hello?...

(He's obviously thrown by the call.)

Uh, just a second, operator.

(He covers the receiver.)

Lynn, what'd you do with that note?!

LYNN

What note?

ALEX

Ralph's note. The one that came with the champagne.

LYNN

You kept it.

ALEX

(Searching around frantically) What'd I do with it?

LYNN

(Jumping out of bed to help search)

It's got to be here somewhere.

ALEX

I've got to have that note!
(Back into the phone, calmly)
Sorry, operator. Just another second.

LYNN

Where did you put it?

ALEX

How the hell should I know?!!!
(He looks at the receiver again, then has an idea. He begins to click the cradle button, trying to give the impression of a faulty connection or some trouble on the line.)
Hello? ...Hello, operator? ...I can't hear you operator. ...Hello? ...Hello?
(Alex then pulls the cord from the back of the telephone. It must be obvious that he has not ripped out the cord and damaged the instrument—he just pulled the plug.)

LYNN

Who was it?

ALEX

Long distance—person to person for Ralph Hunsdorfer.

MIKE

(Sticking his head in through the bedroom doorway.)
Was that for me?

ALEX

No!

MIKE

Oh...okay...well, I'll see you kids in the morning.

ALEX

I can hardly wait.

MIKE

Pleasant dreams.
(Mike gives them a big grin, then disappears back into the bedroom. Alex stands there fuming.)

(Blackout)

End of Act I, Scene 2

(It is a few minutes before eight the next morning. There is a thermos pitcher of coffee on the table with cream and sugar, three mugs, and a basket of pastries—mostly donuts. Lynn has ordered “Continental Breakfast” for three from room service. She is sitting at the table in her peignoir, sipping a mug of coffee and trying to wake up. Alex is still dead to the world on the sofa bed. Mike enters from the bedroom; fully dressed, wide awake and cheerful.)

MIKE

Good morning.

LYNN

(Not a morning person)

Ummm...

MIKE

Coffee smells great.

LYNN

(Gesturing for him to help himself.)

Ummm...

MIKE

(Pouring coffee for himself)

Are you always this bright and vivacious in the morning?

(She gives him a dirty look.)

Sorry, I won't say another word. ...I see good old Alex is going to hit the slopes bright and early, right on schedule.

(Crossing and picking up the alarm clock)

Almost eight. He's got to be up and at 'em if he's going to do any skiing today. Obviously needs a little assist.

(Mike adjusts the alarm clock and places it on the floor behind the head of the sofa bed.)

This should be entertaining.

(Mike crosses to the dinette and sits beside Lynn. The alarm goes off, an obnoxious buzzing sound. Alex begins to stir. He reaches toward the sofa table without looking. He can't find the clock. He feels around, and finally figures out where it is. He can't reach it, so he grabs a pillow and swats at it, several times, and then hits it—ending its buzzing days forever. He struggles up to a sitting position.)

Rise and shine—it's ski time.

(Mike takes his notepad from his jacket pocket and makes a note. Alex gives him a dirty look, gets up and heads for the bathroom. He grabs his suitcase on the way out.)

MIKE (CONT'D)

Good morning, Alex...

(No response. He continues, mimicking Alex's voice.)

"Morning, Mike."

(Back to his normal voice)

It's a beautiful morning today, Alex.

ALEX

(At the bedroom door)

Go to hell, Mike.

Alex exits to the bedroom.)

MIKE

(Making a note.)

Couple is very compatible in the mornings—totally unresponsive. A perfect match.

LYNN

Not really.

MIKE

You can talk in the morning.

LYNN

Only after my second cup of coffee.

(She reaches for the thermos.)

MIKE

I'll pour. Can't have you exerting yourself.

(Refilling her mug)

With anything?

LYNN

Black. As close to pure caffeine as possible.

MIKE

What is the younger generation coming to? This morning I'm full of pep and energy, and you... I apologize for saying this, but you look a bit done in.

LYNN

Flattery does not become you, Mister Sunshine. You slept last night—I didn't.

MIKE

(Glancing back at the sofa bed.)

Oh-hoh!

LYNN
Wrong.

MIKE
Then why?

LYNN
You're nosy. Anyone ever tell you that?

MIKE
Frequently. Was it my book?

LYNN
No—although I did finish it. But that last phone call last night; it was long distance, looking for Ralph Hunsdorfer.

MIKE
There really is a "Ralph Hunsdorfer?"

LYNN
He's one of Alex's clients. They set up this "business trip" to cover them both. He's in Utah, with a "friend."

MIKE
Maybe he's smarter than I thought. How'd he handle the phone call?

LYNN
Pretended the phone was on the blink, and then disconnected it.

MIKE
I'm impressed.
(Moving to inspect the phone)

LYNN
I plugged it back in this morning. He spent the next four hours worry about who it was. He's petrified it could have been his wife, looking for him.

MIKE
Paranoia strikes again, and I can't think of a more deserving victim.
(Alex enters, wearing sweater, jeans and boots.)
Speaking of victims, our downhill racer looks almost alive. Morning, Alex. How do you feel?

ALEX
(Moving to the table and sitting.)
Hung over and hungry.

LYNN

You need coffee.

(Alex starts to reach, but Mike is there first.)

MIKE

Let me pour you one, Old Man.

(He does, then sits back down in the third dinette chair.)

ALEX

(Looking at the Continental Breakfast.)

Where's breakfast?

LYNN

I called room service. Didn't feel like cooking.

ALEX

I'm supposed to hit the slopes on donuts?!

LYNN

Most people use skis.

ALEX

I can't believe this! First, they garrison us with an insane insomniac. Next we end up sleeping on a rack—except we don't sleep. At least I don't. The damn phone rings all night, and now you're trying to starve me to death!

LYNN

This is not a good time for this, Alex.

ALEX

What the hell is that supposed to mean? (Rising) Look, I want us on the slopes by nine-thirty. Get dressed and make us a real breakfast. I'll go rent you some skis.

LYNN

But I have to try on the boots. If they don't fit right, I could hurt myself.

ALEX

I'll fake it. Give me one of your shoes.

LYNN

I've got a better idea. I'll get the skis—you fix your own damn breakfast!

ALEX

I said I'll take care of the skis! Now give me one of your shoes!

(He kneels and reaches for one of her shoes.)

LYNN

Don't you dare touch my feet, Alex Jamison!

(She tries to kick him, he catches her foot, there is a scuffle. He comes up with one of her shoes and heads for the door. Lynn jumps up and chases him.)

Alex, give me back my shoe!

ALEX

Get it in gear and we'll be on the lift in an hour.

(He grabs his coat and exits.)

LYNN

(In the open doorway, yelling after him)

Only if everyone else came up here to play water polo, you jerk!

(Lynn slams the door and stands there fuming.)

MIKE

And a married jerk, at that. Now, if I were writing this situation...

LYNN

I don't want to talk about it!

(She grabs her suitcase and heads for the bedroom.)

MIKE

Then at least think about it. What you have...

LYNN

Not now! I've got to get dressed and make breakfast!

(She grabs her mug as she crosses to the bedroom door.)

While I'm at it—you want something?!

MIKE

Breakfast? No thanks—never touch it.

LYNN

Neither do I!

(She exits to the bedroom and shuts the door, hard.)

MIKE

(Making another note)

Early morning hostilities of major proportion.

(The door buzzer sounds. Mike crosses and opens the door. CYNTHIA JAMISON is standing there. She is wearing a nice sweater, a ski jacket and slacks. Cynthia would be attractive if she'd lose a few pounds and get her nose fixed. She is sweet, but she is also the personification of the word, naïve.)

Hello? May I help you?

MIKE

Is Alex here?

CYNTHIA

No. He stepped out for a moment.

MIKE

You must be Mister Hunsdorfer.

CYNTHIA

Why, er...actually...

MIKE

I'm Cynthia Jamison. Alex's wife.

CYNTHIA

...Oh, I see. ...Well, uh, come in. He should be right back. Here, let me take your coat.

MIKE

Thank you.

CYNTHIA

(Mike helps Cynthia out of her coat. As they talk, Cynthia begins to look around the room, looking for evidence that Alex is messing around—but she is not overly obvious, at least not at first.)

Alex didn't say anything about you coming up today.

MIKE

He's not expecting me.

CYNTHIA

(Crossing toward the dinette)

I thought I'd surprise him.

Oh, he'll be surprised.

MIKE

(Mike hurriedly closes up the sofa bed.)

So you're a skier too?

No. Alex has never had the time to teach me. Now, Alex Junior—that's our oldest—he was practically born on skis. He's going to be just like his father.

CYNTHIA

(Looking at the coffee mugs—possibly for lipstick.)

MIKE
(To himself)
That's a shame.

CYNTHIA
Excuse me?

MIKE
What's his name? Your boy?

CYNTHIA
I thought I told you. Alex Jamison Junior.

MIKE
Oh, right. I'm surprised he didn't bring you all up for the weekend.

CYNTHIA
He said it was business, and the valley was packed.

MIKE
It is. You wouldn't believe how crowded the place is this weekend.

CYNTHIA
I can imagine.

MIKE
I hope not.
(Finished closing the sofa bed, he crosses to Cynthia.)
Tell me, what brings you up here to surprise good old Alex?

CYNTHIA
...Oh, no reason. I just felt like it.

MIKE
Mrs. Jamison...Cynthia. It's none of my business—not that that's ever stopped me before—but if my wife showed up here, unexpectedly, I'd think she was checking up on me.

CYNTHIA
You would?

MIKE
What else could I think?

CYNTHIA
Well...

MIKE

You are, aren't you?

CYNTHIA

(Giving in) ...I had to! I was certain that he was bringing someone up here for the weekend.

MIKE

He was. Me. But you were expecting another woman, weren't you?

CYNTHIA

It all sounded so fishy. Coming up at the last minute. A business trip to a ski resort. No room for anybody but the two of you.

(As the scene continues, Mike begins to try to subtly herd Cynthia toward the door and out.)

MIKE

The accommodations here are definitely overcrowded.

CYNTHIA

And yesterday, when I asked where I could reach him—in case of an emergency—he said that his secretary made the reservations and he couldn't remember the name of the place.

MIKE

Well, I can see where that may have sounded odd, but it could have been true.

(Correcting himself)

It must have been true.

CYNTHIA

(Pulling away from Mike, moving back into the room)

I tried to call her. But she was gone for the day, they said. No one else knew anything about it.

MIKE

(Grabbing her coat, to "help" her into it.)

Then how did you find us?

CYNTHIA

Last night I called every resort in this valley—it's his favorite—asking for him, or you.

MIKE

So you called up her for Mr. Hunsdorfer last night?

CYNTHIA

I only talked to the desk. Your phone was out of order.

(She moves to the phone and lifts the receiver.)

It seems okay now.

MIKE

(He takes the receiver from her and puts it back. Then he tries to guide her back toward the front door.)

They fixed it this morning. Now, aren't you sorry you came all the way up here for nothing?

CYNTHIA

At least I know he was telling the truth.

MIKE

And what do you plan to tell him when he finds you here?

CYNTHIA

...I'll think of something.

MIKE

Look, I'm meddling again, but wouldn't it be a good idea for you to leave, before he comes back?

CYNTHIA

...I guess it might be.

MIKE

Take my word for it—it will! Go.

CYNTHIA

All right.

(Mike opens the door and Cynthia starts out.)

I don't know how to thank...

(Mike has almost got her out when the bedroom door opens and Lynn enters, dressed for a day of skiing.)

LYNN

Sorry I blew up like that, Mike. It's not your fault.

(Seeing Cynthia, she crosses to join them.)

Oh, I didn't know you had company. Is this the young lady you were telling us about last night?

MIKE

This is Cynthia Jamison.

(Lynn stops dead in her tracks.)

MIKE (CONT'D)

Cynthia, this is Lynn...Hunsdorfer. My wife.
(Mike closes the door.)

CYNTHIA

Pleased to meet you.

LYNN

Yes. Uh, me too.

CYNTHIA

Your husband is a wonderful man.

LYNN

Thank you. So is yours. ...I've been wanting to meet you.

CYNTHIA

You have?

LYNN

Yes. Alex has told me...us, so much about you.

CYNTHIA

I hate to think what he's been saying.

MIKE

Nonsense. He's been very flattering.
(To Lynn)

Cynthia was just leaving.
(Mike opens the door for her.)

LYNN

Oh. So nice to have met you. Sorry you have to run. Bye.

CYNTHIA

(Stopping in the doorway, turning)
When you get back to Denver, we've got to get together for dinner or something—the four of us.

LYNN

Sounds like fun.

MIKE

Interesting to say the least. Well, good bye.

CYNTHIA

(Almost out, but turning one more time)

There is one thing that I don't understand.

(She comes back into the room, again.)

MIKE

(Closing the door, exasperated.)

What is it?

CYNTHIA

Alex said there'd only be room for you and him. But you brought Lynn.

MIKE

Well...uh, you see, Lynn and I haven't been married long.

LYNN

You can say that again.

MIKE

I just couldn't bear the thought of not having her with me.

CYNTHIA

Oh, I understand.

(She giggles a little.)

Well then, I'd better be going. Leave you two some time to yourselves.

MIKE

Thanks.

(He grabs the door and opens it. Alex is standing there, with a set of rented ski equipment.)

ALEX

Cynthia!

CYNTHIA

(Simultaneously)

Alex!

MIKE

(To Lynn, and the audience.)

Well, you can't say I didn't try.

(Blackout)

End of Act I