
Night Heat

A comedy in two acts

FIRST ACT – SAMPLE

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By Robert J. Wheeler

FOUR ACTORS REQUIRED
2 males: 30-65 -- 2 females: 30-65

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
LARRY	Dentist, husband of Lucy <i>(can have English or Irish accent)</i>	30-65	Male
LUCY	Artist, wife of Larry <i>(accent same as Larry)</i>	30-65	Female
RALPH	Teacher, husband of Rose	30-65	Male
ROSE	Massage therapist, wife of Ralph	30-65	Female
V.O. or M.C.	Performs pre-show announcement	Any	Either

SETTING -- Two living rooms.

SPOTLIGHT AT BASE OF CURTAIN:

A master of ceremonies takes the stage DS of curtain, moves into light. (will work with O.S. voice if necessary)

M.C. Welcome everyone to (*name of theatre*) and our production of “Night Heat”. Thank you for coming. We have a short announcement. So everyone can enjoy the play equally, we ask that you refrain from revealing the identity of the interloper appearing in the last scene after leaving the theatre. Thank you.

The master of ceremonies leaves, the curtain rises.

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

Time: Morning

Place: Ralph and Rose’s Apartment Livingroom

A few bars of “OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING” plays.

LIGHTS UP:

An upscale sofa and sofa chair with a floor lamp by the sofa chair. A large print (20” x 16”) of a flower on a prominent SL or SR wall.

Ralph sits in the middle of the sofa, reads from the newspaper.

The song ends.

Rose vacuums the floor behind and to the side of the sofa with a loud vacuum cleaner. She is an aggressive vacuumer, after every spot of dirt.

Rose reaches the three to four-foot arm of the vacuum over the back of the sofa on the SL end and vacuums the seat beside Ralph.

Ralph notices, is alarmed; she vacuums closer to Ralph; he hedges toward SR of sofa; she gains on him; he is at the SR end of sofa; she gains on him again.

He is about to say something, then she moves her vacuuming to the back of the sofa, is vacuuming the back of the sofa near his shoulders.

Ralph leans forward, lowers the paper.

RALPH (*loud*) Rosie!

Not hearing Ralph, Rose continues to vacuum.

(*louder*) Rosie!!

Not hearing Ralph, Rose continues to vacuum.

Rosie turns off the vacuum a spit second before . . .

(*shouts*) Rosie!!!!

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ROSE *(jumps back startled, shouts)* You don't need to shout!

Ralph reacts.

RALPH It's Sunday morning. I can't think straight with that thing running. Can't you vacuum when I'm not around?

ROSE No!

RALPH Why not?

ROSE I'm going to invite Lucy for tea, so I want everything clean.

Ralph motions for her to continue.

I'll finish it when you're out.

Ralph reacts as she has decided to do what she said she would not do.

Ralph moves to the sofa chair. Reads the newspaper.

Rose vacuums where Ralph sat on the sofa then leaves the vacuum behind the sofa.

RALPH It says here city taxes are going up three point two per cent a year for the next three years. I'm glad we don't live in a house.

ROSE Then apartment rents will be going up. They're connected.

RALPH We don't need to live in a three bedroom penthouse apartment.

ROSE I like living on the twenty-third floor, above noise of the traffic.

RALPH There's always summer tutoring.

Rose moves US of the sofa chair Ralph sits on.

ROSE You teach for ten months a year. We can afford the increase without moving or you having to tutor.

RALPH I just remembered; they can't raise the rent more than one percent a year because of the lease.

ROSE Good. You up for a massage?

Ralph throws down the newspaper, looks suddenly alarmed as Rose moves behind him, massages the back of his neck.

I'm still the best massage therapist in town.

Ralph makes a terrified face, casually stands, hedges away from Rose. Rose moves with him, massaging. He hedges away. (Actor needs to sell his dread.)

RALPH Uh. *(stalling)* Rosie, I was thinking of going *(thinking fast)* of of going somewhere, uh . . . where was it? . . . that's it . . . to the library, yeah, the library.

Rose stops massaging.

ROSE Library?

RALPH *(holds up newspaper)* I like to read.

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ROSE I've been feeling restless since selling the massage clinic. I thought I could relax your tired, tight muscles. I need the practice.

RALPH (*anxious*) You gave me a massage a couple days ago, the full body treatment! I'm the most relaxed man on the planet.

ROSE You're tense! I know you need it.

RALPH (*desperate*) If my muscles relax any more, they'll dissolve! Rosie, listen, we need to establish a monthly massage quota?

ROSE Four times?

RALPH Two!

ROSE Three!

RALPH Two

Rose gives him an intimidating look.

. . . and a half. Done!

Ralph steps away, happy to change the subject.

How about having Larry and Lucy experience your intensive massage talent?

ROSE They don't have a massage table.

RALPH (*wanting to share the pain*) Too bad.

ROSE It's obvious they both need help.

Ralph enjoys the thought of other massage victims.

RALPH (*eager*) I'll buy them a massage table! I've seen them on sale at . . .

ROSE (*interrupting*) I've been thinking.

RALPH (*eager*) About the massage table?

ROSE The library!

RALPH Library?

ROSE You're after a hot librarian!

RALPH Library sex?

ROSE Yes, library sex!

RALPH (*sarcastic French accent*) The allure of the cultured man! Hundreds of hot women readers discarding their books, falling over each other to seduce a charming reader such as I.

ROSE You're forgetting an important charm!

RALPH What's that?

ROSE Me!!!

Ralph mimics being torn between two women.

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RALPH *(sarcastic French accent)* After a tremendous struggle, the spectacled, frumpy librarian was no match for the magnetic allure, the superior charms of wifie Rosie. *(hugs her, speaks normally)* What are your plans for today? More cleaning?

ROSE I've cleaned everything in the apartment!

RALPH Again? I declare our entire apartment sanitized!

ROSE The car needs cleaning. You can walk to the library.

RALPH Why?

ROSE As you may recall, Lucy and I go to mahjong Wednesday nights. I need the car clean since I'm driving Lucy and some of the others.

Ralph walks around looking for something.

RALPH You sterilized it yesterday!

ROSE Not the interior.

RALPH Fine. Have you seen my car keys?

ROSE They'll be . . .

RALPH *(interrupting)* I know . . . where I left them.

ROSE Exactly.

Ralph continues to look for the keys.

RALPH You cleaned the car's interior two weeks ago.

ROSE We've been living with a dirty interior for a month.

RALPH Rosie, two weeks isn't a month.

ROSE Our car attracts dirt, sucks it in, accumulates a month's dirt in two weeks.

RALPH Rosie, listen carefully.

ROSE What?

RALPH Your glass is half empty. You're a glass half empty person.

ROSE Wrong.

RALPH Are you saying your glass is half full?

ROSE No. It's clean and in the cupboard.

The phone rings. Rose answers it as Ralph continues to look for his keys.

Hello. *(pause)* Hi Lucy. *(pause)* Shopping? Sure. *(long pause, then turns toward the bedroom, loud to Ralph)* Lucy and I are going shopping while Larry destroys a beehive from under their deck. *(pause)* How would you like to help Larry?

RALPH Sure. A bee elimination adventure! Perfect! I'll get to use my "never fail bee removal system". I haven't used it since we sold the house.

Ralph EXITS into the bedroom area.

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ROSE *(into phone)* Yes, Ralph will help your Larry. He has a never-fail beehive removal system. *(pause, then toward the bedroom area)* Lucy wants to know about it.

RALPH *(O.S.)* A metal garbage can, lid, gas, long pole. Knock the nest into the can and let the gas fumes do the killing. It's a cinch.

ROSE *(into phone)* Don't worry, Ralph's an old hand dealing with bees.

RALPH *(frustrated O.S.)* Car keys, car keys, where can you be?

ROSE *(into phone)* He's talking to his car keys.

RALPH *(O.S.)* Why can't there be a button I can press. Keys would scream "I'm here?"

ROSE *(into the phone)* Good. I'll drop Ralph off with his bee killing system in about twenty minutes. That is if I don't kill him first. *(pause)* Bye.

Rose hangs up the phone.

(loud toward the bedroom) Try your dresser.

RALPH *(O.S.)* Oh, right. *(pause)* Not there.

ROSE What about . . .

RALPH *(interrupting O.S.)* Yes!

ROSE What?

RALPH *(O.S.)* I found them.

ROSE In the bed?

RALPH *(O.S.)* Housecoat pocket.

ROSE *(perplexed look)* In your housecoat?

RALPH *(O.S.)* Yeah.

ROSE You put on your housecoat and drive places?

RALPH *(O.S.)* Uh . . . not normally.

ROSE What? Sleep driving?

RALPH *(O.S.)* I was late taking out the garbage. Didn't want to get locked out..

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene One

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO

Time: Evening

Place: Ralph and Rose's Apartment Livingroom

A few bars of "OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING" plays

LIGHTS UP:

Four pieces of large luggage sit at the front door.

There is a cover over the sofa chair.

Larry sits on the sofa chair reading a large newspaper that covers his upper body.

A can or bottle of beer is on the table beside him.

The song ends.

LARRY *(placid, but loud)* I usually drink lager. I find your ale refreshing.

RALPH *(O.S.)* You're not furious?

LARRY *(placid, loud)* Not particularly.

RALPH *(O.S.)* How come?

LARRY *(placid, loud)* I have an unusual knack.

RALPH *(O.S.)* Which is?

LARRY *(placid, loud)* I've learned to see the big picture.

RALPH *(O.S.)* The nasty big picture!

Lucy and Rose ENTER from the DR door, each with a bag of shopping. Lucy sees the luggage.

LUCY *(to Rose)* That's our luggage! *(sees Larry)* What's our luggage doing here?!

Larry jumps up, walks DS, towards them with newspaper covering his upper body, stops, throws newspaper aside.

Larry's clothes are soot covered.

Larry has ten bee stings on his face. (prominent red dots)

The ladies jump back, cringe.

ROSE
and LUCY Aaaaaaah!

LUCY What happened?!!!

Larry picks at his bee stings with the tweezers, hesitates.

LARRY Ralph should be the one to impart that tidbit of information with the not so glad tidings for everyone. Ralph!

Ralph ENTERS from the kitchen area. He holds tweezers and staggers.

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There are seventeen red marks on Ralph's face, puffy cheeks and his hair and clothes are sootier than Larry's clothes.

The song "It Hurts So Bad" plays.

RALPH Buzzing and biting . . . biting and buzzing! On and on.

The song ends.

I can still hear those little devils buzzing and biting.

LARRY I've heard bees don't bite; they sting. I would think a teacher would . . .

RALPH *(a killer look at Larry)* Stop!

Larry smiles as he shrugs.

(to the women) The bee . . .

LARRY *(interrupting to the women)* . . . fiasco.

RALPH *(to the women)* Plan! It didn't go as well as it could have.

Rosie rushes to Ralph, takes the tweezers from Ralph shaking hand.

Rosie tries to take stingers out of Ralph's face, but he waves her off.

ROSE They swarmed you?!

RALPH Like little sharks, stinging and stinging, on and on.

LARRY Swarmed us both, but Ralph got the worst of it because he was closest to the hive.

Ralph gives Larry a 'wish I could kill you' look.

ROSE Hon, you're a mess.

Ralph gives her a knowing look.

LUCY *(looks closely at Ralph's face)* A feeding frenzy.

Ralph waves her off, puts on a brave face.

RALPH It was was . . . nothing really.

Ralph, Rosie and Lucy look unconvinced at Ralph.

Almost nothing.

LARRY Looks like something, definitely feels like something.

Ralph gives Larry a frowned look, is in pain as he eases himself into the sofa chair.

(feeling Ralph's pain) Absolutely something.

Pretending it's nothing but everyone knows he's in pain.

It hurts so bad, doesn't it?

(MORE)

Ralph gives a sarcastic twisted smile.

The ladies sit on the sofa.

I was the hero of the day, wasn't I Ralph?

RALPH Larry pulled me out . . .

LARRY *(interrupting)* . . . by the ankles, with no concern for my own safety.

RALPH *(interrupting)*. . . after it went off.

LUCY Went off?

ROSE What went off?

LARRY *(stands)* The garbage can went whoooosh *(gestures)* exploded.

RALPH Sorry about the deck.

Lucy jumps up distressed.

LUCY Our deck? Our new deck?! Our only deck?!!

LARRY Blew up. Burned up. One or the other. Both . . . gasoline?

RALPH *(motions that it's hard to talk)* Hit the nest with my long pruning sheers; nest was cemented between joists; didn't fall in can; then . . .

LARRY . . . the pruning sheers dropped on the metal garbage can, I emphasize metal; then came the whoooosh, probably due to a spark; flames shot up from the gas in the can like a massive blow torch into the bottom of the deck.

LUCY *(distressed)* My deck?

Rose stands beside Lucy, puts an arm around her.

LARRY Burned up. Gone.

LUCY *(distressed)* House?

LARRY Mostly saved. Fire department.

LUCY *(happy, relieved)* Saved.

RALPH Water damage.

LUCY *(distressed)* Water?! What happened to the painting I've been slaving over for the last three months?

LARRY The gorgeous nude you painted stepping into her bathtub. I named her Hildie for her hills. *(to Ralph)* She was a beautiful nude preparing to bathe, my favorite nude.

LUCY I didn't paint a nude or a bathtub! You see everything as a sexual experience! If I painted a turnip, you'd see a sex orgy! What do you mean, she was your favorite nude?

LARRY The painting was saved, mostly.

LUCY Mostly?!

RALPH I see it as an abstract abstract.

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LARRY The ultimate abstract.
LUCY No!!!
LARRY *(mournful)* Hildie changed.
LUCY *(irate)* Changed?!!!!
LARRY Her hills are gone. Hildie's now . . . *(sad)* Harry.
LUCY Ahhhhhhaa!
LARRY On the bright side, one of the firemen offered a hundred for her . . . I mean him.
LUCY Did you sell my abstract?
LARRY No! It's still your . . . *(shrugs)*
LUCY Ahhhhhhhh!
LARRY I saved my ant Fred.
RALPH Your aunt?
ROSE Where is your aunt?
LARRY In the bedroom with the abstract.
LUCY My abstract!

Lucy rushes toward the opening to the bedroom.

ROSE Your aunt shouldn't be banished to the bedroom. Bring her out.

Lucy rushes through the opening to the bedroom, returns with a large photo of an ANT (20" x 16") but the back of the photo is to the audience.

When she is DC she turns it to reveal a large picture of FRED THE ANT. (must be sure photo is right side up when turned)

Lucy gives it to Larry. Larry takes the painting of a large flower off the wall and replaces it with the photo of Fred The Ant.

LARRY Fred's my favorite ant, a member of the family. Isn't he a handsome fellow?
LUCY Larry thinks one day insects will be gone because of global warming so he's photographing insects for posterity.
RALPH Fred is a very likeable ant.
ROSE He's creepy.
LUCY Very creepy!
ROSE Seeing as you've had a significant event, we're fine with him there.
LUCY *(to Larry)* We can't live in a burned-up house. What'll we do?
LARRY I called the insurance company.

RALPH
AND

ROSE *(fearful)* And?

LARRY Said they'd cover everything except our accommodations for three months, the time needed to repair the damage.

RALPH You're staying with us!

ROSE *(to Ralph)* In our apartment?

RALPH Certainly! We have enough room.

LARRY Rent free?

RALPH Of course.

LARRY Beer free?

RALPH *(shrugs)* Sure.

LARRY Penthouse living with beer benefits.

Rose leans into Ralph, huddle away from Larry and Lucy.

ROSE Larry's nuts! We can't have crazy people move in with us.

RALPH It was my fault. I burned his deck, house, etc, so . . . We've known them for years. I don't see how we can't.

ROSE What about my democratic rights?!

RALPH *(reels back)* Your what?

ROSE *(subdued)* My nighttime freedom of expression.

RALPH Oh, that.

ROSE Yes, that!

RALPH Larry will expect me to pay for them stay in a hotel for three months and I wouldn't blame him. We can't afford to do that!

ROSE Good point.

RALPH *(to Larry)* Larry.

LARRY Yes, Ralph.

RALPH The building comes with a workshop for guys who like to tinker. Interested? It'll take our minds off our discomfort.

Larry shrugs, stands. Larry and Ralph EXIT out the DR door. Rose and Lucy sit on the sofa.

ROSE You and Larry certainly have unusual hobbies.

LUCY I love to paint and Larry loves to snap pictures. Photographs if you ask him.

ROSE Are your walls plastered with photos of giant insects?

LUCY No, just Fred. He's taken a special liking to Fred.

ROSE Oh?

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LUCY Larry likes to jog. Runs through the neighborhood in his jogging outfit.

ROSE Ralph doesn't run. He golfs. Spends hours on the course whacking at a little white ball into a small hole. He says he gets it in every time.

LUCY You really don't mind having creepy Fred on display?

ROSE For now, until the novelty wears off.

LUCY Right. Next week Larry could be snapping pictures of butterflies or mushrooms.

ROSE He's a nature lover?

LUCY Just weird nature. Larry saved that horrid ant but let my painting suffer. I'll never again show him my paintings. You know what I want to do with Fred?

ROSE No. What?

LUCY I want to see Fred burn!

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Two

ACT ONE, SCENE THREE

Time: Morning

Place: Ralph and Rose's Apartment Livingroom

A few bars of Restaurant Ambience Music – Cozy Restaurant BGM, Lounge Music, Dinner Music – Instrumental Jazz (on YouTube)

LIGHTS UP:

Ralph reads from a novel on the sofa chair. Larry reclines on the sofa sipping a can or bottle of beer. The red bites and effects from the fire are gone. They are in casual attire.

LARRY Wives who love to shop gives us a chance to buddy bond.

RALPH *(silently reads)* I don't buddy bond -- read. So, how much longer do you think they'll be?

LARRY Wives?

Ralph looks up from his book.

RALPH Construction! Repairing your house!

LARRY And deck.

RALPH True.

LARRY And the loss of irreplaceable Hildie.

RALPH *(sarcastic)* Oh, the tragedy.

LARRY I hope having us living here for the last month hasn't been too much of an inconvenience. The insurance adjuster said it would be another two months before everything is finished. Is it still okay with you, having us here?

RALPH You're fine, perfectly fine. You're both welcome to stay as long as it takes.

LARRY So, there's no sure-fired way you could get rid of a pesky beehive without destroying a house and deck, is there?

RALPH So, I made a mistake! Rose and I have been very accommodating. You're still planning the renovation homecoming party?

LARRY Once everything has been repaired to our satisfaction and we're moved back, we're having the biggest home-coming party ever.

RALPH It's all Rosie talks about.

LARRY The same with Lucy. They love shopping together -- clothes, curtains, furniture for the opening. It goes on and on.

The phone RINGS, Larry, being closest to it, answers it.

(into phone) Lar. and Ralph's joint, Lar. speakin'. *(pause, eyebrows go up)* Yes Monique, he's here. Just a moment.

Ralph snatches the phone from Larry, returns to his chair.

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RALPH *(into phone)* Hi Monique. Yes, it's me. *(pause)* Just a friend.

Ralph turns away, tries to muffle his conversation.

Of course, I'll be there.

Larry moves to Ralph trying to hear who he's talking to on the phone.

Looking forward to our next meeting. *(pause)* Goodbye Monique.

Larry swiftly returns to his previous position.

Ralph hangs up the phone, sits in the sofa chair and reads from his novel.

A silence between them.

LARRY You've got a girlfriend?

RALPH No. Associate.

LARRY Nice voice.

RALPH True.

LARRY Young?

RALPH So?

LARRY Quite young?

Ralph shrugs.

Sounded pretty . . . and extremely friendly.

RALPH *(looks into the book)* Yes, very, very.

LARRY I like friendly, could stand some pretty. She could have a friend. It would help since I've no house, deck, or Hildie to come home to thanks to . . .

Ralph slams down his book, weary.

RALPH *(interrupts)* This is personal, highly personal!

Larry slumps to his knees, begs.

LARRY Please please please level with me! I've had a severe . . . tragic . . . event. I'm dying for some pretty and friendly. Remember what you did to my dear, sweet Hildie?

Ralph gives Larry a "maybe" gesture.

You killed my beautiful, dreamy Hildie. Dream killer!

RALPH *(reluctant)* It's a surprise for Rosie.

LARRY *(lusty look, stands)* Monique sounds like the type of "associate" who'd surprise a wife.

RALPH Not girlfriend!

LARRY *(stands)* Oh, what then?

RALPH Rosie likes to dance.

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LARRY So? Rose and Lucy are both good dancers.

RALPH You're aware I'm a terrible dancer?

LARRY I won't pick on your dancing. I'm as bad, probably worse. I shuffle to the left, to the right then back to the table as fast as possible.

RALPH Same.

LARRY So?

RALPH (*hesitates*) I'm taking dancing lessons, so once your house grand opening eventually blossoms, I'll surprise Rosie with my dancing expertise. They hold the lessons in the basement at the library.

LARRY You'll glide to the music with Rose, and I, the host, will stumble around with Lucy like always. Embarrassing. I wish I could afford dancing lessons.

RALPH (*hesitates*) If you'll let up about me burning your bee infested house and deck and most of all, killing Hildie, I'll pay for your dancing lessons.

LARRY Expensive?

RALPH Five hundred. Ten lessons. Salsa, Tango, Cha-cha, Foxtrot, even some of the new dances.

LARRY We'll surprise our wives.

Ralph stands, shakes Larry's hand.

RALPH So we'll have no more whining about your burned-up house, deck, etcetera?

LARRY Okay.

Ralph picks up the phone.

RALPH I'll get you signed up. It's Wednesday nights.

LARRY The ladies' mahjong night.

RALPH Perfect.

Larry moves away, pauses as he thinks.

LARRY We don't really know them. It's not like they're friends or even friends of friends.

RALPH What are you getting at?

LARRY What if they roll us?

RALPH For our money?! It's a dance class with other students.

LARRY Worse! What if they want our bodies?

RALPH Is that a real problem or an imaginary one?

LARRY I have a good imagination.

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Three

ACT ONE, SCENE FOUR

Time: Afternoon

Place: Ralph and Rose's Livingroom

A few bars of "LOVE WILL KEEP US TOGETHER" plays.

LIGHTS UP:

Lucy and Rose sit on the sofa. Lucy has a clipboard with papers and pen, looks at the clipboard as she speaks.

LUCY It's a long list. So far, we've ordered the curtains and dining room suite. *(looks up from clipboard)* We need everything else. I wish I knew more about appliances.

ROSE I love appliance shopping. We can shop for them together.

LUCY Thanks Rosie.

ROSE Price matching appliances will take time. We should go.

Larry ENTERS from the bedroom doorway dressed in a bright shirt.

LUCY What's the occasion?

LARRY I ran around the building a dozen times, came in, showered, feel great, so wanted to look great.

ROSE I wish I could get Ralph to run.

LUCY Rosie's helping me select appliances and furnishings.

Lucy and Rose move toward the door.

LARRY Better Rose than me. I hate shopping.

LUCY *(to Rose)* That's what I told Rosie you'd say.

Lucy and Rose EXIT the apartment, leaving the clipboard behind.

Larry looks through the book Ralph has been reading, shakes his head, puts it down, pushes the furniture to the UC wall, then goes to the stereo, takes a CD from a holder, puts it in the player.

The sound of a lively salsa plays. Larry rough dances around the room with an imaginary partner.

The DR door opens, and Ralph ENTERS.

LARRY *(continues dancing)* Greetings to the charmer of the mysterious Monique.

RALPH Me? You've been laughing it up while pretending to dance with the lovely Isabella.

LARRY *(continues dancing)* I've had a run with energy to spare. Isabella and the dancing class have me feeling ten years younger. I'm looking forward to tonight's class. Want to show Isabella my technique.

(MORE)

Ralph sits on the sofa and Larry on the sofa chair.

Isabella's quite the looker. I think she likes me.

RALPH I'm sure Monique likes me, but . . . it could be they like our money more.

LARRY They spend a lot of time with us.

RALPH Because we are the worst dancers in the class, not because they want our bodies.

LARRY They kept us after class.

RALPH To demonstrate the basics of rhythm.

LARRY I've been rhythm deprived all my life. Never developed rhythm sense.

RALPH I'm the same. I've seen you dance, and you've seen me, so . . .

LARRY *(interrupting)* We need the extra time. You know, I find I dance better when it's just the four of us, after the other students have left.

RALPH Could it be we don't like others watching our ineptitude?

LARRY That's it. Maybe they wouldn't mind giving us private lessons here.

RALPH Avoid the drive to the library.

LARRY The ladies will be at mahjong.

RALPH We'll have the apartment to ourselves. I'll ask Monique if they could come here for our lessons. It'll cost more.

LARRY Let her know teaching us here will give them more time with the others.

RALPH So it might not be too much more.

LARRY Private lessons, oooh. Sounds sexy.

RALPH They won't want us, just our money . . . but . . . anything's possible.

LARRY I've heard some young women are drawn to older men, even prefer them.

RALPH We are older, so they could be tempted, right?

LARRY Or we could be tempted.

RALPH Takes two to tempt.

LARRY Or four.

RALPH Honestly, what'll we do if they, you know . . .

LARRY We'll cross that bridge . . .

RALPH *(interrupting)* . . . if there is a bridge.

Larry pulls the sofa out a few feet from the wall.

LARRY Here's my bridge.

RALPH They won't want us! No bridge required.

Ralph pulls the sofa back.

What about me?

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Larry pulls the sofa chair out.

LARRY Pretend your in your sportscar.

RALPH As if you . . .

LARRY *(interrupting)* Women talk . . . to each other.

RALPH Your Lucy knows about my sex life?!

Larry smiles, shrugs, slumps into the sofa chair.

Not with you in the back seat!

Ralph pushes Larry who is on the sofa chair into a corner of the room.

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Four

ACT ONE, SCENE FIVE

LIGHTS UP ON:

Time: Afternoon

Place: Ralph and Rose's Livingroom

VIGOROUS SALSA MUSIC IS IN THE BACKGROUND.

The furniture is pushed against the UC wall. Ralph and Larry pace back and forth across the living room.

The doorbell RINGS. Ralph and Larry nervous pace.

RALPH Dance lessons!

LARRY And maybe more?!

Ralph and Larry rush toward the door.

LIGHTS OUT FOR THREE SECONDS THEN UP AGAIN

VIGOROUS SALSA MUSIC IS IN THE BACKGROUND

Ralph and Larry are at the open door. Talk out the door.

THE MUSIC STOPS.

RALPH Thank you so much for the lessons, Monique. You've really helped my . . .

LARRY *(interrupting)* Mine too. Thanks so much Isabella. You've got me moving like . . .

RALPH *(interrupting)* We look forward to next Wednesday night.

LARRY Eagerly. Drive safe.

Ralph closes the door.

RALPH I've never been so embarrassed!

LARRY You! I'm the embarrassed one!

RALPH You were practically drooling over Isabella. She is trying to get you to move to the salsa and you kept staring at her chest.

LARRY Quite a rack though?

RALPH We hired them to teach us to dance! Think about that, only that!

LARRY I saw you.

RALPH Me?!

LARRY Your hand kept sliding down the curve of her back, landing where?

RALPH I was having trouble getting a grip. Her dress was silk or something.

LARRY Right.

They drag the sofa and sofa chair out. Slump on them.

RALPH No bridge required.

LARRY There's always next Wednesday night.

RALPH You think?

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

LARRY Nice girls don't do it on the first visit.

RALPH They're nice girls.

LARRY You'd prefer bad girls?

Ralph shrugs.

Ditto.

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Five

ACT ONE, SCENE SIX

Time: Morning

Place: Ralph and Rose's Apartment Livingroom

A few bars of the song
"OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING" plays.

LIGHTS UP:

Rose cleans the floor with a Swifer-type mop. Lucy rushes in the front door, throws her coat anywhere.

The song ends.

LUCY Melony, from my art class called. Said she stopped into the library last week and saw my Larry and your Ralph cavorting with two young women in the library basement. She said she wanted to smack them to wipe the smiles off all their faces.

ROSE Ralph?

LUCY Yes, Ralph and Larry with two hot young women.

ROSE My Ralph?

LUCY Yes, your Ralph and my Larry. After her divorce Melony's paintings turned dark.

ROSE How dark?

LUCY In painting class, in front of everybody, she paints men with knives stuck in them and worse.

ROSE Worse?

LUCY Parts cut off.

ROSE (*cringing*) Ahaaaa! That's . . .

LUCY (*interrupting*) And blood! Lots of bright, red blood. Melony said her husband did his cavorting at the gym where men are supposed to cavort; cavorted them into a nasty divorce.

Nasty looks from both Rose and Lucy.

ROSE Ralph goes to the library a lot. He practically told me he's after the librarian!

LUCY Your Ralph's introduced my Larry to a hot librarian!

ROSE Library provides books, then movies . . . now cavorting!!

LUCY Library sex?

ROSE I'm sure of it.

LUCY Our men are cavorting with concubines!

ROSE What are concubines?

LUCY Concubines are women men use for sex!

ROSE I thought that was us.

LUCY A lower form of us. Women without wedding rings.

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

ROSE Like girlfriends?
LUCY Girlfriends is a dangerous designation. Never use it.
ROSE Why?
LUCY A girlfriend can range from female who is a casual friend to a bitch who's convinced a stunned male he's in love with her.
ROSE Oh.
LUCY When a man takes a concubine it's like he's taking a new car for a test drive.
ROSE Even though he's got a perfectly good car in his garage at home.
LUCY Right. (*thinks*) Two guys live together in the same apartment, get bored. One eggs the other on, then, here we are, husbands with concubines.
ROSE I don't know.
LUCY What else can it be?
ROSE Hard to fathom.
LUCY Blows my mind.
ROSE Mine too. (*gestures -- exploding mind*) Our husbands are are . . . cheating on us?!
LUCY All married men want young, single, attractive women!

Lucy and Rose jump up, look at each other then DS.

LUCY
AND
ROSE Ahhhhhhhha!
LUCY What are we going to do?
ROSE Confront them! Let them know that's unacceptable!
LUCY Hold on! Most of the mahjong ladies confronted their husbands, got divorced and are alone. They're on drugs, booze or . . . the worst.
ROSE What's that?
LUCY Escorts.
ROSE (*stunned*) Oblivion. How about a gin?

Lucy starts to cry.

LUCY To dull the pain.

Rose moves towards the kitchen.

ROSE Double?
LUCY More!

LIGHTS OUT THEN COME UP AGAIN (INDICATES TIME PASSING)

(MORE)

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

Rose and Lucy sit upright on the sofa. Rose pours gin drinks in water glasses for herself and Lucy, just a little in the bottom. They sip them. The bottle is on the end table.

LIGHTS OUT THEN COME UP AGAIN (INDICATES TIME PASSING)

(There can be a hidden pail to pour the gin from the glasses into when the lights are out.)Rose and Lucy are slumped down a little on the sofa. Rosie fills their glasses almost full of gin. They drink gin like water. Both slur words.

If Larry and I never moved in with you and Ralph we would have gone on as always, now . . . ?

Lucy throws arms up. Rose ignores Lucy's comment.

ROSE *(wailing to the ceiling)* Men are impossible to understand.

LUCY *(wailing to the ceiling)* Why me?!!

ROSE Why us?!!!!

LIGHTS OUT THEN COME UP AGAIN (INDICATES TIME PASSING)

Rose and Lucy are flaked out in different positions sliding partly off the sofa or sofa arm, holding gin drinks.

ROSE It's Larry's fault!

LUCY Not Larry!

ROSE Not Ralph!

LIGHTS OUT THEN COME UP AGAIN (INDICATES TIME PASSING)

Rose and Lucy are flaked out on the floor in front of the sofa, both drunk. Rose drinks from the bottle, jumps up with the gin bottle.

The queen bee!

Lucy jumps up.

LUCY Right! It's the queen bee's fault!!

ROSE High five!

The ladies wind up for a massive high five, both miss, momentum takes them to the floor. Both look at their "high five" hands, wondering what happened.

If that queen bee didn't move in under your deck our husbands would still love us not the, the concus.

LUCY We should declare war on all the queen bees everywhere.

ROSE Buy a dozen cans of bug spray and let 'em have it. Kill 'em all!

LIGHTS OUT THEN COME UP AGAIN (INDICATES TIME PASSING)

Rose and Lucy are passed out in awkward positions on the floor in front of the sofa.

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

Lucy groggily awakes, jumps up.

LUCY It's not the queen bee!

ROSE (*wakes, groggy*) Too late. We declared it was!

LUCY Wrong!

ROSE Feels so right.

LUCY You've got your need to clean! I've got my need to paint!

Rose jumps up.

ROSE (*fully awake*) Are you saying we, us, we're responsible?!!

LUCY It was my painting!

ROSE And my cleaning!

The ladies flop in unison on the sofa.

LUCY I might be obsessed!

ROSE Our obsessions drove them away . . .

LUCY (*interrupting*) . . . toward younger women! It was us!

ROSE How could we not see it?!!!!

LUCY (*eager*) Maybe it's not too late!

ROSE Confronting means divorce!

LUCY We don't confront! We encourage them back!

ROSE Have them re-commit to us, not their sleezy concus, but how?

LUCY We turn up our bedtime feminine charms! Every night we keep them busy with us.

ROSE Yeah. Ralph and I've been stuck in low gear, but we're not stalled!

LUCY It's been a while since . . . you know . . . there was a lot of hot passion with us.

ROSE Hear you. Remote control. We could shop for some, some, uh, flattering fashions.

LUCY Absolutely.

ROSE We'll reinvent ourselves, become hot hot hot for our guys.

LUCY Acquire expensive suggestive fashions! Do you ever get tired of shopping?

ROSE Never.

LUCY Never get tired of shopping.

ROSE It's our DNA molecules. We got the "love to shop" molecules.

LUCY Larry's got the "hate to shop" molecules.

ROSE Same with Ralph.

LUCY They've got other molecules.

ROSE The "constant need for sex" molecules!

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

LUCY That's the ones.

ROSE (*grabs gin bottle*) To shopping.

They drink from the bottle.

LUCY (*grabs bottle from Rose*) To extreme bedtime attention!

They drink from the bottle.

ROSE Extreme!

LUCY Night heat for our guys!

ROSE Nighttime heat equals daytime cold.

LUCY We'll freeze the concus out!

They pass out onto the sofa.

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Six

ACT ONE, SCENE SEVEN

Time: Morning

Place: Ralph and Rose's Apartment Livingroom

A few bars of the song "LOVE HURTS" plays.

LIGHTS UP:

Ralph, looking dishevelled, in pain, pale and walking like he's been kicked in the testicles, ENTERS from the bedroom dressed in pyjamas, sits in the sofa chair, picks up a book, tries to read, drops the book, curls up to sleep.

Larry ENTERS, staggering in from the bedroom in his robe, walking the same way. The song ends.

Ralph notices Larry.

RALPH What happened to you?

Larry is almost to the sofa, stops.

LARRY *(in pain)* Pulled something.

RALPH Something?

LARRY A muscle. *(loud)* Big one!

Larry collapses on the sofa.

RALPH *(finger to lips)* Shuuuuuush.

LARRY *(softer)* Right.

RALPH *(desperate under his breath)* Don't wake them.

LARRY You look like shit.

RALPH So do you.

LARRY I woke up . . . exhausted.

RALPH Insomnia?

LARRY Something else. What's your excuse?

RALPH *(whining)* I don't sleep, so tired . . . no energy.

LARRY Tennis players eat bananas for energy.

RALPH There's a bunch in the kitchen.

LARRY It's your kitchen. A banana might get me through the remains of my day.

Ralph struggles up, EXITS into the kitchen walking like before, ENTERS with two bananas, throws one to Larry. Larry tries to catch it with one hand, but it hits him on the head.

Pulled muscle?

RALPH It could be . . . It seems that . . . uh. I'm pretty sure . . .

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

LARRY *(interrupting)* What?

RALPH We've pulled the same muscle.

They simultaneously half peel the bananas.

They start to put it in their mouths, stop, pull it back, look at each other for three seconds, break pieces of the banana off and eat it that way.

Neither wants to give the impression they could be gay.

LARRY I got thirty minutes sleep. A long night.

RALPH Forty-five here.

LARRY Mahjong must be an aphrodisiac.

RALPH It's an ancient dice and tile game! Doesn't encourage sex! Not aphrodisiac.

LARRY Usually we have sex once or twice a week, occasionally we skip a week, depending, but now . . .

RALPH *(interrupting)* More?

LARRY Oh yeah.

RALPH How much?

LARRY A lot.

RALPH My Rose's become a sex machine.

LARRY For the last five nights Lucy's turned into a hot hooker.

RALPH Yeah.

LARRY How do you know?

RALPH I was agreeing. My Rose wants it all night!

LARRY Shussssh.

RALPH Three times a night for the last five nights. There's a limit.

LARRY Lucky you?

RALPH Why?

LARRY Three and . . . uh . . .

RALPH Uh what?

LARRY And a half.

RALPH A half?

LARRY Went unconscious before . . . *(shrugs)*

RALPH Every night for five nights!

LARRY That's when it started with us!

RALPH Yeah?

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

LARRY Yeah.

RALPH Weird.

LARRY Could be the moon.

RALPH Not the moon.

LARRY A virus?

RALPH (*shakes head*) If it were a virus, we'd have caught it by now.

LARRY Right. No moon, no virus, no cause.

RALPH But a definite effect.

LARRY Big effect.

RALPH I've never said no to sex.

LARRY Too much is never enough.

RALPH That's been my motto until . . .

LARRY (*interrupting*) Now?

RALPH Yeah. I want to, but . . .

LARRY (*interrupting*) Ditto.

RALPH Yeah.

LARRY What'll we do?

RALPH We're not equipped to deal with sharkie bees or sex-crazed wives.

LARRY We're missing the "say no to sex" molecule.

RALPH It's in our DNA.

LARRY Therapy?

RALPH A therapist would laugh and toss us out on our ears.

LARRY Right.

RALPH It's Kafkaesque.

LARRY Kafka what?

RALPH Kafka wrote about weird stuff happening.

LARRY We've got weird.

RALPH In his *Metamorphosis* a man awakes one morning to find he's been turned into a six-foot bug.

LARRY (*jumps up, frozen in fear*) An ant?!!

RALPH Beatle, I think.

LARRY How did it end.

RALPH Not good.

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

LARRY For the bug or man?

RALPH Both.

Terrified, Larry looks at his hands, arms.

LARRY My stomach is churning. I'm feeling more and more . . . Fred-like!

RALPH You're not turning into an ant! It's a story!

Ralph grabs Larry.

Get a grip, man!

LARRY *(sits)* Thanks. Between Lucy and that damn hound at the other end of the building howling on and on, I don't sleep, I'm utterly exhausted.

RALPH That wasn't a hound.

LARRY Wind? We're on the twenty-third floor. Wind can distort sound.

RALPH Rosie enjoys her night-time freedom of expression.

LARRY Democratic sex?

RALPH Keeps me interested and occasionally awake.

LARRY *(dumbfounded)* I'm living in a silent sex movie.

RALPH Rosie likes night-time drama.

LARRY Is it genuine?

RALPH Don't know. Ever since that eighty's movie with Meg Ryan, Billy Crystal, guys don't know.

LARRY What about the neighbors?

RALPH I've been telling them it's the hound at the other end of the building.

LARRY What'll we do?

RALPH About?

LARRY Our bedtime . . . challenges!

RALPH We could find something to do to get us out of range.

LARRY Good idea.

RALPH Do you golf?

LARRY No.

RALPH But you'll do it?

LARRY *(desperate)* Anything!

RALPH Tomorrow night?

LARRY Night golfing?

RALPH I wish. Afternoons.

LARRY How's that supposed to help?

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

RALPH If we play with two others, a foursome, play eighteen to thirty-six holes, struggle in, say we're too tired. They'll take mercy on us. I know a couple of guys who could be interested in playing with us.

LARRY *(happy)* A night off would be appreciated.

RALPH We'll have to think up other activities.

LARRY I'll give it some thought. How about another banana?

RALPH You get them. I've gone numb from the waist down.

Larry struggles up, takes both banana skins, moves toward the kitchen opening. "LOVE HURTS" plays.

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Seven

ACT ONE, SCENE EIGHT

Time: Afternoon

Place: Ralph and Rose's Apartment Livingroom

A few bars of song "LOVE WILL KEEP US TOGETHER" plays.

LIGHTS UP:

Lucy and Rose, provocatively dressed, and made up, each with a purse, sit on sofa chair and sofa. Music stops.

ROSE *(checks her watch)* They're out having a good time.

LUCY Probably.

ROSE Without us.

LUCY Yeah.

ROSE With those "other" friends.

LUCY Yeah.

ROSE *(near tears)* Getting sloshed with two hotties!!

LUCY Calendar girls?!

ROSE They're in a bar with scantily clad, young . . .

LUCY *(interrupting)* . . . big titty . . .

ROSE *(interrupting)* . . . tight assy!

LUCY

AND

ROSE Concubines!

SHOCKED, Rose and Lucy jump up.

Ahhhhha!!!

LUCY *(screams)* We need to stay calm!!!

ROSE *(screams)* Calm?!!!

LUCY *(calmer)* Right, calm.

ROSE *(very calm)* Absolutely calm.

Lucy and Rose sit as before.

LUCY I like your dress.

ROSE Yours looks new?

LUCY New this morning.

Rose takes a spray perfume bottle from her purse, sprays herself with it.

ROSE Ralph loves this scent.

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

Lucy takes a spray perfume bottle from her purse and sprays herself with it.

LUCY Larry's crazy for my perfume. Once he sees how hot we are, they'll want just us.

The DR door opens, and Ralph and Larry ENTER, dressed in golfing wear with golf bags and clubs.

They prop their club bags in a corner.

Rose and Lucy stand.

RALPH Hello, Hon.

Ralph kisses Rose on the cheek, makes a quick dash back to the bags where Larry is standing.

LUCY *(moves seductively toward Larry)* Hi, Loooooovie.

LARRY *(defensive)* Hi, uh, Love. We played golf. So many holes, so much club swinging and walking, long fairways, trudging from hole to hole, I'm . . .

LUCY *(interrupting, shocked)* You don't golf!

LARRY Ralph's teaching me.

Lucy and Rose give each other looks.

LUCY *(to Rose)* The bad influence.

LARRY I'm a beginner at this.

ROSE *(to Lucy)* A beginner. Hu.

LUCY Which means . . .

LARRY *(interrupting)* It's not something I'm good at yet.

LUCY *(to Rose)* There's hope.

ROSE Did you play the whole eighteen holes?

RALPH We did.

ROSE Just the two of you?

LARRY It was a foursome.

ROSE Kinkie!

The women give each other pained looks.

LUCY You played with the other two on the golf course?

RALPH We did!

LARRY We played on the Tees, fairways and greens. Doing it in the traps was difficult but we managed.

ROSE *(sour face)* In the sand?

LUCY That's obscene!

LARRY We stayed out of the rough.

Night Heat

By Robert J. Wheeler

ROSE That's something.

LUCY I suppose.

ROSE *(to the guys)* Where's your score cards?

RALPH In our bags.

Ralph and Larry move back to the bags, start to open the zipper compartment.

ROSE The first one to give me their score card wins a free full body massage.

Ralph closes the zipper, turns back to Rose.

RALPH *(a look of horror)* Sorry, Hon. Can't find mine.

Larry pulls the score card from his bag, rushes to Rose with it, hands it to her.

LARRY Here's mine?

Larry looks back to Ralph.

I win.

RALPH *(sarcastic)* Lucky.

ROSE *(looks at card)* Not according to the card.

RALPH *(sarcastic)* The big massage winner.

LUCY Have either of you noticed anything different?

Larry and Ralph appear confused, look around the room.

RALPH *(sniffs the air)* There's a smell.

Encouraged, Rose and Lucy spray themselves with their perfume bottles as the guys sniff the room.

LARRY *(sniffs)* I smell it too.

Rose and Lucy appear pleased.

RALPH There's a definite odour!

LARRY Our mosquito repellent?

RALPH No. Repellent has a heavy, distinct odour.

LARRY This has a lighter scent.

Rose and Lucy appear extremely pleased.

RALPH I know it, just can't . . .

LARRY *(interrupting)* Air freshener!!!

Ralph and Larry are excited.

Rose and Lucy appear extremely displeased.

End of Act One -- END OF SAMPLE

LIGHTS OUT