

(Name of Project)
by
(Name of First Writer)

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by
(Names of Subsequent Writers,
in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by
(Current Writer, date)

Name
Address
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MAKING A SCENE

FADE IN:

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM - LOS ANGELES 1984 - DAWN

Cinder block decor. A young couple sleeps in a ruffled bed.

TIFFANY RANDALL, 19, former cheerleader, sleeps on her back, a breast exposed.

DESMOND JAMES, 22, lies flopped on his stomach.

CLOSE ON: CLOCK RADIO

Clicks over to 6:00 a.m. and blares to life with a period tune.

Desmond flails for the clock and knocks it over. He reaches under the covers for Tiffany instead. She giggles.

TIFFANY

Mmm, I think you're a little mixed up. That's not the snooze button.

He rolls over on her. The two fool around a bit. But Desmond can't continue.

He sits on the side of the bed and switches off the radio.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

DESMOND

You're practically a married woman!

TIFFANY

Not yet. C'mon, honey--

Tiffany sits up, and gives him a look. Clearly territory they've gone over before.

Desmond switches on the television minus sound. A professional basketball game plays.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Let's elope.

DESMOND

My luggage doesn't match.

TIFFANY

Think about the curly haired moppets you and I can make. Desmond?

Desmond turns away from the television.

DESMOND

Don't start that again, Tiff. You want the Moppet life? Watch Sesame Street.

TIFFANY

Those are MUPPETS!

DESMOND

I want the Hemingway life. I'm just like him. You know --

Tiffany gives the "I've heard this a 100 times look."

TIFFANY

(interrupting)

Reclusive and elusive!

DESMOND

Don't finish my sentences, ok? It annoys the shit outta me, and you don't really know me well enough to do that.

TIFFANY

This is about my not being a Russian Jew, isn't it? Shalom and spaciba.

Frustrated that he ignores her, Tiffany leans over and grabs a mini basketball from floor.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Indulge me. Take 3 shots from over there. If you make em, I just know we'll end up having it all. Marriage, a baby and a bestselling novel.

Desmond takes the ball, flashing dazzling dimples in his boyish grin.

With one hand, he shoots two swishes in a row with ease. Poises and shoots a third time.

CLOSE ON: BASKET HOOP OVER LAUNDRY BASKET

Slow motion ball swirls precariously around rim, then falls out with a loud, reverberating thud.

Directly behind hoop, the television mysteriously blares sound as the basketball player misses his own basket.

Loud buzzer. Game over. Crowd goes wild. The sound fades as quickly as it began.

BACK TO SCENE

Tiffany won't meet Desmond's eyes but resolutely pulls on a pair of tight jeans.

TIFFANY

Last night will probably be it for us, you know.

DESMOND

Only because you can't stand up for yourself. Go ahead. Marry that Dick Head your Dad wants you to. But when you're 40, Pops will be six feet under. And you? You'll be at the funeral with the wrong guy.

Tiffany softly cries, looking at basket.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEVADA GRAVESIDE FUNERAL - DAY

Tiffany softly cries, looking at casket.

The lawn is well-manicured. People, somberly dressed, sit in rowed chairs. They speak in hushed tones.

SUPER: TWENTY YEARS LATER

A man in profile consoles Tiffany. He rummages his suit for a handkerchief. He turns inside-out empty pockets apologetically.

A row back, another man springs into animated action. This man is CLIFFORD GAINS, 42, gangly and manic, aka..."Dick Head." He leaps over chairs, anxious to outdo Tiffany's companion.

CLIFFORD

Here! This is the very reason I invented designer men's shirts with attached hankies. The kerchief is sewn right inside the pocket so you always have it when you need it.

Tiffany looks up, sniffing and exasperated.

Relatives stare oddly as Clifford stretches a pink dotted handkerchief from his breast pocket, anchored by a taut elastic cord. He gently dabs at Tiffany's eyes. The hanky snaps back into his pocket. He pulls again. Zoom! Into pocket. Determined to hang onto the hanky, Clifford forcefully pulls it out, severing the elastic cord and socking Tiffany in the nose.

People gasp.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Hmmm, better yet. Make the entire shirt out of handkerchief fabric. That way you can blow your nose right on your sleeve! Oh, this is big, really big!

Clifford excitedly extracts a recording device from his pocket and leans into the microphone.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Call Tommy Hilfiger tomorrow!

Sitting a row back, two teary-eyed women shake their heads disapprovingly. Clifford spies them.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Look, Tiffany, it's Aunt Sylvia and Cousin Ingrid! Wow! There's some kick-ass old relatives here today!

Clifford pulls a digital camera out of pocket.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Alright ladies, move closer together. Tiffany, back up just a tad so you're in the picture too. Say "Cemetery!" Everyone, big smiles!

He checks the image in his digital monitor.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Hmmm, one more time. Not too flattering of Aunt Sylvia. Did that thing she does with her nostrils.

Two PRIM and GOSSIPY relatives confer through their teeth in the second row.

GOSSIPY

At least she has the baby to look forward to. They think it's a boy. And would you believe he wants to name it Henchman?

PRIM

You're way behind. Lost it. Fourth time in five years. Maybe he'll learn the meaning of supportive this time.

It's an eyebrow raising contest. Gossipy wins.

GOSSIPY

I hear she's a famous poet. Thank heavens. It'll be cathartic for her.

EXT. LAKE MEAD MARINA - DAY

Day cruises sail, people party on privately docked boats. Abundant bird wildlife flies overhead. Fishermen pull their catch from pier.

Tiffany, sporting an unusual hat with miniature famous book covers, hurries along a wooden planked boardwalk.

Clifford runs awkwardly, straining to keep pace with her. His sweaty tee shirt depicts a cartoon ping-pong player and a caption: "Ping-Pong Players Do It On The Table."

In the distance a redheaded woman passionately kisses her man.

CLIFFORD

Slow down, Tiffany! I dropped my breath mints.

TIFFANY

Don't worry. My poem leaves you breathless. C'mon, Clifford. I don't want to get embarrassed again for being tardy.

CLIFFORD

He doesn't intimate me.

TIFFANY

InTIMidate.

EXT. WRITER'S WORKSHOP BUILDING - DAY

Tiffany, perky posture, opens door to writer's workshop room at end of pier.

INT. WRITER'S WORKSHOP ROOM - DAY

Tiffany and Clifford grab chairs and sit. Chalkboard reads:

"Welcome to Nevada's only Writer's Workshop. Be prepared to make three positive comments after a work is read.

Instructor: DJ."

At podium, in mid-sentence stands MIMI GANDER, early thirties, English accent. Looks like we've found our best supportive actress as she's braless.

MIMI

(seductively)

-- gently whip the firm stick of butter until mixture becomes moist and creamy. Drop by voluptuous rounded teaspoons onto well greased sheets.

Snickers all around as Clifford glances at Tiffany who stares ahead at --

DJ, instructor, 45, untucked, unshaven, unappreciated. Gave up on the brass ring long ago and settled for a bottle opener.

He sits slack-jawed, reclining in straight-back chair. A cap obscures most of his face, florescent orange crumbs stain the front of his flannel shirt...or is that a pajama top? A torn bag of cheese puffs sits on his lap. So does the horse-racing section. His dimples dazzle, even in sleep; however at this point Mimi's moans escalate and his eyes pop open.

MIMI (CONT'D)

(orgasmic climax)

Slip slowly into hot oven until surface stays hard to the touch with a sizzling, golden, round bottom. Oh!

Mimi blows a kiss, takes a seat and looks at Clifford who sucks on the end of his pen. She dramatically crosses her legs, giving DJ a glimpse at the flash of inner thigh.

DJ

Thank you Miss Gander. Alright people. Quiet down. Gimme three good things.

DJ looks upward.

DJ (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Gimme strength.

FEMALE STUDENT

I like your lipstick color, Mimi! Is that Loreal Ruby Apple?

SMART ASS MALE

I don't know shit about your recipe, but you're sure the happy homemaker!

CLIFFORD

Would you garnish that with a cherry before serving?

DJ

That's three. Miss Gander, I told you last week. I'd like to see you challenge your writing more with people and less with food. I don't think food belongs in a writer's workshop.

DJ shoves a handful of cheese puffs in his mouth.

DJ (CONT'D)
 (garbled with full mouth)
 Next reader. Miss Gains?

Tiffany, nervous, fumbles her way to podium. She clears her throat.

TIFFANY
 Here's a selection from something I call "Epics For Embryos, A Collection of Fetal Fables." It's meant to be read to the belly of a woman in her second trimester.

Strange looks and whispers.

SMART ASS MALE
 It's Preggo Poetry!

DJ
 Shut up. This one stands as is. No comments afterward.

Tiffany gives DJ a grateful look.

TIFFANY
 This poem was written for your newly formed ear.
 Don't worry 'bout that tail, it'll soon disappear!
 You're trapped in a place so dark and so wet,
 The uterus of a mom you've never even met.

ANGLE ON - DJ

He shakes his head slowly, hand on forehead.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 You dictate her puking which means you're the boss,
 Even though you're something we'd dip in cocktail sauce!
 You were created one night on just a whim,
 So it sure is lucky you know how to swim!

Behind Tiffany, Smart Ass Male puffs cheeks way out. He's going to explode any second.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 20 minutes of fun joined an egg and a sperm,
 Your mother was tipsy, her "No" wasn't firm.

(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

But your father was FIRM, and look at
you now,
As fetuses go, you should really take
a bow!

Mimi reaches over and slaps the air out of Smart Ass Male's
cheeks. Makes a farting sound. Light giggles.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Your parents wonder, will you be
cuter than us?
Wishing they had a window into the
uterus.
See ya soon, please be good-looking
and a genius,
And do your father a favor, come out
with a penis!

Stunned silence. People look incredulous. DJ applauds
madly, whistles and waves his hat. Tiffany looks with
rapturous appreciation.

DJ

I've never known anyone who's rhymed
uterus before.

MIMI

(rudely)

If we're not giving feedback, I have
something else I'd like to read. A
screenplay for a movie. It's rather
long.

SMART ASS MALE

Preheat your ovens!

Mimi takes a deep breath.

MIMI

Whether it be making cookies, making
a baby, an invention or even making a
scene, we're all looking to make
something --

Participants groan and slide slowly down in their chairs.
Blurry eyes. Gonna be a long day.

CLOSE ON:

The papers in Mimi's hands. Now the words. Now the letters.
Now they're fuzzy.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. LAKE MEAD MARINA - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON:

The papers in Tiffany's hands as the words come into focus.

We pull back to see Tiffany avoid the cracks in the wooden planked walkway.

In the background, the same redheaded woman stops kissing her guy. Now she pops him aggressively in his chest, her angry, ugly words punctuating the air. Ten paces in front of Tiffany sits a SOBBING BOY, preschool age.

SOBBING BOY
My doggie lost his ball.

Tiffany kneels as Clifford crosses his arms and looks at his watch.

TIFFANY
Shush, it's okay. Where is your dog?

SOBBING BOY
I, I don't know. I lost him.

TIFFANY
Well, c'mon. Let's tell mommy.

The boy looks around wildly.

SOBBING BOY
Where is mommy? I'm lost!

TIFFANY
(whispers to boy)
That's okay honey, so am I.

The boy is hysterical now, making the earlier sobs seem like child's play. Clifford covers his ears.

A bedraggled, scowling LADY, piggybacking an infant, strides angrily up to Tiffany. Five other sandy-faced children cling to her every appendage.

LADY
Ziggy! Stop bothering this couple.
Sorry, are you a couple? I told you
not to talk to people who are
strange.

The teenage daughter snatches up the distraught boy. Clifford, repulsed, watches the kid wipe snot on her hair. Tiffany winks as the boy is carried off.

TIFFANY
Do you realize he's the same age our
first would've been. Clifford?

Clifford points to a sailing yacht.

CLIFFORD

Uh-huh. Hey, look at those people playing table-tennis on the deck.

Mimi Gander, sashays by to her car. Clifford pops a breath mint.

TIFFANY

There goes our Braless Baker.

CLIFFORD

Jealous?

TIFFANY

Oh, please! Don't even start. That woman has had so many plastic surgeries. The last one, they extracted fat cells from her butt and grafted them onto her lips.

Clifford considers this.

CLIFFORD

Maybe you could have that done.

TIFFANY

I might just do that and not tell you. That way, you'll never know when you're kissing my ass!

EXT. LAS VEGAS - DUSK

CLOSE ON:

Naked ass of goddess statue at Caesar's Palace.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A. Volcano erupts in front of Mirage Hotel
- B. New York, New York Hotel skyline,
- C. Sphinx and pyramids at Luxor Hotel
- D. Eiffel Tower looms large at Paris Hotel.

We see the other Vegas strip hotels in all their splendor with famous signs, icons and images.

Finally we see a lone, dilapidated hotel sporting a sign with burnt out bulbs. It reads, "The Gamble."

I/E. LADIES ROOM OF THE GAMBLE HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON: A TOILET BOWL

Flushing.

This lavatory needs servicing. Garbage pail overflows, soap scum oozes down counter onto floors.

Using teeth, Tiffany pulls sweater sleeve over hand and turns on faucet. Pumps liquid soap with her chin and scrubs. Hands dripping, she cranks paper towel lever with her elbow. Nothing. Tries it with her foot. Empty. High heel catches on handle and ricochets across room.

Waving wet hands in air, Tiffany spies electric dryer on opposite wall. Hops on one foot. Almost there. She rams it with her hip. Gusts for split sec. Off. Head butts it. Blows then -- Off. Determined, Tiffany backs against it with her butt. That's the ticket. Bending forward at waist, she tries to dry her hands by reaching between her thighs. No good.

Wild eyed, Tiffany balances on one heel to sanitary napkin dispenser. Machine reads "Extra Absorbant."

She reaches into pockets. No coins. Collides entire body into dispenser, toppling backward into occupied stall. She slowly slides down against door just in time for the machine's contents to shoot at her with a vengeance.

Tiffany triumphantly blots her hands dry with one sanitary napkin.

What sounds like muffled cries comes from inside the stall.

TIFFANY

Hey! You need help in there?

Gum-chewing, LEGGY GIRL opens stall door and stares down at a crumpled Tiffany.

LEGGY GIRL

Me? You wanna know if I need help?

TIFFANY

It's just -- I mean nobody should cry alone in a bathroom. I should know.

The girl gives her a "back under your rock" look and whispers into a cell phone, then waves it pointedly at Tiffany.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry. Thought you were alone and crying.

Leggy Girl blows a bubble.

LEGGY GIRL

Boyfriend and laughing.

Tiffany nods and gets up, brushing herself off. She reaches in stall, grabs a handful of toilet paper which she uses to lasso her stray shoe and reel it in. Leggy Girl ignores this.

TIFFANY

I know this is crazy but could you hold the door open for me?

Extremely put out, Leggy Girl opens door.

LEGGY GIRL

What? Are you one of those people? C.O.D?

TIFFANY

That's cash on delivery. I'm O.C.D -- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

Leggy Girl sneezes on Tiffany. Tiffany takes a huge breath and holds it, holds it, holds it, waves goodbye, holds it, eyes crossing as she exits.

OVERHEAD, A view of sign on door, "Queen Of Hearts." Opposing Men's Room sign, "King of Farts."

UP AHEAD, flashing sign with arrow reads: "Royal Flush Bathrooms."

EVEN FURTHER AHEAD, another sign, "Wild Card Cafe."

Tiffany exhales tremendously which seems to propel her towards the Wild Card Cafe.

INT. WILD CARD CAFE - MOMENT LATER

Tiffany veers toward booth by window. Holds her hands up like a surgeon walking into the operating room. Several male diners admire her backside in fitted skirt.

JOY WINTERS, 40ish, matronly, sits with enormous triple decker BLT in front of her.

JOY

What took? Wait, lemme guess. No towels. You were trapped inside and had to wait for someone else to open the door for you.

TIFFANY

Nope, Smartie. Never made it to the bathroom. I put a quarter in a machine and won a thousand dollar jackpot.

Joy nods sarcastically.

JOY
Lost your shoe again, huh?

Joy gestures to the sandwich that Tiffany's been eyeing.

JOY (CONT'D)
What? This? I'm doing the bread
version of Atkins. I decided how
much can he know? He's dead!

Joy grins.

JOY (CONT'D)
Oops. I forgot. I'm not supposed to
do that anymore.

Joy frowns.

JOY (CONT'D)
That's the last smile you'll see from
me. I looked in the mirror and saw
so many laugh lines I cried. So if I
don't smile the rest of our lives, it
doesn't mean I'm a bitch.

TIFFANY
Joy, if you were me, what would you
do?

JOY
Jeez, I'm trying to keep your mind
off the subject. But okay. I'd have
the hysterectomy Tiffany.

Joy takes a huge bite of sandwich.

JOY (CONT'D)
Fibroids can turn malignant. You're
almost 40. You don't need a uterus.
And anyhow, miscarrying is a sign
that women our age shouldn't have
babies. I really believe that and so
should you.

TIFFANY
I just wanna buy a little more time.
A few more months.

JOY
Call the office today. I'll book it.
And don't worry, it's an easy
procedure. I'll even make sure I'm
on O.R. that day so I can present you
with your Vera Wang designer hospital
gown.

Tiffany smiles weakly as a busboy discreetly picks a potato off floor and returns it to plate to serve to a man.

The same busboy approaches the women's table with generic ketchup for Joy's fries.

TIFFANY
This isn't Heinz.

Busboy shrugs and places check on table as Tiffany holds ketchup bottle up to light for inspection.

Head waitress, saunters over, sneers at busboy and snatches check up.

HEAD WAITRESS
I'm sorry Miss Tiffany. He's new.
On the house, as always.

She makes a big production out of ripping check up.

HEAD WAITRESS (CONT'D)
(hissing to busboy)
Owner's niece!

TIFFANY'S DREAMY POV - COZY BOOTH BEHIND JOY

Leggy Girl from bathroom sits on lap of boyfriend. They're holding hands up, comparing palm sizes and giggling. Now they're checking out if they both have that tongue curling gene. In the middle of seeing who can and can't roll their R's, Leggy suddenly looks up and makes an ugly face at Tiffany.

BACK TO SCENE

Tiffany, caught staring, self-consciously averts eyes.

TIFFANY
That's it. I just made my decision.
I'm going to find him on the
internet.

Tiffany hides the obvious glint of her wedding ring under a napkin.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Blech, this soup isn't what I
remembered.

JOY
Nothing ever is. What we remember.

TIFFANY
Desmond is an unusual name. Finding
him shouldn't be complicated.

JOY

Oh, it'll be complicated alright.

Joy points to the soup or maybe Tiffany's wedding ring?

JOY (CONT'D)

So what's the problem? Not spicy enough for you? You like it really hot?

TIFFANY

Yeah, cold and bland is the pits. Shhh, here comes Uncle Eddie!

EDDIE BUCKET, 60's, snow white hair, handlebar mustache, glasses. So, this is where Colonel Sanders hides out. Licking his fingers, he approaches Tiffany's table.

Tiffany flashes a phony smile and covers her cheeks with both hands.

EDDIE

I'm gonna squeeze a pair of cheeks one way or another young lady. Up to you which pair.

Feisty Eddie's hand dives for Tiffany's butt. Redirects mid-motion and pinches Joy's cheeks instead. Joy chortles.

Tiffany is distracted by another diner walking by.

TIFFANY'S DREAMY POV - A BABY

The infant doses and stretches in his mother's arms.

A bootie drops. Tiffany retrieves it, pauses to admire its size before handing it over.

BACK TO SCENE

TIFFANY

Hi, Uncle Eddie. How's Aunt Sophie?

EDDIE

Expensive!

INT. A HOSPITAL NURSERY - LATER THAT DAY

Tiffany peers through a glass partition and gazes at a dozen newborns swaddled like burritos in pink or blue blankets. The door swings open and a NURSE, all efficiency, carries a tiny baby girl.

NURSE

Here, have a quick peek before I bring her to Mommy.

TIFFANY

Oh, thanks Selma, but I just came from the hotel and I don't want to pass germs. She's beautiful.

NURSE

Someday. Someday.

Tiffany nods and gives a little wave as the nurse swiftly carries the pink package away.

NURSE (CONT'D)

(over shoulder)

See you tomorrow.

INT. A RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN - DAY

UNKNOWN FEMALE CHEF chops beef and potatoes with sharp cleaver.

CLOSE ON: A CROCK POT

Lid opens and hands dump the mixture inside. Fingers hesitate before plugging electrical cord into outlet and turning dial to "steam."

INT. GAINS' BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Giggling seductively, Tiffany sprawls in bed talking on telephone. Wearing a frumpy bathrobe, she does a few absent minded leg-lifts.

TIFFANY

C'mon, I don't believe you. There's no way you could change that much. Twenty minutes or twenty years.

Tiffany looks down at a photograph she clasps. Desmond and Tiffany at a formal dance from the 80's.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Even if you do have a beard, I'd recognize you in a heartbeat. And you must be a famous writer by now.

DESMOND (O.S.)

Same old Tiff. Always my cheerleader. Good to see. And your husband, he's also a writer?

TIFFANY

I don't -- did I tell you that? Yeah. He writes instructions for installing garbage disposals. But let's talk about you.

DESMOND (O.S.)
Let's talk about the effect I have on
you.

TIFFANY
(sighs)
You still have that bedroom voice.

DESMOND (O.S.)
(lowers voice to growl)
And I'm in the dining room!

Tiffany giggles.

DESMOND (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I think I'll step into the bathroom
and see what that does for you. Tell
me what you're wearing.

TIFFANY
I've got on a black lace teddy.

Tiffany glances at her furry pink slippers.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
And heels.

Tiffany jumps as front door SLAMS.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Desmond, I need to phone you back.
Same time tomorrow?

DESMOND (O.S.)
I'll call you.

TIFFANY
That's not a good idea. Gotta run.

Tiffany tightens sash on bathrobe and runs down hallway. She
composes herself as she turns the corner of the kitchen to
see --

Clifford, fumbling with keys, boxes and papers. He wears a
tee-shirt depicting cartoon ping-pong player. Underneath the
caption, "Real Men Perspire Playing Ping-Pong!"

Tiffany runs to grab his hand.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Let's measure our hands.

Clifford backs up.

CLIFFORD
Don't get too close. I stink. I
stink cuz I've been fired.
(MORE)

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Or I've been fired cuz I stink. Not sure which. At any rate, I'm offensive.

TIFFANY

What? No. How could this happen? Everything was fine when we were at Writer's Workshop.

CLIFFORD

This afternoon I wrote, "Remove hand from disposal before flipping switch."

TIFFANY

Oh no, Clifford. You didn't.

CLIFFORD

Shlotsky went ballistic. You're offending our consumer's intelligence, he shouts. You stink! That's okay. We don't need a company like Grindless Garbage, babe. They're going straight down the drain.

MURDOCK, a saucy, caged parrot, laughs. Tiffany fusses over Murdock. She kisses him on the beak. This is obviously her bird.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

This frees me up to take a career chance. Especially now that we've agreed. No children.

TIFFANY

(to bird)
Murdock wanna treat?

Murdock wolf whistles at Tiffany.

CLIFFORD

I wanted to save this for our anniversary but I'll tell you now. I sold it last week.

Tiffany turns, stunned.

TIFFANY

You sold your ping-pong table?

CLIFFORD

Table tennis. Give it the respect it deserves. And speaking of which, could you keep that bird from hanging out on the chandelier? I think he purposely flies there just to crap on my net.

Clifford scowls at Murdock.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
And no. I didn't sell my table, I
sold my invention.

TIFFANY
Oh, that.

CLIFFORD
Oh, that. That. That is going to
make us millions.

Clifford holds up a shot glass, pretends it's a microphone
and clears his throat.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
(announcer voice)
Floating furniture! Now your home
can have more floor space!
Inflatable coffee tables, beds or
sofas! 1 800 AIR-CHAIR today.

Tiffany picks up television remote, aims and turns Clifford
off.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Always my cheerleader, Tiff. Good to
see.

TIFFANY
Can you change clothes? Uncle Eddie
is expecting us at his hotel party.

CLIFFORD
Not that dump. I always feel sick
there. Last time I got foot ulcers.
Then I barfed in the lobby, that's
how ingratiated I was.

TIFFANY
That's how nauseated you were. And
don't talk to me about vomiting. I
had morning sickness 8 weeks straight
at the sight of raw eggs. And for
what?

CLIFFORD
Right. Hey, how come you wanted to
measure our hands before?

Tiffany hesitates.

TIFFANY
Forget it. Wasn't important.

As Tiffany heads toward bedroom, she mutters two words.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Foot ulcers.

INT. WILD CARD CAFE - NIGHT

The dingy restaurant is festooned with balloons, X-mas lights and a faux, plastic red-carpet leading up to a podium. Employees still in uniform, mill about talking and crowding around the few waitresses passing mini microwavable quiche on trays.

SOPHIE BUCKET, 55, aging beauty queen in a short skirt, parades on Uncle Eddie's arm, his personal show poodle.

SOPHIE
Is my slip showing?

A few important looking men in suits with their dolled-up wives converse with one another, huddled in a corner by the buffet. They are MAX, MORRIS and BORIS MOTHER.

Clifford approaches the group, tugging along a reluctant Tiffany by her sleeve. All the while, he pretends as if she's dragging him.

CLIFFORD
Okay, okay already! I'm here.
Sheesh.

Clifford makes one last annoyed swatting motion in Tiffany's direction.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Sorry. My wife always pesters me to come over and introduce myself to obviously important and influenza types such as yourselves.

Clifford shakes the three men's hands.

TIFFANY
(whispers to Clifford)
Wash after shaking.

CLIFFORD
Clifford Gains. Interesting fact for you. I come from a long line of inventors. My great grandmother came up with the tradition of putting stuffing inside the turkey on Thanksgiving.

The group murmurs in Yiddish.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Before that, people just ate bread crumbs on a plate. And that's a fact.

MAX

Max Mother. My twin brothers Boris and Morris Mother.

CLIFFORD

Mother. Interesting last name. Russian? Well, a boy's best friend is his Mama, eh? And if you love Mom, you're gonna love this. Ready?

The group collectively nods while stuffing their mouths with meatballs on little toothpicks.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

I dunno about you but I'm tired of obnoxious alarm clocks buzzing or blasting loud music. My idea is a pre-recorded motherly voice whispering to rise and shine for pancakes.

Tiffany yawns as one of the wives discreetly drops several meatballs in her purse.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Or better yet. No mother's voice. Forget Mom's voice! She's got better things to do! A Non-Intrusive alarm clock. A red flag pops up at the pre-set time. No interruption, no fuss, no muss. Whaddya think? Clever, huh? Huh?

Clifford pulls out a digital tape recorder.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

(speaks tersely into mic)
Call Bausch and Lomb tonight

TIFFANY

Those are contact lens people. Call G.E.

The group disperses, shaking their heads, muttering Yiddish expressions.

MAX

You can never separate a mashugana from his mishegoss!

MAX'S WIFE

Everything's so goyish. Are you sure you wanna put money? Irving is gonna plotz.

MAX

Leave Irving to me. I'll handle Irving.

BORIS

Where's this genius writer Eddie's been kvelling over?

A Waitress approaches, offering a tray of triangle cheese sandwiches. Tiffany sniffs the tray and crinkles up her nose.

TIFFANY

These are not made with Best Foods mayonnaise.

Before the waitress can answer, Uncle Eddie spots Tiffany across the room. He pinches imaginary cheeks in the air as he steers Aunt Sophie by the shoulders in their direction.

EDDIE

Clifford! My man! So glad you could come. Tiffany told me what happened at Spineless Garbage -

Uncle Eddie squeezes Tiffany's cheeks as she reluctantly cooperates.

TIFFANY

(interrupting)
Mindless Garbage.

CLIFFORD

Grindless!

EDDIE

Doesn't matter. They're gonna sink without you, Boy. Get it? Sink! Disposing of you was their biggest mistake. One man's trash is another man's treasure. And you are true trash, err, talent. Just the kind of talent my hotel needs.

SOPHIE

(demurely to Tiffany)
Is my slip showing, dear?

EDDIE

Now don't spend the 800 grand just yet. I'll show you the money, but first you gotta show me the show!

Tiffany and Aunt Sophie look bewildered. Uncle Eddie darts up red-carpet, taps on microphone. A spry old guy.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank you for being here.

Eddie bows slightly.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

As most of you know, my brother, co-owner of The Gamble Hotel died last month. A lot of you were at his funeral. I made him a promise. A promise to class this place up and compete with the other grand-daddy hotels. And a promise to watch over his daughter, my beautiful niece Tiffany. A talented writer.

Tiffany flushes, turns away as Aunt Sophie tugs down her short skirt.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Tonight, Tiffany and her husband Clifford --

HECKLER

Tiff and Cliff!

EDDIE

That's right. Tonight, they've agreed to write our new hit musical extravaganza! We're refurbishing our showroom, pulling out all the stops. We're gonna show that old Cookie on the strip!

CLIFFORD

(to Tiffany)

Cookie?

SOPHIE

That's what Eddie calls Newton, Wayne Newton.

EDDIE

And we're gonna stick it to that Magic Man who fed himself to his tiger. We've got a little something up our own sleeve!

Hotel employees cheer and flail arms enthusiastically.

Max, Morris and Boris Mother lift their glasses in an ominous toasting gesture, nodding at Uncle Eddie.

MORRIS
 (quietly)
 L'chayim.

EDDIE
 (a bit unnerved)
 Follies Brassiere will have nothing
 on us! Even though we're not on the
 strip, we're gonna shine. We are The
 Gamble Hotel and we're gonna have a
 big pay off!

Uncle Eddie smiles nervously at the three brothers. Whoops
 and hollers from the crowd as a few hookers slip out of their
 bras and wave them like flags.

CLIFFORD
 (low voice)
 What the - ? What kind of show are
 we supposed to write?

A PROSTITUTE sidles coyly up to Clifford.

PROSTITUTE
 Write a show about me. I worked as a
 Doctor for 8 years while trying to
 break in as a hooker. Call it The
 Call Girl Who Missed Her Calling.

Clifford looks at the prostitute, considers this, looks away
 and then back to make sure she's serious. She pulls out a
 stethoscope buried between her enormous breasts.

PROSTITUTE (CONT'D)
 I went from heart donors to hard
 boners.

Clifford reddens.

EDDIE
 Give a round of applause to Tiffany
 and Clifford! In two weeks, they'll
 make this the hottest spot in Nevada.
 The Gamble Hotel will make the cover
 of Time Magazine and Jewweek -- I
 mean Newsweek.

People react to this.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
 Sorry, that was a Freudian slip.

SOPHIE
 Oh dear. I just knew my slip was
 showing.

INT. GAINS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clifford sleeps spoon style behind Tiffany, whose insomnia is in full gear. She tests Clifford's arm. Spaghetti limp. She extricates herself and creeps away.

INT. GAINS' KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Tiffany whispers into telephone and nervously glances around the room.

TIFFANY

But you're a gifted writer, and Jewish like these big shot investors. Just think. Together every day. Permission to have an affair and get paid for it. Please?

DESMOND (O.S.)

I could sure use that money but what about Clifford?

TIFFANY

I don't remember saying his name? Well, never mind, I'll find a way to bring you on and eliminate him.

DESMOND (O.S.)

Eliminate? Hey, I don't wanna see this on the 11:00 news.

TIFFANY

We can have our cake and eat it too, Desmond. Please?

DESMOND (O.S.)

As long as it isn't wedding cake, Tiff. Don't forget I still enjoy being reclusive and elusive.

TIFFANY

I better go. He's a light sleeper. I'll call you tomorrow, put you on speakerphone. Follow my lead, okay?

Tiffany gently replaces phone on cradle and backs up carefully on tiptoe - smack into a mirrored closet door. A loud noise in the still of the night. She turns and leaps out of her skin at the reflection.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Oh god!

Tiffany looks deeply into her own eyes searching for - her conscience, perhaps?

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Oh, stop. I'm not having an affair.
Yet.

INT. GAINS' KITCHEN - MORNING

Tiffany and Clifford sit at table in front of computer while eating breakfast. Murdock rocks quietly on his trapeze.

Clifford wears a tee shirt depicting a ping-pong paddle hitting a ball. The caption reads, "Real Ping-Pong Players Smash Their Balls!"

They make all sorts of adjustments with the screen, the contrast, the font, the margins, etc. Nobody types a word.

TIFFANY

Go for it, Shakespeare Breath!

CLIFFORD

Look, you know I'm clever, but two weeks is ridiculous, Tiffany.

TIFFANY

We're desperate. Already we're late on the mortgage. Pretend it's an invention. Invent a show.

CLIFFORD

Borrow. That's what I do when I'm inventing. I'll borrow a little from Broadway for Vegas. Yeah.

Clifford takes a huge bite from his cheese and crackers. He leans back in his chair.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

(singing Broadway style)

The Von Trapps adopt a curly redhead named Annie and a little thief named Oliver. They hire a nun named Miss Saigon as their nanny, move to an old, haunted opera house and become one singular sensation.

Clifford takes a bow then slaps his forehead.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Wait. Those investor guys are Hebes. Okay, Oliver can wear a Yamaha on his head.

TIFFANY

Clifford, that's not appropriate. And that's not borrowing! That's stealing. And that's illegal.

CLIFFORD
That's not illegal. That's the
creative process.

TIFFANY
In workshop, the instructor tells us
to start with a title. An inspiring
title.

CLIFFORD
Okie dokie. let's see. Something
Vegasy. How about My Bare Lady or
Breast Side Story?

Tiffany chokes on her coffee. Murdock gives a wolf whistle.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Thighs and Dolls? Beauty ON the
Beast! Eleven Brides for Seven
Brothers? Wait, I keep forgetting the
Jewish element here. Let's go with
Diddler on the Roof.

Tiffany holds up a hunk of cheddar cheese.

Murdock pecks at his bell. Clifford, on a roll, paces around
the table.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Hey, they're always adapting live
theater into movies, y'know like
Grease and stuff, right? Let's
reverse it and adapt a movie into a
live show. We can rewrite On Golden
Pond for Goldie Hawn and market it as
a Goldie Oldie. Bet we'll win a
Golden Globe.

Clifford pulls out his trusty recorder and bends over the
mic.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Call Whoopie Goldberg!

TIFFANY
This is theater, Golden Boy. You win
a Tony.

CLIFFORD
Okay, call Tony Orlando.

Tiffany looks disgusted.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Call Tony the Tiger? God, Tiff. You
used to laugh at these jokes.

TIFFANY

You don't even know if I can roll my R's.

Murdock laughs obnoxiously. Tiffany takes him out on her shoulder and nuzzles him.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

We need some serious help. Wait! What would you say if I told you I know the goose who lays the golden egg? Everything he touches turns to gold. Remember that writer I went with in college? He's even Jewish.

Without hesitation, Clifford tosses her the phone.

CLIFFORD

What would I say? I'd say, Goldilocks, call your King Midas.

Tiffany feigns looking up a number in the white pages, dials and pushes speakerphone.

DESMOND (V.O.)

Hello, you've reached the reclusive and elusive Desmond James. I'm out teaching one of my writer's workshops. If you're a fellow author, here's a *novel* idea, express yourself at the beep. Angry film makers, leave your screampplay, but songwriters, please *refrain!* BEEEEEEEEEEEEEP.

Both Tiffany and Clifford react to this with much surprise. Tiffany composes herself.

TIFFANY

Desmond? I don't know if you'll remember me. This is Tiffany Gains from UCLA. Regarding a writing collaboration. I'll phone back.

Tiffany disconnects, glances at her watch and gasps.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

I can't believe it. I'm late again for workshop. Wanna come?

CLIFFORD

Nah, I'll stay here and work on Saturday Night Beaver.

Tiffany shakes her head, cages Murdock and dashes out.

Certain she's gone, Clifford pushes a single button on phone.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Give me a call. We need to talk.

Clifford hangs up phone, glares at parrot.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Say, nice shot. Nice shot. Nice
shot, Clifford. Say it. Nice shot!
C'mon you idiot bird.

The bird turns his tail to Clifford with an indignant squawk.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Flying Asshole!

INT. RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN - DAY

Unknown Female Chef takes long handled wooden spoon and stirs
contents of crock pot.

CLOSE ON: CROCK POT

Fingers switch dial to "mix"

INT. WRITER'S WORKSHOP BUILDING - DAY

Tiffany bounds clumsily in and stumbles over instructor DJ's
outstretched legs, falling into his lap. He quickly hangs up
his cell phone. She adjusts her hat which has playing cards
and dice attached by colored wires.

TIFFANY
I'm sorry. Really, I'm so sorry.

At podium a SHY MALE READER shuffles his feet.

SHY MALE READER
(lost his place)
Uh, ration our passion
I mean, urging our merging --

Several dice fall off Tiffany's hat and clatter to the floor.

SMART ASS MALE
Yahtzee!

SHY MALE READER
(stammering)
Trash on my passion,
Thrash on my passion
Rash from my passion.

TIFFANY
Please forgive me, I'm terribly
sorry.

SHY MALE READER
 My passion is unhinging.
 Your flame is singeing.

TIFFANY
 Oh. Sorry. You're reading a love
 poem. My apologies again.

The more Tiffany apologizes, the more intrusive she becomes.
 DJ lifts brim of cap, turns and glowers at Tiffany.
 Blushing, Tiffany nods her head, swallows hard, clasps hands
 together and assumes a teacher's pet pose.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 Sorry.

DJ
 (quietly)
 Gimme strength.

DJ looks upward.

DJ (CONT'D)
 Tardy. I think we've degenerated
 into the Dead Poet's Society. Let's
 breathe some new life into things
 with a few words about an amazing man
 that I so admire --

SMART ASS MALE
 Aw jeez, I wasn't expecting any
 fanfare today.

DJ stands and for the first time ever, removes his cap.
 Hopefully he can get a refund on the Rogaine. He writes on
 board, ERNEST HEMINGWAY.

DJ
 I like to think of myself as sharing
 a few adjectives with the great Mr.
 Hemingway. Two of these adjectives
 are reclusive and elusive -

CLOSE ON: DJ'S MOUTH

Those dimples.

Immediately, Tiffany starts to choke on thin air. Or maybe
 the deja-vu went down the wrong pipe? She tips over her
 chair and bolts toward DJ, open-armed.

TIFFANY
 No! My god! Desmond. It's you!

Tiffany locks her arms around DJ who keeps his own stiffly at
 his side. But he inhales her.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

DJ, DJ. When did you start going by that?

DJ

Had I known Hemingway had this kind of effect, we would've brought him up sooner. Faulkner do anything for you?

The workshop members titter but sensing a moment, file out the door. Mimi looks annoyed, but leaves as well.

Smart Ass Male graffiti on the board under the words Ernest Hemingway. He scribbles, FOR WHOM THE BELLE EXTOLS. As an afterthought he adds, THE OLD MAN AND THE C...STUDENT! He looks pleased with himself and slams the door on his way out.

TIFFANY

I can't believe this. I just left a message on your answering machine. But you were here so - you couldn't - well, I'll catch you up. And then - well, then you have to fill me in.

DJ

I would love to fill you --

Tiffany drops a pencil and bends in front of DJ.

DJ (CONT'D)

-- in.

TIFFANY

Well, I'll go first. Let's see. It was mainly about collaborating on the show. But I didn't want to mention the 800 grand on an answering machine.

DJ

(perks up)

No. That's definitely something to mention in person. So? Mention away.

TIFFANY

Oh, silly. We've got better things to talk about. You weren't joking about changing -- I mean god. Twenty years is twenty years, huh? Take a close look now, would you have recognized me? You be honest now.

Tiffany twirls flirtatiously.

DJ
 With that hair, that perfume and your
 great pair of...shoes. I'd pick you
 out anywhere.

TIFFANY
 C'mon, let's get outta here and
 figure things out.

DJ
 If only that were possible.

Tiffany gushes, grabs and guides DJ who somehow has the
 presence of mind to hold the door open for her.

EXT. LAKE MEAD MARINA - SAME

With a death grip on DJ's shoulder, Tiffany tightens her
 crocheted shawl with her other hand.

TIFFANY
 This whole thing just blows me away.
 I mean it blows my mind. I mean I'm
 not just blowing smoke --

A sudden gust of wind off the harbor blows her silly hat
 straight over the handrail and onto the deck of a docked
 sailboat.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 Oh no! That's my good luck hat.
 Desmond, please! I have a really bad
 feeling about us if I don't get that
 hat back. Please!

DJ
 I kinda wanted to see where you were
 going with the blowing euphemism.

Realizing she's seriously upset, DJ races down the boat ramp
 with Tiffany trailing in high heels. DJ looks around, sees
 no one and leaps. His foot slips and one shoe and pant leg
 submerge into the water.

TIFFANY
 Oh! Caref --

Tiffany shuts up. She majored in Male Ego. Best to pretend
 not to notice Misfit's Misstep. DJ awkwardly reaches for her
 hand and helps her aboard the deck of the sailboat.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 Carefree. I love how you're so
 carefree.

The hat suddenly blows again. Right down some steps, landing
 on a comfortable bed in the interior cabin below.

DJ
 (under breath)
 This IS a lucky hat.

Tiffany, mindful of her heels, delicately picks her way down the tight stairway. DJ is close behind her behind. He draws an invisible bulls eye in the air around her ass.

INT. SAILBOAT - CONTINUOUS

If you're claustrophobic, this is not somewhere you'd want to live. Yet someone obviously went to a lot of trouble to make this feel like home.

An awkward moment.

CLOSE ON: A TOILET PLUNGER

Prominently displayed on a glass shelf.

TIFFANY
 Okay. I'll take the plunge. For god's sake Desmond, I want you. I've been thinking about this forever.

Tiffany clings to DJ. She strokes his scruffy beard.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 I like you with this. Very professorial. Speaking of, I loved how you had us invent new words for our poetry last week. I should've known that it was you right then. That is just so you.

Tiffany traces DJ's mustache with a finger.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 I was too shy to volunteer. But I thought of sexsational. Then I told myself that was too tame, so I thought of fucktastic. What do you think of that?

DJ
 Fucktastic? Yep.

DJ winks.

TIFFANY
 It reminds me of how we used to talk in secret acronyms. Remember that?

DJ
 Quite memorable.

TIFFANY

Here comes a B.B.J -- Bad Boob Job.
She's U.T.S. -- Uglier Than Sin.
God, I've missed everything about
you. I've even missed your cigarette
smoke. Hey, aren't you going to
light up?

DJ

Uh. Managed to quit a few weeks ago.
C.T. That's Cold Turkey.

Silence. DJ hands her the windblown hat.

DJ (CONT'D)

Well, here's your lucky hat --
Gorgeous.

Big trouble. He's blanking on her first name.

TIFFANY

You've never called me that before.

Tiffany folds her hat, then tosses it carelessly aside.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Say what you used to say. Right
before we used to do it. Please
Desmond? For old time sake. Say it
like you used to.

DJ looks caught. Oh hell, what's the use.

DJ

Tell me your first name again.

TIFFANY

Mmmmm, that still turns me on
enormously. Acting like we're
strangers.

Tiffany pushes him down on the bed and straddles his torso.

DJ

I don't know what gave me the idea I
could ever pull this off.

TIFFANY

Well, here. Let me help you.

Tiffany pulls the shawl off, revealing just a camisole. She
yanks it overhead and kisses DJ passionately.

DJ brightens. From his angle below her breasts, things are
definitely looking up.

INT. GAINS' KITCHEN - DAY

Clifford is circling, agitated, on the phone. He yanks the curtains closed.

CLIFFORD

If Tiffany thought the show was my idea, she wouldn't do it. And that's a fact. Let's just keep this quiet.

Murdock cocks his head, listening intently now.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Like that other thing. Yes, Sir, that other thing wasn't how it looked. I'm really not interested in women at all. Other women. Your niece is my priority. And that's a fact. So I really appreciate your excretion.

Clifford pauses to listen.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

What, those guys? The Mother Brothers? Nah, they won't give us any trouble. I know the kind of show those Mothers want.

Murdock flaps around his cage.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

And I know just the guy who can deliver. I got him lined up. Amazing writer. Tomorrow night, we'll spoon-feed his genius. Names Desmond James. Doesn't sound Jewish but trust me, he's our Kosher Kid. One look at him, they'll drop money like a loose slot.

Clifford hangs up.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

(to Murdock)

Clever Clifford. Clever Clifford. Say it, c'mon say it. Clever Clifford. Clever.

The bird laughs.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

You flying asshole.

INT. SAILBOAT - MOMENTS LATER

DJ, in the little bed, looks up at ceiling. He greedily rubs his hands together, anticipating. Below him is a large lump of bunched up sheets. The sheets wriggle, squirm and moan. Then --

TIFFANY
Desmond?

DJ
Mmm?

TIFFANY
I need an explanation.

DJ
I used to talk you through this?

TIFFANY
No. But there's a left angle. It curves to the left. What happened?

DJ
The women after you were all left handed.

Tiffany pokes her head out from under the sheets.

TIFFANY
Be serious. What happened?

DJ
Big Clinton fan. So now I lean a little to the left.

DJ quickly pushes her head back under.

TIFFANY
And wow. Before I could touch my thumb to my finger around it. Easily.

DJ
Easily? Easily! Show me.

Tiffany pops her head out, makes the O.K. sign with her hand. DJ laughs at the small circle she makes.

DJ (CONT'D)
That's pathetic! And how 'bout now?

TIFFANY
Not even close. It got so much thicker.

DJ
 Yep. You're dealing with some major
 girth, darling.

He presses her back under. Long pause. He waits patiently
 for something to happen. Once again she pops out like a jack-
 in-the-box.

TIFFANY
 But how'd you do that? Did you join
 some kind of special gym?

DJ
 Yep. Became a member for my member.
 100 reps on the penis press.

Tiffany stares.

DJ (CONT'D)
 You know for a detective, you don't
 stay undercover much.

Shoves her down.

TIFFANY
 (muffled)
 It's kind of scary down here. Your
 size and all.

DJ sighs.

DJ
 What do you mean, scary? This is
 what women like. Thick and hearty.

She's back above sheets.

TIFFANY
 Maybe. When they open a can of soup.

DJ
 Well soups on, baby! Down you go.

She resists his shoving.

TIFFANY
 And there's something missing around
 the upper part. You're chipped.

DJ
 Is a lube and oil included with this
 inspection? Whadya mean chipped?

TIFFANY
 It's okay. I'm just grateful you're
 not snipped.

DJ
Snipped?

TIFFANY
A vasectomy.

DJ
Okay. I should've known how this
would turn out. Chipped, snipped.
and now -- zipped.

DJ jumps up, zipping his pants in one fell swoop.

TIFFANY
Oh Desmond. C'mon. You know we
talked on the phone about the baby
stuff. And how I'm out of time.

DJ
Okay, fine. Just curious though, can
a woman tell if a guy has been fixed?

TIFFANY
Oh, I'd know if he were shooting
blanks alright. And H.B.H. He'd Be
History!

CLOSE ON - DJ's face

Wheels turning.

INT. WILD CARD CAFE - NIGHT

A waitress carries a fancy, empty French water bottle. She
fills it discreetly in a side sink.

Max, Morris, Boris and their wives sit crammed in a booth for
four.

The waitress pours the bottled tap water with a flourish.

MAX
I say naaah. We back out.

MAX'S WIFE
Especially if the show is gonna be
anything like this matza ball.

Max's Wife holds up an oversized Italian meatball that's
swimming in chicken broth.

MAX
Oy.

MORRIS
But Irv wants this. We already
promised.

(MORE)

MORRIS (CONT'D)

And you know what happens if you make
a change with Irv. Big problem.

Everyone looks worried. Uncle Eddie approaches.

EDDIE

Hi good folks. How's dinner here?

MAX

(grunts)

Eh.

EDDIE

Tomorrow night, you'll come back for
another delicious meal and then we'll
go to my niece's house for our little
meeting. What shall I have our chef
make? A nice, juicy medium rare
biscuit?

Everyone looks puzzled.

MAX'S WIFE

Brisket. He means brisket. How
about just coffee n' cake. You do a
strudel?

EDDIE

I can do a noodle strudel, a poodle
strudel. I can do a yankee doodle
strudel. You come tomorrow night
Yenta, I'll have oodles of strudels.

The wives look at one another. The men are all business.

MORRIS

Eddie. Listen. Our Irving. He
wants to meet your Russian writer but
he can't stay out late at night.
Tomorrow don't work for him.

EDDIE

Russian writer? Tolstoy?

Morris slams his fist on table. Other diners stare. Soup
spills.

MORRIS

Dammit Eddie! Don't mess with
Irving. At your fancy shmancy party,
your mashugana nephew brags. He says
one writer is Russian Jew. I want
that Irving should meet him.

Boris puts his hand on his twin's arm to calm him.

BORIS

Maybe a little golf. A soak in the jacuzzi or some steam. Then a group massage while we shmooze about the show. We have big fun.

EDDIE

No problem. We have all that here at my hotel. My nephew-in-law Clifford will join you.

MAX'S WIFE

Clifford? That scrawny nebbish inventor? There's barely anything there to lift a golf club.

MORRIS' WIFE

And he has no business in a jacuzzi. He'll dissolve.

The women dissolve into giggles.

MORRIS' WIFE (CONT'D)

And no massage for you. I remember last time.

MORRIS

A real massage, Gertie. Please Bubula?

MORRIS' WIFE

No massage!

This time it's Morris' wife who slams her fist on the table, spilling soup. Morris looks meek and put in his place.

Uncle Eddie looks at the soup with disgust. He snaps his fingers at a passing waitress.

EDDIE

Liza, this isn't Mazta ball soup! What's wrong with those cooks -- err chefs?

Eddie picks up a spoon and digs through the wife's watery soup. He lifts up a dark brown meatball, examines it and puts it back.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Not a damn carrot to be found! I'll take care of this, little darlin'.

EXT. LAKE MEAD MARINA PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Tiffany is hanging all over DJ. She looks down below his waist.

TIFFANY

(with awe)

I can't believe so much pleasure can
come from 8 inches.

DJ

Can't believe so much pressure can
come from 8 inches. Get in. I'll
drive you home.

They both duck inside DJ's car. He starts the engine.

TIFFANY

What a night for my battery to die.
But this is good. At least you'll
know where I live for tomorrow.
Remember, 8 o'clock. I'll try to
answer the door before my husband
does.

At the mention of a husband, DJ careens straight over a
concrete parking barrier and into a crosswalk.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Oh! Are you okay?

DJ looks upward.

DJ

Gimme strength.

ANGLE ON - PEDESTRIAN

A surprised mother with stroller is partway in crosswalk.
She retreats back to curb. DJ takes a deep breath. He
beckons to the mother that it is now safe to cross.

The mother looks hesitant. DJ motions impatiently. Walk
already! The mother begins to cross reluctantly.

TIFFANY

But there's a small chance I might
have to pick up my Uncle and those
investors. Which means you would be
alone with my husband.

Tiffany leans in closer to DJ.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

But that would be a good thing.
Especially since we worked things out
tonight. You could announce our
plans for a baby.

DJ floors the accelerator. The car lurches forward herky
jerky, almost hitting the mother with stroller, who jumps
back spastically.

As the car stops short, DJ goes into a choking fit worthy of the Heimlich maneuver.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Wow, you didn't quit smoking a day too soon, did you?

Tiffany pats his back affectionately as he continues to sputter.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK - MORNING

Dressed in white jogging suits, Tiffany and Joy are on their morning run. Tiffany is in the lead as both women huff and puff.

JOY
Certainly are competitive this morning. Wait up.

TIFFANY
I'm feeling renewed in body and spirit. Desmond and I were together on a boat last night.

Joy stumbles over a rolled up newspaper on the pathway but regains her footing.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Watch out!

JOY
You're the one who better watch out! How did that happen so fast?

TIFFANY
Relax. We didn't go all the way. But tonight he's coming to the house. To meet Clifford.

At this, Joy trips over a Jack Russel Terrier sleeping on the sidewalk. She keeps running.

The dog yelps. Joy and Tiffany look behind them as the dog limps away whimpering.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
I really think this is gonna work, Joy. We might have a few issues to work out but you tell Dr. Spanky to keep his gloves off my uterus. According to my chart, I'm really ripe this week to get pregnant.

This time Joy trips over a Japanese gardener bent over fixing a sprinkler. She falls on top of him, the two a tangled mass of body parts.

Tiffany screams.

INT. RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN - NIGHT

Unknown Female Chef unscrews lid from hot sauce and pours entire bottle into crock pot.

CLOSE ON: CROCK POT

Fingers switch dial to "slow boil."

INT. GAINS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The doorbell chimes.

CLIFFORD'S POV - DOORSTEP

A disheveled DJ stands holding a bottle of champagne in one hand, the other extended.

Clifford squints questioningly at DJ. He doesn't shake his hand.

CLIFFORD

Hey man. Writer's workshop, right?
DJ? I'm sorry, it's just not a good
time. My wife and I are expecting
someone for an important meeting.

DJ

I'm the someone. Desmond James.
Nice to officially meet you.

DJ awkwardly holds up the bottle.

DJ (CONT'D)

To toast our partnership.

CLIFFORD

Desmond James. Desmond. James.
You're Desmond James?

DJ

That's right. DJ. Desmond James.
Oh gee, those are great curtains.

He sidesteps a flabbergasted Clifford and enters the living room, tracking mud onto the new beige carpet.

CLIFFORD

Uh, Tiffany made those. Quite
autistic. She's very good with her
hands.

DJ

I'll say she is.

CLIFFORD

She'll be back soon with the rest of em. So, you're Desmond James. Huh. And Tiffany knows that too? Well then, how about a little male bondage while we wait?

Clifford elbows DJ roughly and laughs. DJ panics, looks around for assistance.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Do you use a rubber?

DJ

What?!

CLIFFORD

Or sandpaper?

DJ cringes.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Because I have both.

Clifford takes from behind his back two different kinds of ping-pong paddles.

DJ slowly reacts to this and reaches tentatively for the sandpaper paddle.

DJ'S POV - GAINS' LIVING ROOM

Dramatic music plays. A red velvet curtain on a pulley moves slowly aside in response to Clifford activating a remote control. It opens to reveal the ping-pong table on a raised platform.

The perimeter of the room is filled with trophies and medals encased behind glass. Fancy paddles are prominently displayed on the wall.

In the corner, a Sparkletts water cooler has been modified. The paper cups have been removed from the clear cylinder dispenser and replaced with ping-pong balls.

ANGLE ON - CLIFFORD

Clifford ceremoniously puts a white terry cloth sweatband on his forehead. He lets out a war-cry whoop.

CLIFFORD

They call me King Pong!

Clifford menacingly bounces a ping-pong ball on his paddle higher and higher. The last bounce reaches the ceiling and doesn't come down.

CLOSE ON: OVERHEAD CHANDELIER

With bulbs the exact size/color as ping-pong balls.

Murdock is perched there, leaning down.

BACK TO SCENE

Both men look up. What appears to be the ping-pong ball but is actually a light bulb, comes smashing down on Clifford's paddle, shattering into smithereens.

ANGLE ON - THE BIRD

Murdock bobs his head.

MURDOCK

Nice shot. Clever Clifford.

Clifford growls at the parrot.

CLIFFORD

Flying asshole!

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Clifford opens a mini can of tomato juice with a pull top, KSSSHHT. He prominently produces a factory fresh ping-pong ball from inside the can, holding it up for approval.

B) Clifford pulls out tape measure from pocket and measures height of net, making slight adjustments.

C) Clifford shows off paddle dexterity. He flips it between hands, behind his back, somersaults it, throws it up, spins around, claps hands three times and finally catches it.

D) Clifford holds right hand over heart and sings snippet from Star Spangled Banner.

E) Clifford serves into the net.

F) Clifford serves over-handed and smashes ball hard.

G) DJ holds up flattened ping-pong ball.

H) Clifford serves into the net again.

I) Clifford wipes sweat from face with a towel.

J) Clifford hits ball from under his uplifted leg.

K) Clifford hits ball over shoulder with his back to the net.

L) Clifford attempts a shot with paddle hanging from his teeth.

L) DJ pulls out ball after ball from Sparklets water cooler as we see a pile of balls split in two on the floor.

M) Clifford runs to far end of table to get a corner shot and slams body into glass display case.

N) Clifford throws his paddle down on table a la John McEnroe.

O) DJ triumphantly leaps on table, steps over net and shakes the loser's hand. Clifford glowers.

CLIFFORD

You're a guest. I let you have that game.

ANGLE ON - THE BIRD

MURDOCK

Lying asshole!

Clifford points up to bird.

CLIFFORD

I can't believe so much crap can come from eight inches.

Bird droppings rain furiously down on Clifford.

DJ smiles smugly as the front door slams.

TIFFANY

Oh my God! Clifford!

Both men turn to see Tiffany standing aghast on the threshold. Eddie, Sophie and the three brothers look curiously on.

Without warning, the ping-pong table collapses in the middle. Folding in half, it sandwiches DJ in the center.

DJ sheepishly climbs out of the rubble as Tiffany nods in his direction.

MAX

What a Putz. Nothing better to do after getting his pink slip?

SOPHIE

I'll thank you to keep your hands off my slip!

Aunt Sophie smacks Max.

INT. GAINS' DINING ROOM TABLE - CONTINUOUS

Tiffany makes certain she's seated next to DJ. Everyone holds stacks of papers.

EDDIE

So you must be the Desmond I've been hearing about. Boy, I admire a winner in ping-pong and in life. If that's the kind of enthusiasm you bring, I say bring it on to my show! Right Sophie?

Uncle Eddie reaches over to Aunt Sophie and forces her head to nod with his hand.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I've made arrangements for you to have free use of a hotel suite with everything you'll need. You can start tomorrow.

DJ

Let's not forget King-Pong here.

DJ points to Clifford, still sweating and seething in his chair.

MAX

(to DJ)

I hear your family came from Russia?

DJ

(best Russian accent)

Absolut! And more importantly, I only use Russian dressing on my salad.

The three brothers look at one another and give thumbs-up sign.

Underneath the tablecloth, Tiffany strokes DJ's thigh. He squirms uncomfortably.

MAX

(gesturing to DJ)

Irv wants mainly you and Miss Shiksa to do the writing. Mainly.

CLIFFORD

Irv?

BORIS

Irving. Irving Blatfarb. He's on cell phone right now. Listens to our meeting.

CLIFFORD

Well, you can tell your Irving that I'm the only one in this room who has written professionally for a living. I wrote for Grindless Garbage. That's a fact. Nobody wrote garbage like me!

MORRIS

We shouldn't upset Irv. And neither should you.

Aunt Sophie sleeps on Uncle Eddie's shoulder, her mouth gaping. Uncle Eddie makes the peace sign behind her head. He uses a stir stick in her open mouth like a tongue depressor. He tries anything to lighten the mood.

CLIFFORD

(shouting toward cell)
Hello there, Mr. Blabfart! Nice to meet you. I happen to be the shiksa's husband -- MR. SHIKSO and this whole show was my idea -- None of us would be here if it weren't for me.

ANGLE ON - UNDER TABLE

Tiffany reacts to this. She stops massaging DJ's thigh for a moment.

TIFFANY

(quietly to DJ)
T.I.N.T.M.

SUBTITLE: This is news to me.

DJ cocks head toward Clifford.

DJ

(whispering back)
F.L.E.

SUBTITLE: Funny looking ears!

CLIFFORD

And here's another news flash for you all. Mr. Desmond James here is a complete phony! Nothing but a fraud! And that's a fact. He's had us all fooled. I was just waiting for the right time to tell you.

Clifford points to DJ who is visibly nervous, shifting in his seat, holding his breath. The others lean in closer. All eyes on Clifford as he trains a pocket flashlight on DJ's wrist.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
That's a fake Rolex!

DJ breathes a bit easier.

DJ
Uh, where's your bathroom?

Clifford reddens and throws his chair to the ground. He points and looks back and forth between Tiffany and DJ in synchronized rhythm, much as someone would watch a ping-pong game.

CLIFFORD
Oh, so now you're going to piss in my house, huh? I know what that's all about. Does everyone here know what that's about? He's marking his territory. And I say the two of you can go screw yourselves!

TIFFANY
G.I

SUBTITLE: Good idea!

DJ shakes his head vehemently.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Go on. Tell about our plans, Desmond.

DJ shakes his head some more.

DJ
We have plans for a great show.

Tiffany looks disappointed.

We see and hear the Gains' front door SLAM as Clifford exits.

EXT. FRONT DOOR OF GAIN'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

We see the same front door open just a crack. Joy stands on the stoop doing calf stretches.

JOY'S POV - Clifford peeks his head out while positioning himself to block the doorway. He looks disheveled.

JOY
Hey Clifford. Jogging time.

CLIFFORD
Yeah well, she's not here. Early morning writing meeting with that phony baloney Desmond character.

Joy looks through the front window. A female figure catches her eye. She angles herself to better peer inside. Clifford reaches to smooth the curtains closed.

JOY

You're sure she's not in there?

CLIFFORD

Hey, did I tell you about this new pedometer I'm working on? It plays Chariots of Fire music while you jog. When the sensor detects you slowing down, it gives an electric zap and shouts, C'mon you lazy ass!

JOY

I don't think that's very nice.

CLIFFORD

Okay, fine. It can shout, Run Forrest, Run!

Joy turns on her jogging shoe heel and walks away.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

(yelling)

You don't laugh much anymore. I think you're getting those little frown lines!

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

DJ sits in front of a computer with a stack of medical books beside him.

He types quickly into the computer and up comes a web page which reads, "Reversing Your Vasectomy."

DJ covers his eyes and peeks through his fingers to read.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF GAINS' HOUSE - DAY

As Joy is about to open her car, brakes SCREECH behind her and a man jumps out of his jeep.

Joy stares.

The real DESMOND, 40's, hunky, well groomed, looks at Gains' house, doesn't notice Joy.

JOY

Desmond?

Desmond intently walks up the driveway.

JOY (CONT'D)

Desmond? Desmond! It's Joy.

Desmond turns in Joy's direction, shielding his eyes from the sun.

Joy beckons him.

JOY (CONT'D)

Yes, Joy. Come here a sec. Look at you!

Desmond and Joy embrace like people who fondly remember one another from college do.

JOY (CONT'D)

This is so amazing that you and Tiffany uh, well, you know -- after all these years. That you'd be -- well -- together.

DESMOND

Don't jump. So far we've just spoken on the phone. She said she would call back days ago and I haven't heard a word. I got concerned.

Joy's mouth drops.

JOY

You haven't been on a boat with her?

DESMOND

God, no. I get horribly ill on boats.

Suddenly, the front door of the Gains' house opens and Mimi jiggles down the walkway.

Joy quickly grabs Desmond's arm. The two cross the street, pretending to check out a neighbor's landscaping.

Desmond can't stop staring at Mimi.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

I can't believe it. I wouldn't have recognized her. She never used to dress like that. Look at those gazoontas--

JOY

Don't be an idiot. That's not Tiffany.

DESMOND

Where's Tiffany?

JOY

At this very moment? She's hard at work writing a show at the Gamble Hotel. With you!

Both Desmond and Joy stare at each other.

I/E. THE GAMBLE HOTEL SUITE - DAY

DJ and Tiffany, professionally dressed, struggle with the door key.

Inside there are two big desks outfitted with several computers, printers, stacks of paper, stapler, paper clips, etc.

DJ

Yep, everything we need.

Tiffany closes, locks door. She yanks curtains shut.

TIFFANY

Everything I need.

Tiffany looks at DJ and licks her lips. She stalks him closer to the desk. She gives a strong shove, leaning him back on the keyboard. Equipment, supplies and papers scatter in every direction.

INT. JOY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joy is searching on her computer. Up comes a web page that reads, "Reasons To Have An Emergency Hysterectomy." She takes notes.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL SUITE - DAY

The desk is torn apart. A man's belt and woman's high heel are strewn in the disarray of equipment.

We pan below to find Tiffany and DJ on their backs, looking at the underside of the desk. They hold hands together, measuring palms. Tiffany giggles.

TIFFANY

Did I tell you I still have my diary from when we dated? I chronicled everything we did.

DJ

That would be interesting for me to see. You know, to catch up. I mean so I can walk down memory lane.

TIFFANY

We should reminisce, shouldn't we? Those were some wild times.

(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Tell me everything you remember about the Styxx concert.

DJ

Sure, but first. Why aren't we using the bed? I'm into unconventional but not uncomfortable.

TIFFANY

You know I have a thing about hotel linens. Remember that survey I read? What's on the bedspread alone.

DJ

Oh yeah. Right. Well, listen, I hate to be a K.J. -- Kill Joy. But with a two week deadline, we better get cranking.

TIFFANY

Anxious to start on the show, are you?

Tiffany pretends to pout.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

You're already bored with my coming attractions? P.I. Pun intended. Okay, you win. How do we begin? You're the writing expert.

DJ

Well, first we need to have a treatment.

TIFFANY

That sounds wonderful I noticed a sign in the lobby for a massage and facial. \$100.

DJ sighs and looks upward.

DJ

Gimme strength. Okay, here we go, star pupil. A treatment summarizes our basic show's concept. What is our show going to be about?

TIFFANY

I'm so glad you asked. Clifford's ideas are so idiotic. I've been thinking and I've come up with a winner. We take my pregnancy poetry and set it to music. We'll call the show "Fetal Attraction."

Pause. DJ double checks. Yep, she's serious.

DJ

Any chance of getting your Uncle to extend the two weeks just a tad. Like two years?

TIFFANY

Hey! I'll have you know I have a publisher interested in putting together a collection of my poetry. I have lots of enthusiastic fans.

DJ

Yes, but not one member of your fan club has been born yet!

(a beat)

I have an idea. You'll make a great muse. You won't have to write a word. Let me explain what an important job a muse is. It's not everyone who can handle the role of musing.

The entire time he talks, Tiffany playfully takes his tie and lightly binds his wrists to the desk legs. She finds her crumpled scarf and starts to tie his ankles.

TIFFANY

Don't get tongue-tied now.

DJ

(talks faster and louder)

Let me also assure you that a muse would be the first credit listed on a show program. Actually, I'm feeling inspired already and --

Tiffany stuffs her bra in DJ's mouth.

TIFFANY

I think I'm ovulating.

INT. HANE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Clifford paces while talking on the phone. He is visibly upset. Murdock stares.

CLIFFORD

Ludicrous! There is absolutely no way my floating armchair could pop or explode unless that old bat over-inflated it. And that's a fact.

Pause.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Whadya mean, I'm liable for her broken collar bone? Liable?

(MORE)

CLIFFORD(CONT'D)

I'm liable? I'm liable to fire your sorry ass if you don't take care of this, Huck! Invent something. Say she poked a hole in it.

INT. FANTASY LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS (CLIFFORD'S DAYDREAM)

A decrepit old woman sits on an inflated gray armchair suspended above ground. She knits a scarf furiously. Looking both ways to make sure she's alone, she jabs her knitting needle into the arm of the chair.

The old bat hangs on for dear life as the armchair zips around the room, deflating in seconds.

INT. HANE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

CLIFFORD

So that's the story we stick to, Huck.

Clifford slams the phone. Murdock laughs.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Fuck you!

MURDOCK

Fuck you back!

The look of shock on Clifford's face is enough for us to count his cavities.

INT. RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN - DAY

Unknown female opens a bag of flour and pours a generous amount into crock pot.

CLOSE ON: CROCK POT

Fingers switch dial to "thicken."

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Tiffany is fully dressed now as DJ sits at the desk, self-consciously typing in his underwear.

TIFFANY

How about a scene where the two main stars eat? They'll be hungry after that last song.

DJ intentionally drops his jaw.

DJ

Never write eating scenes. It's just assumed. Like going to the bathroom. When's the last time you saw a toilet plunger in a movie?

TIFFANY

But it's Vegas. We need a song about
an All You Can Eat Buffet.

DJ

Okay. Food. Great idea. You do
look hungry. You're starving,
withering away. Get the room service
menu.

TIFFANY

(screams)

No! Don't you remember anything?

DJ looks startled.

DJ

What -- what?

TIFFANY

Never, never, never! You never know
where room service's hands have been.
I'll get us something from the
vending machine. Then we'll talk
babies. And what an amazing
vocabulary ours will have.

Tiffany opens the door and comes face to face with --

The real Desmond James, grinning broadly, billboard dimples.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Oh my god! Desmond! Oh god!

DJ jumps up.

DJ

What? What's the matter?

DJ comes closer.

TIFFANY

No! Stay there. Please.

DJ

Why did you call me like that? All
frantic.

TIFFANY

I was just practicing screaming out
your name. In ecstasy. For next
time. So it'll be natural.

DJ looks worn out. He pops an aspirin.

DJ
 You are the noisiest muse I've ever
 had.

TIFFANY
 I'll be back. I'm really hungry.

Tiffany closes door quickly behind her.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The hallway is tiled in a black and white checkerboard.

DESMOND
 I've been ravenous as well.

TIFFANY
 (gasping)
 Oh my god. Oh my god. It's you.
 Desmond. Exactly how I remembered.

Tiffany points below his belt.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 And no curvature. You're straight,
 right?

Desmond shakes a room key.

DESMOND
 One sure way to find out.

Desmond yanks Tiffany down the hall. She carefully avoids
 the black tiles as she's dragged.

ANGLE ON - DOOR

Desmond pulls Tiffany inside and slams the door shut. He
 reopens the door and firmly places the hotel sign on the
 knob.

CLOSE ON: LONG CORRIDOR

Row of doors with "Do Not Disturb" signs. Linger on
 Desmond's door. Sign reads, "Disturbed"

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL FRONT DESK

The desolate lobby is decorated in bargain basement
 Christmas. Clifford stands impatiently as the phone rings
 and rings.

CLIFFORD
 Oh, for Christ's sake.

Clifford manhandles the phone.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 It's a full house at the Gamble
 Hotel. Can I help you?

Pause.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
 Listen, you don't want to stay in
 this place. Trust me. They don't
 play with a full deck here.

Clifford hangs up the phone roughly. He hits the silver bell
 on the counter. He hits it again. Again. He plays Jingle
 Bells.

Finally, Aunt Sophie pops up from below. She's spaced.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
 I'll just use your passkey, Aunt
 Soph. I'm looking for Tiffany.

Clifford grabs the key ring from Sophie's neck and runs down
 the hall. Aunt Sophie stares wordlessly.

AUNT SOPHIE
 (sings)
 Bells on boptails ring.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL, DESMOND'S SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

TIFFANY
 But how did you know I was even here?

DESMOND
 Your last message said you would call
 back. About the 800 grand. When you
 didn't, I got worried. About you, I
 mean. Joy told me where to find you.

TIFFANY
 Oh, Joy.

Desmond grabs Tiffany close. He presses his lips on hers.

DESMOND
 Tiff. What's going on? How is it
 you can tell the difference --

He mashes his face into hers.

DESMOND (CONT'D)
 -- Between name brand and generic
 peanut butter --

Desmond backs Tiffany up against the wall.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

-- But you can't tell the difference between your former lover and some loser off the street?

He unbuttons her blouse as Tiffany wriggles.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

Lover and Loser, Tiffany. You're a writer. Do the spelling. Similar words yet one letter makes all the difference.

TIFFANY

Desmond. Please. I promise I'll explain everything.

DESMOND

No need, Sugar. I'll just have a quick visit with that shlubb down the hall and we'll be all set.

Desmond eyes the bed.

TIFFANY

Shlubb? No. No! He's very fragile. Lemme explain things to him. I'll be right back. Give me a few minutes. I just -- well, I want to look my best for you.

Tiffany extricates herself. She walks out leaving Desmond staring after her.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tiffany opens door and walks straight into Clifford. She has the hiccups.

TIFFANY

No. No. No. (Hic) God, no.

CLIFFORD

Tiffany. We've got to talk. In here. I've already checked. It's vacant.

Clifford opens door and beckons her in. Tiffany remains hiccuping defiantly out in hallway.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Go in. Or I'll say what I have to say out here and I know how you hate to wear our dirty laundry.

TIFFANY
 (hiccuping between words)
 Air. (hic) Air our dirty laundry.
 (hic)

CLIFFORD
 We're being sued. For hundreds of
 thousands of dollars.

TIFFANY
 Sued? I knew it. (hic) You never
 should've invented that sex toy.
 Using a -- (hic)-- ping-pong paddle
 is one thing but that -- (hic)

CLIFFORD
 Listen up. Stop writing with that
 egomaniac hick writer. We need
 every penny from this gig for
 ourselves. To pay my attorney, Huck.
 From now on, he's out on his hump.

TIFFANY
 Huck? (Hic)

Clifford points down the hall

CLIFFORD
 The hick, not Huck.

TIFFANY
 Hack, not hick. He's a hack. (hic)

CLIFFORD
 A heck of a hack.

TIFFANY
 Huh? Huck? (hic)

CLIFFORD
 No, that hick hack.

Sophie rides by on a bicycle.

SOPHIE
 Hulk of a hunk.

TIFFANY
 Who? (hic)

SOPHIE
 Huck!

Sophie toots her horn.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Hark! A honk!

CLIFFORD AND TIFFANY
 (barely a whisper)
 Take a ...

Clifford and Tiffany point down the hall.

CLIFFORD AND TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 (shouting)
 Hike!

They hurry in the room, slamming the door in Sophie's face.
 Tiffany holds her breath and looks ill.

CLIFFORD
 What's wrong?

TIFFANY
 I can't stand that cologne you're
 wearing.

CLIFFORD
 Well, you made me stop wearing it
 when you were pregnant. It's my
 favorite brand. Russel Sprouts.
 C'mon let's go tell that Shmuck in
 the next room it's over.

TIFFANY
 No, Clifford! I'll tell him alone.
 I don't want to mess things up. I
 still want to go to writer's
 workshop.

INT - GAMBLE HOTEL, DJ'S SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

Tiffany rushes in looking scattered.

DJ
 Whatcha get? Cheesepuffs?

TIFFANY
 Huh?

DJ
 From the vending machine. Where's
 your stash? I need some good stuff.
 Gotta be fortified if we're gonna
 talk babies.

Tiffany brushes imaginary crumbs off her blouse.

TIFFANY
 Oh. I was starving. I ate it on the
 way. That was thoughtless of me.
 Let me go get you something.

An odd look from DJ.

DJ

Never mind. Max Mother called on my cell phone while you were gone. Big trouble. They want a sample song written ASAP. He said Irving wants us to write a show with lots of kibbitzing. Sounds like cat food to me. Oh and he said we should have a Maven. Is that some kind of a blackbird? And he kept saying feh to me. Feh, feh, feh. I thought he had a fur-ball caught in his throat. How can this guy direct our show when he talks so funny?

TIFFANY

He doesn't talk funny, he talks Yiddish. As all Jewish people do, DJ. Maybe you should brush up on yours.

DJ

Yeah, maybe I should. Oh, hey. You're good with calling me DJ now? Desmond's not quite as pleasing to the ear, huh? I agree. Let's forget Desmond.

Tiffany keeps looking toward the door.

TIFFANY

Let's forget Desmond.

DJ

That's right. We'll start fresh. No past expectations. No remembered promises. A clean slate from this point on. Deal? Look, I'm even reaching out to you palms up. To show my good faith.

DJ holds both hands out, open palms.

Tiffany unbuttons her blouse, leans over him and places a full breast in each hand.

TIFFANY

I want you even more now.

DJ

(stammering)

I have to get something. A Yiddish dictionary. In my car. I'll be right back.

TIFFANY

No! I'll go. There's a couple of losers out wandering the halls. I want to report them to my Uncle.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Set to music. "Three Times A Lady," or "She Works Hard For the Money" perhaps.

A) Tiffany runs down checkerboard hallway, stepping only on white squares.

B) Tiffany rushes into Clifford's suite. She sits on chair. We see arguing faces.

C) Tiffany runs down checkerboard hallway, stepping only on white squares.

D) Tiffany opens door to Desmond's suite. He tries to kiss her. She holds a finger up to stop him. He continues. Arguing faces.

D) Tiffany runs down checkerboard hallway, stepping only on white squares.

E) Tiffany opens door to DJ's suite. They sit at the computer together. He types two words. She hugs him resolutely.

F) Tiffany runs down checkerboard hallway looking ragged. She's stepping on both black and white squares now.

G) Tiffany gallops into Clifford's suite. A stench of his cologne overwhelms her. She fans the air. Arguing faces.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

An inebriated LECHEROUS MAN watches Tiffany with keen interest as she leaves Clifford's room and enters hallway. He stands frozen, his door cracked open.

LECHEROUS MAN

This is me in 207. Can I be next?

TIFFANY

What? No, you don't understand. I'm working.

LECHEROUS MAN

(sings)

Workin' your way back to me, Babe.
With a burning love inside.

TIFFANY

Listen you scum. I'm not a hooker.
I'm a writer.

LECHEROUS MAN

A Hooker? A writer? Hey baby, I just thought you were the maid! I need to be vacuumed.

TIFFANY

You thought I was the maid? A cleaning woman? Whatsa matter? I couldn't be a hooker? I could be a hooker! I could be a helluva hooker. You wouldn't be able to afford a hooker like me! Check it out. Look at me from this angle.

Tiffany hikes up her skirt and turns to the side, thrusting her chest out.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

The maid! Do these look like scrubbing hands to you? Or do these look like rubbing hands?

Down the hall, Clifford, Desmond and DJ each open their doors. Tiffany, panics, opens Lecherous Man's door. She shoves him in, follows behind and slams door.

INT. LECHEROUS MAN'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

The bed is rumped, beer bottles litter the floor.

LECHEROUS MAN

Shit, I thought you were playing hard to get. And I was just getting hard.

Thrilled his maid ploy worked, he moves in for the kill, open mouthed.

TIFFANY

Oh! Is this the Jackpot Room?

LECHEROUS MAN

Huh?

TIFFANY

Don't you know? One lucky room has a television that doesn't work on channel 7.

Lecherous Man grabs the remote, and turns to channel 7.

ANGLE ON - THE TELEVISION

Pure snow.

LECHEROUS MAN

Dang! Look at that!

TIFFANY

Quick! Go to the lobby and claim your valuable prize!

LECHEROUS MAN

(mesmerized by TV static)
I would've thought this was just poltergeist crap. Thanks, doll.

TIFFANY

Hurry! There's a time limit.

Lecherous man makes a mad exit out the door, as Tiffany absentmindedly smiles and flips through all the channels. White snow on each.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Uncle Eddie, I can't believe you still haven't paid the cable bill.

INT. - BEAUTY SALON - DAY

Tiffany and Joy sit in chairs. Joy's hair is woven through a sieve hat. Never a Julia Roberts look-a-like, but at this moment she resembles Julia Child.

Tiffany sits adjacent at the manicurist table, aglow.

TIFFANY

-- and so I don't know how much longer I can keep the three of them separate. I can't explain it, Joy. I feel protective of DJ. I'm afraid things will change if he realizes I know his true identity. I know, I know. You would think I would be fuming at the man for keeping up a charade. And lying to me. But I'm not. Maybe I would have been before but something's different. We've crossed a line. And now that I know he's the wrong guy --

Tiffany removes her hand from bowl of water.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

I think he's definitely the right guy.

The HAIRSTYLIST applies white coloring with a paintbrush on Joy's strands.

JOY

Now I've heard everything. Mr. Wrong is Mr. Right, huh?

TIFFANY

He's not even my physical type. He's so -- he's just -- well, he's like a used easy-chair. You know, all the lumps and bumps in the right places. And sure, sometimes a coil springs out at you. But I'm comfortable. Whereas Desmond is like the newly upholstered couch you encase in plastic.

JOY

Tiffany, this isn't a furniture shopping spree. You already own a convertible sofa bed. Clifford! Why don't you try sleeping with him!

Tiffany makes a shushing gesture and looks away, a little ashamed.

JOY (CONT'D)

Unbelievable. This is like a friggin' repeat of college. Every guy wants Tiffany the cheerleader. DJ, Desmond, your husband. Gotta have Miss Rah-Rah. How about that guy over there?

Joy points to an elderly man, reading a magazine while waiting for a stylist to tease his wife's hair.

The geezer looks up and winks moronically at the women.

JOY (CONT'D)

And you. You never look before you leap. Then I'm always the one who has to talk common sense into you. Picking up the pieces. You don't even know this guy.

TIFFANY

But I've been up front and honest. I even told him I wanted to have a baby and he seemed into it. Two strangers who immediately fall into sync is such a rare thing, Joy. You've got to admit that.

JOY

Tiffany, do you even know who you're dealing with?

The hairstylist twirls Joy's chair around. Joy now faces Tiffany head-on. The sunlight glares through the window, illuminating Joy's face. It is a mean face.

The manicurist closes the curtains.

JOY (CONT'D)

It's always been this way. It's always so easy for you. You always get a choice.

TIFFANY

Which one?

Tiffany holds several polish bottles up.

JOY

That one on the end.

Joy points to a hideous purple.

TIFFANY

Really, ya sure? I'm meeting DJ tomorrow and I want to look gorgeous.

JOY

Absolutely that one, then.

Joy turns her head away and smiles wickedly.

HAIRSTYLIST

(to Joy)

Hon, you shouldn't smile like that. You're getting those little laugh lines.

JOY

Doncha think Tiffany should do something to her hair? What do you think, ladies? A cut, a perm? Help me out here.

Several women in the beauty parlor look over.

JOY (CONT'D)

Something really special in honor of her new life.

Tiffany looks unsure as all the ladies nod in unison. The hairstylist applies more white color on her paintbrush.

I/E. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

A PAINTER in white overalls applies more white color on his paintbrush.

Sign on door reads, "Ted Ritter, Licensed Chiropractor"

The painter completely covers the sign with masking tape and begins to paint the door.

Directly across, two elevator doors open to reveal DJ looking up at ceiling.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
 Oh, I'd know if he were shooting
 blanks. And he'd be history.

The word "history" echoes several times in the hallway.

Suddenly DJ looks like Abe Lincoln. Now he's back to plain old DJ.

DJ
 Can I put in a request for Hemingway
 next time?

PAINTER
 Whatcha talkin 'bout, man?

DJ takes a deep breath, covers groin area and walks through open door.

DJ
 (quietly)
 G.S.

SUBTITLE: Gimme Strength!

ANGLE ON - COUCH

Three male patients sit reading men's magazines. A HOMELY FEMALE PATIENT sits on a side chair. She blows her nose and sneezes. A crusty RECEPTIONIST, sits behind counter with an opaque sliding window.

DJ looks around, carefully scrutinizing the faces of the male patients. It is unearthly quiet save for the sound of magazine pages turning.

The receptionist slides her window noisily.

RECEPTIONIST
 (loudly)
 Do you have an appointment?

DJ
 No, thank god, No!

DJ looks around, notices that everyone now stares.

DJ (CONT'D)
 I mean I'm just visiting.

RECEPTIONIST
 Visiting? You're visiting. Whom are
 you visiting, Sir?

DJ
 Nobody in particular. The
 surroundings, the people...

He winces.

DJ (CONT'D)
The equipment.

RECEPTIONIST
We don't give tours, Sir.

DJ
Oh, well I'll just visit you then.

The Receptionist raises her eyebrows.

DJ (CONT'D)
I just thought we could chat a bit about the comings and goings around here. Particularly the comings. These perfectly healthy, unsuspecting lambs behind me. And how they'll feel going.

DJ looks over his shoulder and lowers his voice.

DJ (CONT'D)
It might be too late for them but it's not for me. I'm doing my homework. So tell me, you're here everyday. What's the worst --

RECEPTIONIST
Actually, this is my first day.

DJ
Oh, how nice. What kind of work did you do before this?

RECEPTIONIST
I demonstrated the Chop-O-Matic Dicer and Splicer.

DJ looks pained, takes a few steps backward.

DJ
Maybe I should leave. I was just wondering what a typical procedure was like?

MALE PATIENT #1
I couldn't help but overhear. The doctor evaluates each of us on an individual basis. But he always gives everyone a really vigorous massage, focusing on the area he just worked on. It's awesome.

DJ looks this patient up and down.

Behind the receptionist, the large, muscular Doctor saunters by, cracking his knuckles loudly.

MALE PATIENT #2

Yeah. With me, he alternated heat and ice on the area. Mmm, hmmm.

RECEPTIONIST

Oh yes. But that's after the doctor is satisfied that he's stretched you out as much as possible.

Receptionist looks proud.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

I learned that in my training.

DJ

Stretched? Stretched?

RECEPTIONIST

Of course, the really unfortunate ones sometimes end up wearing a brace.

The last male patient enthusiastically jumps into the mix.

PATIENT #3

Hey dude, I just want you to know the most important thing of all. Since he did his thing on me, there's not a day in my life I've ever been stiff again.

DJ looks faint.

The Homely Female Patient is anxious to chime in but can't stop sneezing. Finally she makes an attempt.

HOMELY FEMALE PATIENT

Believe me. I'm a changed --

Homely FEMALE PATIENT sneezes during the first syllable of the word "woman."

HOMELY FEMALE PATIENT (CONT'D)

--man since the good Doctor's manipulations.

A petrified DJ bolts out the door, knocking the painter off his ladder.

CLOSE ON: PAINT BUCKET

As white paint pours out.

I/E. GAINS' KITCHEN - DAY

CLOSE ON: MILK CARTON

As white milk pours out into Clifford's glass below.

The doorbell chimes. Clifford looks through the side curtains. He opens the door.

CLIFFORD
What the hell is going on?

DESMOND
I was about to ask you the same.

CLIFFORD
Alright, let's calm down and figure things out. C'mon in.

Clifford pulls Desmond in firmly by the arm.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
That's a great color on you, Babe.

Clifford pats Desmond on the ass. They kiss.

INT. BEAUTY PARLOR - DAY

Tiffany sobs under an old fashioned, oversized hair dryer. The hairstylist pats her hand.

HAIRSTYLIST
But you haven't even seen it yet.
It'll look better dry. Promise.

Tiffany shakes her head. The hairstylist walks away. Joy leans inward and shouts above the din of the dryer.

JOY
You have to know that I didn't want to tell you now, Tiff. Like this. It's just that I see you're serious about this baby thing. I told Dr. Spanky it would be best if you heard it from someone who cares about you.

TIFFANY
I was so close to my dream. I can't believe my body is betraying me like this. Damn those fibroids. This is my punishment for not having my priorities in order. I wasted my chances.

Tiffany reaches out to hug Joy from under the hair dryer.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Thanks for always being there for me.

JOY

Don't worry. An emergency hysterectomy is not a dangerous thing. We just have to act fast.

INT. GAINS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Clifford and Desmond are seated very close on a love seat.

CLIFFORD

We just have to act fast. Everything has gone to shit. I should've known it was too good to be true when you were the guy she called to elaborate with.

DESMOND

Collaborate.

CLIFFORD

That's what I said. Anyhow, I couldn't believe my luck that morning, when I heard your answering machine on our speakerphone.

Clifford takes a slug of milk.

DESMOND

Yeah, what a break, huh? All we had to do was keep her busy and you and I could've been frolicking in our free private hotel suite--

Desmond wipes Clifford's lip.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

-- Milk mustache. Anyhow, with my talent, in two weeks, a cool 800 grand would've been ours. Well, it could still work out that way.

CLIFFORD

Dream on, Sweetlips. This DJ guy knows he's hit the jackpot. Sex with my wife and a sweet writing deal to boot. All because he had the lucky initials. Don't kid yourself. He smells money and he ain't about to be knocked off the scent. And that's a fact.

DESMOND

So this is where you live? These curtains are the ultimate in tacky.

CLIFFORD

Yeah, Tiffany made em. Listen, how are we getting rid of this guy? Exposing him exposes our relationship. The worst thing is those crazy Mothers Brothers won't do the deal without him.

DESMOND

Those Mothers.

CLIFFORD

Yeah, we're all meeting tomorrow for golf, some steam and a group massage. Tiffany's Uncle arranged it in his hotel.

DESMOND

Sounds delightful. Can I come? My back is terribly sore.

CLIFFORD

You stay away. That would be the worst thing. They'll take their money and run if things don't seem kosher.

DESMOND

How's this DJ gotten by this far?

CLIFFORD

Their head honcho, some guy we've never even met, Irving Blatfarb, took a liking to him. They all think he's this Russian Jew.

Desmond fires off impressive staccato Russian. Clifford looks questioningly.

DESMOND

That means we'll give him just enough rope to hang himself.

From the next room the parrot shouts.

MURDOCK (O.S.)

Fuck you!

CLOSE ON: DESMOND'S FACE

His eyes are huge.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NEXT MORNING

DJ and Clifford rummage around, clanking lockers.

CLIFFORD
What's your handicap?

DJ
Never play.

CLIFFORD
You don't play? Why did you agree to meet?

DJ
It was important to the deal.

CLIFFORD
Well, you're just gonna have to fake it. Like you do with writing. Or pray you get lucky, like you did with table tennis.

DJ
Actually, I agreed to golf, hoping it would run long and we'd skip the sauna and massage thing. I got a little problem with that.

CLIFFORD
Oh yeah. What's your problem?

DJ
I'd rather not say. I'm just not comfortable with that stuff lately.

CLIFFORD
Hiding something, eh? Herpes outbreak. Swastika tattoo? Wait, I got it. You're not circumcised!

DJ looks annoyed.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Yeah. That's it, isn't it? You expect us to believe you're of the Jewish perspiration but you still got your foreskin. Quick! What day of the week is Chanukah?

DJ chuckles at Clifford's pronouncing Chanukah with the "CH" sound as in church.

DJ
Well that depends. Considering there are EIGHT days of Chanukah.

CLIFFORD
Oh, how convenient for you. This year.

DJ
 Buddy, I don't know what you're inferring. But you're clawing up the wrong scratching post. Now forget I brought it up and let's play golf.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

Clifford, DJ and two of the Mother Brothers stand by a golf cart. All four men wear white shorts and pastel colored golf shirts. Clifford appears unusually upbeat. It's bright and sunny, the perfect golf day. Greenery abounds.

CLIFFORD
 You gentlemen hungry? I took a look at the menu inside. Looks like there's going to be a circumcision today.

The twin brothers look at one another. Boris lightly taps his ears. DJ stops walking in disbelief and looks at Clifford behind him.

BORIS
 What? What did you just say?

CLIFFORD
 I said looks like they're going to be serving chicken today.

Clifford grins at DJ, settles his ball on the tee and gyrates his hips back and forth.

Remarkably, he hits the ball hard. The sucker flies.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
 (bellowing)
 FORE...skin!

Clifford's ball swooshes past an ornate castle with a waterfall and it's clear...this is a miniature golf course.

Clifford looks back at the incredulous faces of the other three gentlemen. He wipes sweat from his brow. He sniffs under his armpits.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
 Whew! I'm sweating here. Really starting to aspire. How does a nice group shower sound?

The men all look at one another and shrug.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Uncle Eddie has called an emergency staff meeting. A dozen employees sit on ancient sofas listening intently.

UNCLE EDDIE

I just heard they're cutting golf short and heading for the steam room. I need two towel attendants and --

1ST EMPLOYEE

What steam room?

UNCLE EDDIE

I cranked up the furnace in the boiler room. It's good, it's good. No worries for Eddie. Okay, now I need 4 volunteers that can give a good massage?

Eddie points to some raised hands. There's a man in Chef's attire, there's a maid, there's a plumber and there's... nobody else volunteering. Eddie looks around the room. A buff looking man in a tank top browses the brochure table, his back to the group.

EDDIE

You there. You look like you've got some arms. Ever given a professional massage?

The man turns and grins. It's Desmond James with dimples to spare.

INT. GAINS' BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Tiffany opens her bedroom curtains. She sits alone rewinding Clifford's silly little tape recorder. She presses the "play" button.

CLIFFORD (V.O.)

Even better than motorcycle seatbelts. Airbags. Motorcycle airbags. That's it! Call Evil Kneivel!

Tiffany pushes fast forward button and then "play" again. A phone rings on the tape.

CLIFFORD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Hello?

MIMI (V.O.)

For a wonderful genius, Cliffy
When we first met, I was a bit iffy
But all that changed so swiftly
With your truly awesome Stiffy
It gets things ready in just a jiffy.
I couldn't ask for a better gift.

Clifford's faint moans come from the tape.

CLIFFORD (V.O.)

Oh, Mimi.

TIFFANY

Oh my god. Clifford and Mimi are having Poem Sex!

INT. MAKESHIFT STEAMROOM - DAY

The towel attendants turn out to be women. Giggling, with one hand covering their eyes, they distribute small hand towels to the four naked men who enter. The two Mother brothers and Clifford openly gawk down at DJ who enters confidently.

CLIFFORD

Under the CIRCumstances, I think a massage will be great for the CIRCulation. A CIRCular motion to CIRCumvent any friction.

As Clifford talks, he stupidly gestures with his head toward DJ's lower half.

DJ

Alright, alright. I don't know what you're babbling about. But here's some hard evidence that you're full of it.

DJ drops his towel. All stare.

CLIFFORD

Wow, actually, we call that CIRCumstantial evidence. This sure puts an odd angle on things!

The two towel attendants snicker, whisper and point. They bend and contort their hand toward the left, trying to simulate what they see below DJ's waist.

TOWEL ATTENDANT

Oohhh, I just remembered. I gotta get my left hand turn signal fixed.

INT. RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Unknown Female Chef lifts lid and stirs contents of crock pot.

CLOSE ON: CROCK POT

Fingers switch dial to "embroil."

INT. MAKESHIFT MASSAGE CENTER - NIGHT

The four men enjoy a group massage in a cramped, hot room.

CLOSE ON: MOTHERS BROTHERS FACES

Boris and Morris' bizarre expressions as they rest on their stomachs with two male masseurs working them over.

The two men are recruited Gamble Hotel kitchen help. They wear aprons and chef's hats. One uses a rolling pin and the other employs a potato masher on the skin. An oven timer dings. Morris cringes as he catches sight of a carrot peeler headed for his back.

MORRIS' FLASHBACK - WILD CARD CAFE - DAY

MORRIS

A real massage, Gertie. Please
Bubula?

MORRIS' WIFE

No massage!

Soup spills everywhere as she slams fist into table.

END FLASHBACK

ANGLE ON - CLIFFORD

He's this year's recipient of the Ugly Maid's Massage. She lubricates him with sprays of Windex then uses her feather duster on all the right places. Clifford stares jealously at-

DJ, who relaxes under the firm-handed Desmond. Suddenly and without warning, Desmond begins to pound, push and pummel DJ with tremendous force. DJ groans. Clifford smiles and gives thumbs up.

INT. GAINS' BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Tiffany closes her bedroom curtains. She furiously brushes her newly permed hair. The cut is short, the color strange and the curl kinky. The more she brushes, the frizzier it becomes until it sticks out at perpendicular angles.

She picks up a mirror and looks into it. She sticks out her tongue. A younger Tiffany from twenty years ago sticks out her tongue back. This younger REFLECTION speaks.

REFLECTION

This is what you have to show for
twenty years? A new hairstyle? I
thought you'd have a kid by now or
something.

TIFFANY

Hah! What a pipe dream that was.
I'm too old anyhow. But there's
always my writing.

REFLECTION

Yeah, right. I dropped by the library. Guess all the poetry books you wrote were checked out.

TIFFANY

Actually, it turns out you have to know someone in the business to get published.

REFLECTION

Yeah, yeah, whatever. We really had a lot of goals in 1984. What the hell happened? I didn't think you were such a quitter. You seem to let everyone else in your life override what it is you actually want. So what have you been doing? Putting out? Putting up? Putting on?

TIFFANY

What is this, my college reunion? Most people get advance notice, you know. So they can get a face lift and invent juicy stories.

REFLECTION

You're almost 40. One more month. Mirrors don't lie, you know. Only people do. Whoops. You better answer that.

TIFFANY

Answer what?

REFLECTION

Your wake-up call.

Tiffany is startled as the phone rings.

TIFFANY

Hello?

DJ (O.S.)

You sound quiet. Did I wake you?

TIFFANY

No, I was just doing some reflecting.

DJ (O.S.)

We need to meet.

INT. THE GAMBLE HOTEL LOBBY - AFTERNOON

A man holds the door open for Tiffany to enter. Tiffany wears a red dress and has camouflaged her ugly hair under a hat studded with poker chips. The man turns appreciatively at Tiffany's backside.

DJ watches Tiffany head his way with pride.

TIFFANY

You called just in time. I've been so terribly sad. But I just realized I still have a chance. Something tells me there's still a chance. If you'll cooperate.

Tiffany looks up at DJ hopefully.

DJ

Baby stuff later. Major problem. We can't get in our room. One week left to nail this thing, and we can't get to our computer. And the whole idea of meeting this Irving Blatfarb maniac has me spooked.

Tiffany kisses DJ. He ignores her.

DJ (CONT'D)

Housekeeping has to pick today to re-grout the tile floor?

TIFFANY

Stop grumbling. They're giving this place a face lift for our show. It's exciting! We can work right here until our room is ready.

Tiffany plops onto a tattered lobby couch and pats the filthy cushion next to her. Dust rises.

DJ slowly moves toward the sofa like a man who's been badly beaten. Tiffany stares in horror.

DJ

Massage today.

Tiffany nods, eyebrows raised.

DJ (CONT'D)

Okay. Did you work on the lyrics like we talked about?

Tiffany reaches in her pocket. She salutes DJ.

TIFFANY

Yes, Sir. Got em right here. You're sure all business today.

DJ

Good. I know you said you couldn't sing but I brought a little background music to help you relax.

TIFFANY

Oh, that was thoughtful. But there's no way I'm using that thing.

Tiffany clears her throat.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

(horrific singing)

We're keeping our vision in focus.
A little bit of magic and a lotta hocus pocus.
We're the The Gamble Hotel and that's not bogus.
The best place to stay in all of Las Vogus.

DJ

Las Vogus? That's what you come up with? Las Vogus! Oh God, we're done. We're finished. Helloooo Mr. Blatfarb!

TIFFANY

Well, nothing rhymed with Las Vegas. If it's done right, the audience will love it.

DJ

Gimme strength. You just changed an entire city's name! What did the mayor say?

Aunt Sophie enters from a curtained door in the back. She wears her signature short skirt. A PLUMBER, trying to keep a straight face, gingerly holds his toilet plunger, while following closely behind.

SOPHIE

(to Tiffany)

Tiffany dear. This is our B.S. Engineer. Blockage and Stoppage. He needs to get into the entire first floor. Uncle Eddie has the passkey. Have you seen your Unc?

PLUMBER

Yeah, he seems to have given us the slip.

SOPHIE

You stop that right now, Mister --
Mister Tidybowl Man! I warned you
earlier about my slip.

Sophie takes the plunger and suctions it onto the plumber's
face.

TIFFANY

S.F.F.H.L.

SUBTITLE: She Finally Flipped Her Lid.

The plumber laughs good-naturedly, thoroughly amused. Sophie
leads the plumber away by the plunger which is still attached
to his face. She berates him as they disappear through the
curtained door. His hearty laughter trails behind.

DJ

Tiffany. On that note. I have
something I should confess to you.
And it's very difficult for me.

Tiffany appears jittery. The jig is up. But she wants one
more dance.

TIFFANY

(speed talking)

No, no, stop. There's nothing you
need to confess. Don't. Confession
is actually awful for the soul.
Everything's fine, really. So you
don't like Las Vogus? Big deal.
I'll change it.

DJ puts a hand up.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Let me finish. There's nothing you
can say to change where we're at.
You said it yourself. Clean slate.
Starting over. You could be the man
in the moon and I'd still want you.
Let's just get this show done.
C'mon, I'll sing some more. I'll
even use your karaoke machine. Here.

Tiffany turns on the microphone with a pleading look. She
hums a few bars of "The Way We Were." DJ leans closer to
her.

DJ

(amplified by mic)

I'm glad you feel that way. Open
minded. Because, I want to be fair
with you, Tiffany. Many years ago.
I had a vasectomy.

Tiffany stops singing. She lunges at DJ, battering him with the microphone and winding the wire around his neck.

TIFFANY

I hate you! Get out of my sight!

ANGLE ON - THE CORNER OF THE LOBBY

Hidden behind a fake Christmas tree, a dozen or so people have gathered. The LEADER holds a big sign that reads, "Gamblers Anonymous."

The group sits quietly, reading from their special "bible." Some meditate. All neurotically react to the sound of Tiffany's voice, loud and clear over the microphone.

BACK TO SCENE

TIFFANY (O.S.)

(amplified)

How could you? You got snipped? You let some doctor syphon your sperm? You may as well have handed him a bag marked 'Future Best Selling Author.' You knew how important a baby was to me right up front. And you said nothing all this time!

The entire Gambler's Anonymous Group peeks through the branches of the Christmas tree, watching with interest.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Well, you're just going to get it reversed. Right this very minute.

Tiffany taps on her wrist watch.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Go on. I'll wait. Reverse it.

Tiffany impatiently drums her fingernails on the table. DJ shakes his head vehemently.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

I'm completely out of time. And sick of letting everyone control my life. You go back under the knife. And you do it before it's my turn to go under the knife. Cuz then it'll be too late.

DJ looks pained.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

You got us into this fix. Now fix getting fixed.

(MORE)

TIFFANY(CONT'D)

Reverse the vasectomy or we're
history. Pain or no pain. I haven't
got time.

Sophie struts by and leans into the open microphone.

SOPHIE

(sings like Carly Simon)
I haven't got time for the pain.

DJ waves his arms in protest.

DJ

You have no idea how much I've
already done for you, woman. Put up
with for you. Been through because
of you! Believe it or not, it's not
all about you.

SOPHIE

(sings)
You're so vain. You probably think
this song is about you.

DJ ignores Sophie. He's focused.

DJ

I actually looked into a reversal. I
don't know what I was thinking. But
I draw the line at extreme pain. And
heat. And ice. And cracked
knuckles. And stretching. And
braces. And sex changes. I can't
wait to see what's next.

SOPHIE

(sings)
Anticipation --

In her wild exasperation to slap Sophie, Tiffany's hat falls
off. Her beauty shop disaster is revealed.

DJ does a double take.

DJ

Ludicrous hair. That's what's next.

DJ looks up to the heavens.

DJ (CONT'D)

Gimme strength. Definitely drawing
the line at the hair. And no baby.
No way. No how. I'm out.

Tiffany throws her hat at DJ. She narrows her eyes.

TIFFANY

Listen, you fraud. I knew the moment we were on that boat you weren't Desmond. There was no mix-up. It's just that I didn't have the heart to dash your hopes. And it was my week to do some charity work. But I've known all along.

DJ looks hurt.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Here's three last acronyms for you, Mister. F.Y. F.Y. And... F.Y!

Tiffany makes for the lobby exit door. A Christmas ornament catches her hair as she storms by, toppling the entire tree. She walks with as much dignity as she can muster while dragging an 8 foot, fully decorated Pine behind her.

Onlookers from Gambler's Anonymous applaud. A mad frenzy ensues as money is exchanged all around.

LEADER

Well, I'm out. I had twenty riding on the woman with the ludicrous hair. How'd you do, Bob?

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF GAMBLE HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Desmond stands on the curb staring incredulously at the disarrayed sight of Tiffany scrambling through the door.

TIFFANY

Look! I'm in no mood for you. And don't think you can blackmail me with telling my husband I was going to embark on an affair with the likes of you. You wanna know the kicker? Clifford has actually been the one sleeping around on me!

Desmond looks interested and just a tad guilty.

DESMOND

Oh? Clifford's seeing someone? Is he cute?

TIFFANY

He? What do you mean he?

DESMOND

I mean Clifford. Is he handsome? Never mind that. Who is he seeing?

TIFFANY

This little Betty Crocker slut in my writing class. She writes about baked goods. I heard the whole thing on his stupid tape recorder. She wrote this nauseating poem to Cliffy. All about his stiffy.

Tiffany stifles a scream.

DESMOND

Really. And you're sure about this?

Desmond looks angry.

TIFFANY

I'm sure about this and a whole lot more. I'm sure that I'm through writing this whole show.

Tiffany hurls the tree and pushes past a stunned Desmond.

DESMOND

(yelling after Tiffany)

I think you're just having a ludicrous hair day.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

Desmond enters lobby door and stops dead in his tracks. He gives DJ the once over and winces at his tacky clothing.

DESMOND

(under breath)

Damn, this shmo is really giving me a bad name around town. This has gotta end. Right now.

INT. GAIN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Clifford is talking excitedly on the phone. The entire time he talks, the bird distracts us with his antics.

Murdock hangs upside-down from his swing. He saunters cockily across his perch with a jive head-bob. He chatters away incessantly, often interspersing Chaucer's Canterbury Tales with profanity.

MURDOCK

(softly in background)

Fuck you, fuck you, fuck you...

CLIFFORD

Listen Mimi, you can have my Stiffy all you want. Come over right now and get some use out of it.

Clifford glares at the bird, who continues to antagonize him. He slams a lamp shade over the cage.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Oh, big deal! Just wear a pair of dark glasses. Or put a lamp shade on your head. Look, you can't let laser surgery turn you into a caged bird. C'mon by. Spread your wings. Promise I won't laugh.

Clifford hangs up the phone.

MURDOCK

(loud and clear)

Fuck you!

CLIFFORD

That's it for you. Flying Asshole. You're gonna chill out a bit.

Clifford grabs the squawking parrot in his fist. Without hesitation, he walks to the kitchen and throws the bird into the freezer.

MURDOCK

(hysterically)

Fuck you!

Clifford slams the door and brushes a few stray feathers off his hands.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL FRONT DESK - NIGHT

Desmond and DJ shake hands.

DJ

Hey, that was quite a massage earlier.

DESMOND

Irving Blatfarb. Nice to finally meet you formally.

DJ stops shaking immediately.

DJ

You're Irving Blatfarb? Somehow I pictured someone a lot older. Well, I don't mind telling you, Irv. Can I call you Irv? You've been my worst nightmare, buddy. Heard a lot about you. None of it very good.

DESMOND

I've had an earful lately too. It's why I gave the massage.

(MORE)

DESMOND (CONT'D)

To check up on things. Overheard the show is stalled. We can't have that now, can we, Desmond.

DJ shakes his head.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

I figure you and I can knock this thing out in a few days. Who needs the others? A bunch of inept, cheating phonies and users. You're the genuine article, the only real writer in the bunch. The Mother Brothers can't stop talking about Desmond James. Desmond James this, Desmond James that. You've made quite a name for yourself.

DJ looks pleased.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

Too bad it isn't actually your name.

DJ's backs up.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

What does DJ stand for anyhow? I know D is for Disgusting? Help me out with the J.

INT. HOSPITAL FRONT DESK - NIGHT

Nurses bustle behind desk as Tiffany looks grim. The one closest to Tiffany is the kindly nurse we've seen from the newborn nursery.

NURSE

Okay. Nothing to eat or drink by mouth after midnight the night before. And make sure you have a good friend or someone you can trust. To drive you home and help.

TIFFANY

Joy Winters will take care of me. Is she scheduled to work that day?

The nurse checks her list.

NURSE

She sure is. Cheer up Sweetie. Babies aren't all they're cracked up to be. Who needs the spit-up and the noise? As long as you've got yourself a good, loving man. That's what matters.

Tiffany begins to weep.

INT. GAINS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mimi begins to weep. She's chopping onions. She stands next to Clifford in a whirlwind of kitchen activity. Flour on their faces and hair.

CLIFFORD

Mimi, you'll appreciate this. Ever order a really decent steak in a restaurant? You know, special of the day. Cuts like butter, seasoned well, nice texture.

Mimi looks up, interested.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

You're almost finished. Maybe two bites left when you see it. A bottle of steak sauce. Al brand Steak sauce next to you on the table. It was there the whole time. So you pour some slowly on your plate.

Mimi looks flushed.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

You dip your last two bites in the sauce and wow. I mean really wow. But suddenly you're mad. Mad and sad. You ate almost the whole steak with nothing on it. You could've had it really special. But you ate it plain.

Mimi is turned on.

MIMI

Mmmm, yes. Bare steak. Naked meat.

CLIFFORD

No Mimi. This isn't sexual. You're missing the point of my metaphor. My great anthology. And of all people, I thought you would get it.

Mimi touches her dark glasses.

MIMI

I can barely see a thing. Hope I'm not making too much of a mess.

Actually, Mimi has been chopping a banana into the onions for a while now.

MIMI (CONT'D)

This is the last of my operations. I think I've had every surgery known to mankind. Did you know they extracted skin from my mouth and injected it into my butt?

Mimi purses her lips.

CLIFFORD

So if you wanted to give someone lip service, you'd have to hang a BA?

Mimi turns toward the kitchen sink as Clifford opens the freezer.

ANGLE ON - FREEZER

Murdock is frozen solid. A green icy mass. One determined wing sticks defiantly straight up. Clifford looks closer. And closer still. The wing's feathers. No doubt about it. One final time. The bird is flipping Clifford the bird.

Clifford quickly slams the freezer door.

CLIFFORD

Uh, I have to check on something. Be right back.

As Clifford exits, Mimi busies herself stirring batter.

MIMI

(an afterthought)

Oops, forgot to defrost the rock cornish game hen.

Mimi opens the freezer and feels around by braille. Finally she grabs the frozen parrot and tosses him in a foil-lined pan which she readies for the oven.

INT. THE GAMBLE HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Sophie and Eddie busily repair their Christmas tree, watching out of the corner of their eyes, the fallout between Desmond and DJ.

DESMOND

So Tiffany had this plan to seduce you into doing the show for us. She and her husband weren't able to hack the writing so she concocted the whole mistaken identity bit.

Desmond lights up a cigarette.

DESMOND (CONT'D)

The whole thing was motivated by money. I don't blame you if you want to walk. I'm happy to throw twenty-five hundred your way for your trouble. Think of it as a thank you from me and the Mothers Brothers.

DJ clicks on the Karaoke microphone, speaks purposefully into it.

DJ

That's okay. I thought I was in this for the money. But, now I know. I wasn't. Thanks folks.

DJ takes a small bow. Uncle Eddie looks kindly in his direction.

INT. GAINS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mimi uses a bizarre eggbeater contraption as she whirs a glossy mixture in a bowl.

Tiffany enters, red eyed, through the side kitchen door.

Mimi shuts off the little device.

MIMI

Oh hey there. Cliffy will be right back. Hope you don't mind? I just can't get enough of his Stiffy.

TIFFANY

(defeated)

Oh. So that's what they call it in England?

MIMI

Nothing like it there. I just adore how quickly it goes.

TIFFANY

Wham, bam, thank you ma'am!

MIMI

You've been keeping it to yourself, but I told him he should go public right away.

TIFFANY

Well, you're certainly generous with what isn't yours.

MIMI

Oh, it must be shared. It's gonna revolutionize the merengue industry.

TIFFANY

There's a merengue industry?

MIMI

Beating his egg whites into beautiful stiff peaks like he does.

TIFFANY

Boy, sex and food are all the same for you, huh?

MIMI

My fiancé, he's the head chef at Caesar's Palace. He's gonna come check out Cliffy's Stiffy next week.

TIFFANY

He is?

MIMI

Or if you don't mind, I can just stick it in a little bag and bring it to him in for a brief trial?

TIFFANY

You can? What?!!

MIMI

Yeah, he might order two dozen of these babies.

Mimi holds up the egg-beater contraption imprinted with the words, "Cliffy's Stiffy."

TIFFANY

Let me get this straight. You want a piece of the action from Clifford's invention but you're not sleeping with him?

Mimi wrinkles her nose.

MIMI

Eww, God, no. Is that a prerequisite?

INT. THE GAMBLE HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Sophie and Eddie rally around a sunken DJ. He's a deflated soufflé, slumped in his chair. Sophie removes a Christmas wreath from the wall and slides it under his head as a pillow.

DJ

Thanks, folks. I'll be fine. Back to my boat. Back to my life. This was fun while it lasted.

SOPHIE

You live on a boat? Is there a boat
slip?

EDDIE

Slip? Slip? Nobody cares about your
slip, woman!

Eddie shakes his wife's shoulders.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

So that was the infamous Irving
Blatfarb, huh? Funny, I pictured a
much older man. Sort of a Moses
slash Godfather type holding the Ten
Commandments.

They look through the glass lobby door, watching Desmond
pace. Suddenly a taxicab zips up and Clifford springs out.
His forehead is still dusted with flour. The two men hug as
the threesome look puzzled from inside the lobby.

EXT. THE GAMBLE HOTEL CURB SIDE - NIGHT

DESMOND

Pattycake, pattycake. Hello baker's
Man. Whose muffin you been rolling
and patting and marking with a C?

Clifford laughs. Desmond punches him in the gut. Clifford
holds his stomach.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Tiffany holds her stomach. She is draped from the chest
down. Joy, along with two other nurses assists. DR. SPANKY,
graying, jovial, enters through swinging doors.

DR. SPANKY

Morning all. Having pains, Mrs.
Gains?

TIFFANY

No, just hugging my uterus goodbye.
Can you wash your hands after opening
that door? I read in a medical
journal that doorknobs have more
germs than toilet seats.

DR. SPANKY

It's an automatic door, sweetheart.
But glad to know toilets aren't so
bad. I just scrubbed my instrument
in the men's room.

Dr. Spanky winks at Tiffany and pats her shoulder. Tiffany musters a smile.

DR. SPANKY (CONT'D)
Now, how big are these fibroid tumors? Let's have a looksy, shall we?

Dr. Spanky reaches under Tiffany's drape.

TIFFANY
Kinda hard to see em from my angle.

DR. SPANKY
You always had a great sense of humor. We'll see what we can do about that. Now just take a slow, deep breath, my dear.

Tiffany's breath comes rapid and shallow. Dr. Spanky gropes internally.

Dr. Spanky is grimly quiet. He makes a notation on a chart.

INT. GAINS' KITCHEN - DAY

Mimi makes a notation on a recipe card.

MIMI
You know Clifford. You should be at the hospital. Losing your uterus is a big deal. A woman will always say she doesn't want you somewhere when she really does. That's called love.

CLIFFORD
(lamenting)
Nah. It's not like that anymore. We're gonna split. She only married me to make her Dad happy and I married her so my mother wouldn't have a gay son. We shoulda just fixed our parents up with each other and called it a day.

Mimi carries a carton of eggs.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
All her miscarriages pretty much did us in. I know she blames me. Every time I'd enter a table tennis tournament, she'd miscarry.

The entire carton of eggs almost slips out of Mimi's arms but she manages to save almost all the contents.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

I'd lose a game. She'd lose a baby.

One lone egg drops and cracks open on the tile floor. The yolk spreads into a wide circle.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

She really hates me now. The other day she told me she couldn't even stand my cologne. And she used to only say that when she was pregnant.

MIMI

She must have a weak stomach. She told me she couldn't bear watching me whip egg whites.

CLIFFORD

Really? She did? She loves those. Except when she's pregnant.

Clifford removes his apron.

MIMI

I'll handle the rest here. Go ahead to your ping-pong tournament.

CLIFFORD

Table tennis. Thanks, Mimi. Gosh, I can't explain it. I just feel kinda relaxed lately. I feel kinda free. Free to kinda invent, free to kinda play table tennis, free to kinda do this.

Clifford squirts a dollop of whipped cream from a can on an éclair.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Wow. I should've come out of the closet a long time ago. I feel kind--

MIMI

Kinda what?

CLIFFORD

Kind. That's it. Just kind.

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Nurses fuss over Tiffany.

DR. SPANKY

Who did Mrs. Gains' pre-op?

JOY

I did, Doctor.

DR. SPANKY
 Can I see the labs please, especially
 the urine?

Joy rustles some papers.

CLOSE ON:

A Positive Pregnancy Test stick. Joy turns away and
 discreetly drops it into her purse.

DR. SPANKY (CONT'D)
 Okay. Everything seems to be in
 order. Put the I.V. in. We'll begin
 when I return.

Joy pats Tiffany's arm as another nurse swabs it with
 alcohol.

JOY
 I know you're squeamish, Tiff, honey.
 Don't look and it won't hurt. Look
 into my eyes instead.

Suddenly, Tiffany sits bolt upright.

TIFFANY
 What day is it today? You're not
 supposed to have operations done on
 days of the week that have an N.

JOY
 Today is Thursday.

The I.V. Drips slowly from the machine. The nurses clatter
 and chatter.

NURSE #1
 Are you in O.R. 4? The patient with
 those dimples?

NURSE#2
 Oh, he's a handful. But then again,
 look what he's having done to him.
 And on a voluntary basis yet. Ouch.

Tiffany closes her eyes.

INT. A RECREATION ROOM - DAY

Clifford closes his eyes. People crowd him at the ping-pong
 table. They cheer and jeer as if at a fight.

Clifford readies to serve. He stands ten feet back from the
 table. Dramatically winds his arm around, loosening his
 shoulder up. Clifford's eyes pop wide open.

CLIFFORD'S POV - A VERY PREGNANT WOMAN standing in the back.
She smiles at Clifford from across the room.

Clifford gives a little wave back. The pregnant lady's mouth moves but it is Tiffany's voice Clifford hears.

TIFFANY (V.O.)

I threw up for 8 weeks straight at the sight of raw eggs. And for what? Nobody should have to cry alone in a bathroom. But you were always playing ping-pong. Every time I lost a baby, you were playing ping-pong. I can't stand the smell of your cologne. Your cologne and raw eggs.

Clifford lets the paddle drop from his hand to the table. A loud clattering. People stare as the racquet makes quite a racket.

CLIFFORD

My god. You're pregnant, Tiffany. You don't even know it. But you're pregnant. And that's a fact.

Clifford races out the door, his breath mints fall out of his pocket.

ANNOUNCER

It looks like Clifford Gains forfeits the game. What that means folks, is -
-

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tiffany is sedated as the gossipy nurses huddle together.

JOY

It means that Clifford's not quite the asshole she makes him out to be. If I had a husband like him --

NURSE #1

(interrupting)

Should we be talking about this stuff? I mean, can she hear?

Dr. Spanky stands quietly by the entrance.

DR. SPANKY

Dr. Spanky can hear. Ladies, Ladies. There's three things we don't do in my operating room. Backstab. Cut to the quick. And twist the knife.

A staring contest between Dr. Spanky and Joy. Joy looks down.

JOY

Doctor.

DR. SPANKY

I need the patient prepped in O.R. #4 for Dr. Stoopack please.

NURSE #2

I'll go. I want to hear more about how he's reversing his vasectomy just to prove his love for his girlfriend.

Tiffany's eyelids flutter.

Without warning, the double doors burst open and Clifford shoots in like a ping-pong ball being served. He bounces off some medical equipment.

CLIFFORD

Stop! What are you doing to this woman?

DR. SPANKY

Sir. You are interrupting. I'm performing a radical hysterectomy.

CLIFFORD

Oh. Cool! I love that song. Just make sure you don't take out her uterus. I think she's pregnant.

Everyone gasps.

INT. RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN - DAY

Unknown Female turns dial on crock pot to "boiling point."

CLOSE ON: CROCK POT

It explodes, spewing red sauced meat and potatoes everywhere. Mimi Gander screams as her face and hair get plastered with the gross concoction.

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Spanky, maneuvers under Tiffany's draped legs.

DR. SPANKY

Yes, I would say a gestational age of possibly six weeks. She's very early but she is definitely very pregnant.

Clifford pulls out his calculator and does some figuring.

TIFFANY

Relax, Clifford. It can't be true.
How can it be, Dr. Spanky?

DR. SPANKY

Things happen, my dear. And even
though I'd like to think I did a good
job on your vasectomy, Clifford.
There's a definite failure rate in
the beginning.

Clifford hangs his head in shame. Tiffany looks shocked at
the mention of a vasectomy. Dr. Spanky continues to
playfully admonish Clifford.

DR. SPANKY (CONT'D)

Which is why I told you to abstain
for six weeks, you stud, you. But
what's done is done.

TIFFANY

Oh, Clifford followed your advice to
the letter, Dr. Spanky. Believe me.

DR. SPANKY

That's good news because you should
hear the stories I hear. Especially
about failure rates. Happens more
than people realize. Too bad it
didn't happen for the poor writer
chap down the hall. He's about to
experience a great deal of pain. All
to keep his girlfriend happy.

TIFFANY

DJ! Oh my god. This baby has to be
DJ's.

CLIFFORD

And that's a fact. Thank god.

Tiffany yanks wires from her oxygen and I.V. She smiles as
Clifford kindly helps her off the table.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Go. Go get the life you've always
wanted. You deserve it.

Tiffany races down the hall, slipping on slick floors.

TIFFANY

(frantic)

DJ! Stop! Cancel the surgery.
Don't let them put you in reverse!

INT. OPERATING ROOM #4 - CONTINUOUS

We find Joy in mid-sentence as she leans over DJ.

JOY

-- You have no idea how evil she is.
Not the perky, innocent little
cheerleader slash writer you think
she is. Why, once she even told me
she thought of you as a used easy
chair! Imagine that.

DJ rubs his eyes and nods in bewildered agreement. He peers blatantly down his hospital gown to check on the status of "things."

DJ

I don't even know who in the hell you
are.

Tiffany bursts in, hospital gown torn, wires hanging.

TIFFANY

DJ, meet my sister, Joy. But you can
call her Bitch.

Tiffany turns to face Joy.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

How could you watch me, your own
flesh and blood, suffer miscarriage
after miscarriage, year after year.
Then I'm finally pregnant with a man
I really care about and you arrange
for me to have a hysterectomy I don't
even need --

DJ

(interrupting)
You're pregnant?

TIFFANY

Quiet, please.

Tiffany yanks off Joy's hospital name tag. Joy is indignant.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Don't pretend you don't know what I'm
talking about. Dr. Spanky just told
me my fibroids aren't nearly as large
as the measurements on my chart say
they are.

DJ

You go to a Doctor that calls himself
Spanky?

TIFFANY

Shush, DJ. Please.

Tiffany pushes the call button next to DJ's bed.

CALL BUTTON SPEAKER

Yes?

TIFFANY

I'd like to press charges please.

CALL BUTTON SPEAKER

(confused whispering)

Okay, We'll send a bedpan with your apple juice.

Tiffany gives the speaker a dirty look.

TIFFANY

From this day on, I will no longer be the meek, timid, people-pleasing Tiffany I've been. It's my turn to follow my dreams and stand up to the people who prevent me from doing that!

DJ

You've been meek and timid? You've gotta be fucking kidding me!!

INT. A SYNAGOGUE - MORNING

People look on as a Rabbi in ceremonial robes holds out a Torah scroll.

Tiffany, DJ, Desmond, Clifford, Eddie and Sophie stand in doorway of lobby. Tiffany peers in nervously.

CLIFFORD

So, where is the real Irving Blatfarb monster and why did those Mothers have us come to some Bar Mitzvah to meet him? And by the way, how come there's no bar at this Bar Mitzvah? I'm dying for a gin and tonic.

TIFFANY

I'm actually quite petrified to meet old Irving now.

UNCLE EDDIE

Oh, c'mon. Nobody pushes my niece around anymore.

Uncle Eddie goes to pinch Tiffany's cheeks. Tiffany slaps his hand, then violently yanks his handlebar mustache.

Max Mother approaches in a suit. He looks happy.

MAX
You are supposed to say Mazel Tov.

CLIFFORD
Mazatlan!

MAX
Close enough. I am to be
congratulated. Today, Irving make me
very proud.

Max points inside the sanctuary.

CLIFFORD
Irving?

MAX
Irving. My son. Shhhhhh, listen.

The Rabbi hands the Torah scroll to a homely, acne-faced
scrawny kid. The Rabbi motions the congregation to be
seated. A hush falls over the room.

IRVING
(high pitched girly voice)
Today...I am a man. Tomorrow I go
back to the 7th grade.

ANGLE ON - TIFFANY, CLIFFORD, DJ, DESMOND, EDDIE, SOPHIE
Their reaction. All exchange incredulous looks.

INT. GAMBLE HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

Dressed in evening attire, guests at the Bar Mitzvah
circulate and partake in appetizers passed by Gamble Hotel
employees, wearing tuxedos.

CLIFFORD
(to waiter)
Where are the pigs in the blanket?

TIFFANY
Clifford! They don't eat pig here.
Pork is forbidden.

Tiffany shoos Clifford away as she readjusts her fancy hat
which features shooting stars of David at every angle.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
(to waiter)
Excuse me, but where would the shrimp
cocktail be?

The waiter gives Tiffany a funny look.

DJ
Look, there's our Irving Blatfarb
now.

Everyone turns as Irving stamps his foot defiantly.

IRVING
You said I could have glow-in-the
dark ice-sculptures shaped like
dinosaurs!

BORIS
Isn't it enough you have a chocolate
fountain, Irv? Come on now. Be a
good boy.

IRVING
I'm not a boy. I'm a man. And don't
you forget it.

CLOSE ON: CHOCOLATE FOUNTAIN

Sprays of fudge shoot up and cascade down, surrounded by
strawberries, marshmallows and cookies. Clifford discreetly
dips his finger into the chocolate and licks it. Dips again.

BACK TO SCENE

The band strikes up a hora and at once, people come to life.
Everyone gets caught in the whirling circle of dancing
guests.

The Mother Brothers hoist Irving up high in a chair.

IRVING (CONT'D)
Higher! What's wrong with you
people? You're barely lifting me off
the ground. More to the left. And
where's that photographer? Let's get
a shot of me touching the ceiling!
From my right shoulder. Action,
people, action!

Tiffany leans over and whispers in DJ's ear.

TIFFANY
Our director.

DJ
Apparently. His parents bought him
our show as a Bar Mitzvah present.

In the b.g. Clifford sprints across dance floor with his
newest invention, a spray bottle marked, "Deep Voice"

CLIFFORD
Boy, Hey! Boy, Hey!

TIFFANY
 (covers face)
 Oy Vey! Oy Vey!

EXT. THE GAMBLE HOTEL - NIGHT

It's opening night and traffic is snarled. The atmosphere is like the strip. Throngs of people stand by the box office as ticket scalpers work the crowd.

Limousines take turns curb side.

SUPER: NINE MONTHS LATER

Desmond and Joy exit the first limousine together. Joy wears the telltale technology on her ankle that signifies a house arrest. Second limo pulls up.

EXT. CLIFFORD'S LIMO - CONTINUOUS

CLIFFORD
 --Hotels can have a "Take a Number"
 sign on the top of their building.
 "Now serving Limousine #42" What do
 you think?

MIMI
 That's brilliant, Cliffy!

Horns honk and two cab driver's jump out in a stand-off.

INT. DJ AND TIFFANY'S LIMO - CONTINUOUS

DJ is lovingly leaning over Tiffany's very pregnant figure with a medical stethoscope.

DJ
 So, little guy, it's opening night
 Are you squinting at all the light?
 Your mom and I met, t'was our fate
 I've become a Dad just a bit late
 No initials for you, a normal name.
 No mistaken identity by some crazy
 dame!

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. WRITER'S WORKSHOP - AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON: WORDS ON A TYPED PAGE COMING INTO FOCUS

Everyone sits with glazed expressions. We pan the room to see familiar faces. Uncle Eddie, Aunt Sophie, Joy, Clifford, Tiffany, Desmond, the Mother Brothers, and of course, DJ. All sit in the little room, listening to Mimi droning at the podium.

MIMI

And so as DJ recites his poem to Tiffany's pregnant belly, she suddenly realizes that by going back to her past, she accidentally stumbled upon her future.

Mimi gives a dramatic pregnant pause.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Our ditzy character Tiffany has had an epiphany! The End.

Applause. Everyone chatters at once. Mimi glows.

DJ

Okay, people. Let's try to keep it to three comments. I'll go first. Miss Gander, you definitely challenged yourself this time but the whole crock pot thing isn't working for me. I realize we writers are a bunch of crackpots but I think you gotta lose it.

Mimi nods.

DJ (CONT'D)

On a side note, I just have to say about my own character. I can't believe so much material can come from eight inches!

A few guffaws and people throw wadded paper at DJ.

DESMOND

Why am I a homosexual?

CLIFFORD

I like Clifford but I'm much funnier than he is!

Snickers.

CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Not to be mean or anything but in my opinion, this story was all over the table. You've got to focus and be precise. Control. Control where the ball lands. Speaking of balls, I've never played ping pong in my life. I wear my brother's hand me down shirts.

MIMI

So you're saying just stick to the meat and potatoes of the story?

Everyone groans at the food reference.

Irving Blatfarb casually walks in, empties the trash, does a little sweep-up. Dressed in jeans and white tee, he is of course, the janitor.

Aunt Sophie stands to throw something in the trash can and we clearly see she is wearing conservative long pants.

TIFFANY

Wow, Mimi. What can I say? Desmond and I have been coming to workshop so long it's almost like group therapy. We're about to celebrate our 20th wedding anniversary and Clifford's been our college friend forever, so I think they'll agree with me --

Tiffany gestures to Desmond, seated closely next to her.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

When I say, wow! The Gamble Hotel! What a name! Who could ever think that up? You shouldn't write cookbooks girl, you should write recipes for life! Right, honey? Dez?

DESMOND

I'm still wondering why I'm a homosexual?

DJ

Alright people, we ran a few minutes over today. Good work. Remember, let's keep the friction in our fiction. Without conflict we have no character. And without character, there is no story.

DJ pops an aspirin.

DJ (CONT'D)

(as an afterthought)
Oh, and remember -- don't put food in your writing. It doesn't work. People want to keep their food and their entertainment separate. Maybe someone here will prove me wrong.

Sophie nods her head hypnotically. Participants stand up, stretch and began to gather up belongings.

DESMOND

(dazed to Tiffany)
She wrote me as a homosexual.

TIFFANY

Yep.

JOY

(to Tiffany)

You know, we should have lunch or go jogging sometime. I'm new in town and kinda on the shy side.

Tiffany gives her a strange look and joins in with the others as they file out.

Walking behind Desmond, as she passes DJ, Tiffany nonchalantly slips him a note.

INSERT - NOTE IN DJ'S HAND

Which reads, "Don't wait for me on the boat tonight, Desmond's dragging me to a show. I love you!"

INT. RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN - DAY

Mimi Gander scrubs a brown potato until it is shiny and new. There's a missing spot on the counter where the crockpot was. A tattered, ripped cord. Mimi preheats a conventional oven.

CLOSE ON:

Oven dial which reads, "Half-Baked."

I/E. THE GAMBLE HOTEL - NIGHT

A newly lit marquee reads, "The Gamble Hotel presents Miss Sophie Bucket Starring in My Just Desserts!" a risqué revue about food, fun and folly. The place somehow has more sparkle, pizzazz and class.

As immaculately coiffured patrons cross through the lobby, they encounter none other than Murdock, swinging on a trapeze.

MURDOCK

Enjoy the fucking show!

Inside on stage, donned with ostrich feathers, Sophie struts on a set surrounded by larger than life cakes, pies, donuts and pastries. The orchestra plays. A stagehand gives her a microphone.

STAGEHAND

Careful Sophie, don't slip on the whip cream.

SOPHIE

(boisterously)

Slip? Sophie never slips!

Sophie bursts into her song and dance act.

In b.g. two men smile and shake hands happily. One we recognize as Lecherous Man from the Gamble hotel. He's sober now. The other is the leader from Gamblers Anonymous.

LECHEROUS MAN

Who knew the shy ole broad had it in her? She comes in, plunks down her money and opens up the joint. And look at the size of this crowd. We've been sold out for weeks.

LEADER

Yeah, who knew? I would've put money on her flopping. Said she got the idea in some stupid writing class she attended.

LECHEROUS MAN

It sure was lucky that I had the Jackpot Room with the broken television. I didn't realize what a true prize I was getting that day. When they handed me Sophie.

LECHEROUS shows off his wedding ring.

LEADER

You never know, man. Nothing is what it appears to be. And you never know what can be real in someone's head. Heh.

The two men give one another five and slap shoulders.

We're back to watching Sophie do her thing in the spotlight. Her singing gets louder and more exuberant as we...

FADE OUT.