

# ANNIVERSARIES

A Play in Two Acts

By

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# Characters

In order of appearance

Alan  
Reg  
Elaine  
Bernard  
Stephen  
Arsenio  
Yvonne  
Jonathan  
Diane  
Larry  
Sophia

## Anniversaries

### Synopsis

The play is set in a clifftop hotel on the Amalfi coast in Italy, which has a spectacular view of the beach below, the coastline and the sea beyond.

Diane Culthorpe, the reputable and 'motherly' proprietor is about to celebrate her thirtieth anniversary as the owner of the hotel. Sadly, she has been far from financially astute and the bank is about to foreclose on the mortgage.

Alan Barron, a novelist and author of the trilogy, *Anniversaries*, has been a guest at the hotel for twenty five years and might also be celebrating his twenty fifth wedding anniversary, had his wife not left him during the first week of their honeymoon.

Reg Moss and his colleague Elaine, property investment executives, arrive at the hotel to ascertain whether it would be in their employer's interests to purchase the hotel and whether the property could be developed as a casino. Eventually, the executives are exposed and Alan and other guests consider ways of saving the hotel and retain Diane's ownership.

Reg and Elaine turn the tide when they agree that the hotel is unsuitable as a casino and save the day by convincing their employers that it should be a condition of their intended purchase that Diane be appointed manager and given a life tenancy of a suite of rooms at the hotel.

The play has a few sub plots involving a young guest, Yvonne and her relationships with the hotel waiter Arsenio and a work colleague Jonathan, who has followed her to the Amalfi coast. To make the situation even more complicated she is obviously smitten by Alan, but that's another story!

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## Production Notes

The cast consists of 7 males and 4 females. Their ages are referred to within the script and details of costuming are also contained therein.

The set can be as simple or elaborate as budgets or desires allow. Again details of furniture and props are referred to within the script.

At the time of writing this play has not been performed and the writer looks forward to receiving news of its world premiere.

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## Act 1

*Time: Close enough to the present*

*Scene1: A patio and balcony area at a hotel on the Amalfi Coast in Italy.*

*There are white patio chairs, tables and a few folded umbrellas on stands C and CL. There are also potted palms and climbing plants UL and UR. UL is a balustrade to the balcony.*

*Alan in his late forties, dressed in a sports shirt and long trousers, is relaxing in a comfortable patio chair CR, reading a book. There are other chairs and tables C and CL.*

*Reg, in his mid-forties enters L. He's wearing a short sleeve shirt and slacks. He casually crosses UL and stretches both arms on the stone balustrade and appears to study the view. He takes in a deep breath and exhales noisily and smiles.*

*Alan looks up at him and smiles and then continues reading.*

Reg: Morning.

Alan: *(calmly turning a page)* Good morning.

*He continues reading*

Reg: What an excellent view.

Alan: Yes, although some people might say the tree spoils it.

Reg: No, it's a natural feature. It gives the view more interest.

Alan: Yes, I'm sure.

Reg: A beautiful part of the world. I've just had a look at the pool area, it's impressive.

Alan: It was renovated fairly recently. The owner spent a bomb on it.

*Reg crosses to chair at CL, but does not sit. He studies Alan briefly.*

Reg: Been here long?

Alan: Two months.

Reg: Really? What do you do with yourself?

Alan: I read, try to make notes in preparation for my writing and otherwise relax as much I can.

Reg: A writer, fiction?

Alan: Yes. Social dramas I suppose you'd call them.

Reg: And should I know your name?

Alan: Well, you might stumble upon my books in your local library. Alan Barron.

Reg: Barron. No sorry, but I'm not really into books, fiction that is.

*Alan smiles and turns another page.*

*Reg returns to the balcony, turns, leans on the balustrade and looks up at the hotel.*

Reg: It's a fine piece of baroque architecture.

Alan: Yes. I believe it was built in 1856, but it looks much older.

Reg: It's typical of the buildings on this coast I believe.

Alan: Are you into architecture?

Reg: No, I'm just an admirer.

Alan: This place became a hotel in the 1920's. It was very popular, buzzing with music, balls, cocktail and garden parties. It survived the Second World War with little damage. Some of the rooms have

been boarded up, mainly because of the sudden slump in bookings during recent times.

Reg: Oh, that surprises me.

*Reg turns and studies the view again. Alan continues reading. Reg turns to him, again leaning on the balustrade.*

Reg: Are you a regular visitor?

Alan: *(without looking up)* Oh yes, I spend three months here every year. I've been coming here for twenty five years.

Reg: As a writer I would've thought you'd want to widen your horizons.

*Alan laughs briefly*

Alan: You're probably right. I'm in need of new material, but I thoroughly enjoy it here and I can be rather lazy. My publisher would vouch for that. So what do you do?

Reg: Nothing exciting, I'm an insurance executive.

Alan: *(smiling)* I just hope you don't try selling me any.

Reg: No, not while I'm on holiday.

*Alan closes the book and stands*

Reg: I hope I haven't disturbed your reading.

Alan: No, no. *(He checks his wristwatch)* It's nearly time for breakfast. I'm sure we'll see each other again.

Reg: More than likely, we're here for another seven days.

Alan: We?

Reg: My, er, partner and I.

Alan: Ah.

*Alan crosses R*

Reg: Are you on your own?

*Alan turns to him*

Alan: Yes, ever since my divorce. We spent one whole week here, twenty five years ago on honeymoon and then she left me. She objected to my writing, not that I was into it at the time; *(he laughs briefly)* after all I'd other things on my mind. She took ages with her make-up, often fell asleep on the beach and spent our money like water.

Reg: And you've never dipped your toes in the water since?

Alan: Well, I haven't exactly lived my life as a recluse. I've had my moments, but marriage is not for me, obviously. I was absolutely ecstatic when she left. That week was the most miserable I've ever experienced. I'm leaving you, she said. I'd had a few drinks and I replied, very bravely I thought, well fuck off then and to my amazement she did. I didn't see her again, just letters from her lawyer and eventually the Decree Absolute which I framed and had hanging in my office for a few years. I've valued my freedom ever since. *(He scoffs)* I should celebrate my twenty fifth year of freedom, shouldn't I? Anyway, I'm luckier than most. I have my writing, reading and I enjoy my own company.

*Reg turns towards the view*

Alan: I apologise, I've been rambling on.

*Reg turns to him and smiles*

Reg: No please, I was listening, although I admit, for a moment I was lost in my own thoughts, away with the fairies.

Alan: I wish the fairies would help me; I've had writer's block for much of the year and my publisher's becoming tetchy. Oh well breakfast awaits and er, I'm sorry I didn't ask your name.

Reg: Reg. Reg Moss.

Alan: Have a lovely day Reg.

Reg: Thanks, er Alan.

*Alan goes to exit R, but slowly turns to Reg and shakes his head*

Alan: You know I've no idea why I eluded to my past.

Reg: Well, I asked the questions. Don't worry; I've no relationship with the Paparazzi.

Alan: That's gratifying, not that they'd be interested in me.

*Reg holds up a hand in farewell.*

*Alan exits R*

*Reg turns to the balcony to look at the view.*

*Elaine, who is slim and in her early forties, is dressed neatly in a light summer dress and open toe casual shoes, enters R*

Elaine: There you are. Aren't you coming for breakfast?

Reg: I won't be long.

Elaine: What've you been doing?

*Reg turns away from the balcony and joins her.*

Reg: I've been admiring that spectacular view.

*Elaine crosses to the balcony*

Elaine: Oh my! What a beautiful coastline. You certainly did well choosing this place.

Reg: This is the hotel alright; a splendid view and an equally splendid building; exactly what we're looking for.

Elaine: Absolutely.

*She re-joins Reg*

Reg: Oh yes, I had a chat with one of the guests, seems a nice bloke. He told me all about himself, well as much as he wanted to. He's a writer. I told him I was in insurance.

Elaine: That's safe, I suppose. What've you in mind today?

Reg: Perhaps we should explore the area, a walk around the town; get our bearings.

Elaine: I'm told that this place has a very nice pool.

Reg: You're not suggesting we spend the day stuck up here when there's a beautiful beach down there. In any case, I thought you were keen to go walking.

Elaine: Not in this heat, anyway we've another seven days; plenty of time for walks before we get down to business. (*She looks at the view*) It's so lovely.

Reg: Alan Barron, the guy I met this morning, writes social dramas, whatever they are.

Elaine: Alan Barron? He's quite well known.

Reg: I thought he might be.

Elaine: I've read three of his books, a trilogy, Anniversaries.

Reg: Good is he?

Elaine: Very good, but a bit depressing though. I haven't read his other novels.

Reg: Right, I think I'm ready for breakfast.

Elaine: (*crossing to exit R*) I'm glad to hear it; we can plan our day while we're eating.

Reg: If you have your way, that shouldn't be difficult.

Elaine: Don't be like that; let's make the most of it while we can.

Reg: Really?

Elaine: You know what I mean.

Reg: Yes, unfortunately I do.

*Elaine exits R and Reg follows.*

*Off R we hear Bernard*

Bernard: How do you do?

*Reg and Elaine pass the time of day with him.*

*Bernard, a large man in his late sixties who is dressed in a colourful cotton shirt over a pair of three quarter length shorts and sandals,*

*enters R. He walks with the aid of a stick. He surveys the scene, belches and is drawn to the balcony. He studies the view and then turns, stifles a belch and lowers himself into one of the patio chairs CL.*

*Stephen, who is in his early sixties, a tall dark haired man, who obviously dyes his hair to conceal the greyness, and wears a smart T shirt and white shorts and casual shoes, enters R*

Bernard: Stephen my love, you've finished eating!

Stephen: I just had to have some mushrooms. They looked enticing.

Bernard: What an extraordinary response to a serving of common mushrooms.

*Bernard belches loudly, to which Stephen winces.*

Bernard: Bloody fried courgettes.

Stephen: No, Zucchini; in France, we say courgettes. The trouble with you is you eat far too much.

*He crosses to the balustrade*

My, my, this is special. *(He studies the view)* What a vista!

Bernard: It's a pity they've stuck the fucking tree in the middle.

Stephen: Oh really, they didn't just stick the tree there, it's au naturel.

Bernard: Al naturel, we say in Italy.

*Stephen gives him a hard look.*

Stephen: One looks beyond the tree, Bernard.

Bernard: Al naturel or not, it spoils the view.

Stephen: Don't be ridiculous! *(He points excitedly)* Oh look, such an expanse of beach. I can't wait!

Bernard: Down there it's noisy with traffic, the inane chatter of tourists and the aroma of cheap fast food which all together creates pressure and a great deal of heat. It's better to see it all from a

distance, rather than being part of it. In any case, I'm not sitting on the beach while you lie there practically naked with a wanton view of the crack of your arse, as I sweat and paw my face and neck with a large handkerchief.

Stephen: Well take your clothes off and join the rest of us.

Bernard: If I can't bear the look of my body I'm sure no one else can.

Stephen: Don't be coy, no one will show any interest in you.

Bernard: I'm not sure how to take that.

*Stephen laughs*

Bernard: The beach provides a haven for misshapen and beautiful oil basted bodies. I no longer consider them virile and tempting and thank God I no longer need to struggle to control my erection as each and every supple body passes by.

Stephen: I wish you'd relax and just enjoy doing nothing.

Bernard: Doing nothing I enjoy, but I don't like sharing it with the rest of the world on a beach like that. No, today I shall be confined to barracks, reading a paper, an English one, enjoying a glass or two of Campari and soda, and taking a nap here on the patio or by the pool. If you want to go to the beach, that's fine by me.

Stephen: God you're a laugh a minute!

*Arsenio, a waiter who wears an open collared white shirt and long black trousers and shoes, enters R with a large Campari and Soda and places it on the table beside Bernard.*

Bernard: Thank you Arsenio.

Arsenio: Prego!

*He smiles broadly.*

*(To Stephen)* Would you wish to have a drink signor?

Stephen: Not at this time of the morning, thank you. *(To Bernard)* What are you doing?

Bernard: Arsenio, does it disgust you that I should ask for an alcoholic beverage so early in the morning?

Arsenio: Alcohol, er...bev...?

Bernard: A drink!

Arsenio: Oh, no not at all signor. You're on holiday and I make sure you enjoy it; how you say, to the limit?

Bernard: Yes, thank you Arsenio.

*Arsenio nods and exits R*

Stephen: You're really something aren't you? You've only just had breakfast.

Bernard: Yes indeed. I placed my order with dear Arsenio while you were devouring the field mushrooms.

Stephen: Drinking at nine thirty in the morning is immoral.

Bernard: Don't you mean amoral?

Stephen: God, you're so annoying!

Bernard: Look, I intend to see out my last years on this God forsaken planet as impetuously as I can. I shall drink, eat, belch or fart at any time of the day that suits me. And I shall go to the beach when I desire to do so.

Stephen: You selfish bloody bugger. While you're gearing up for a heart attack, I think I might go and get ready for my first swim.

Bernard: Stephen, don't be angry. When you swear, and it never sounds right coming from your mouth, I know you're upset.

Stephen: I'm not upset. I'm just a mite disappointed (*pointedly*) Enjoy your drink and nap. I suppose I'll see you later.

*He crosses to exit R*

Bernard: (*weakly*) Stephen, please.

*Stephen stops and turns to him*

I'll meet you later in the morning, at the beach, OK?

Stephen: Very well. Don't forget.

*He turns and exits R*

Bernard: Oh dear. *(He sips at his drink)*

*Arsenio enters R*

Arsenio: The Campari, it is good?

Bernard: Perfect. *(He offers the glass in a toast, but doesn't make one)*

Arsenio: A Campari won't harm you signor. I never see no one get drunk drinking it.

*Bernard chuckles*

Bernard: My friend worries about me too much.

Arsenio: But he is a good friend, si?

Bernard: The best.

Arsenio: Then you are very lucky signor.

Bernard: Tell me Arsenio, is the owner on site? I've yet to meet her.

Arsenio: On site? I do not understand.

Bernard: Does she live here?

Arsenio: Oh, yes of course, but today madam is in Naples. She has important business there. She returns this afternoon.

Bernard: Left you in charge, has she?

*Arsenio smiles and shakes his head.*

Arsenio: No, no. All I am good for, is that correct, good for?

Bernard: Yes, but I would've used a different phrase.

Arsenio: Phrase?

Bernard: It doesn't matter, I've confused you. You were saying?

Arsenio: Ah, si. I'm far better serving drinks and collecting luggage.

Bernard: I'm sure you are; each to his own dear boy.

Arsenio: Each to his own?

Bernard: *(out loud to himself)* God, how do I finish this bloody conversation? *(To Arsenio)* You call the owner madam, not senora?

Arsenio: She is English and we must call her Madam or Madam Culthorpe. She insists on the staff speaking English at all times. She is well known to everyone in the community. Can I get you anything else signor?

Bernard: How interesting, er, yes, a newspaper; an English one, if possible.

Arsenio: Not a problem signor. You stay up here today?

Bernard: Just for a while.

Arsenio: It is always cooler, especially by the pool. I get the newspaper for you.

*Bernard smiles and nods; Arsenio bows and exits R. Bernard places the glass on the patio table in front of him and struggles to get out of the chair. He rises and quietly curses. He drinks deeply and belches loudly.*

Bernard: Those bloody courgettes, zucchini, whatever they're called, terrible.

*Alan enters R with his book*

Bernard: Good another guest.

Alan: *(extending a hand in welcome)* Alan Barron pleased to meet you.

Bernard: *(shaking his hand)* Likewise. Bernard Holmes. I suppose you're another beach worshipper.

Alan: Oh no, I shall read by the pool this morning.

Bernard: I'm pleased to hear it. I'll join you, if that's OK with you.

Alan: Of course.

*Arsenio enters with a selection of newspapers.*

Arsenio: Signor Holmes, your newspapers.

Bernard: Excellent!

*He takes them, finishes his drink, hands the glass to Arsenio and crosses L*

Another Campari and soda please Arsenio; at the poolside.

Alan: That sounds most refreshing, the same for me Arsenio.

*They exit L. Arsenio smiles. He picks up the glass on the patio table and crosses to exit R, but stops as Elaine and Reg enter.*

Arsenio: Can I get you anything signora, you signor?

Reg: No thank you.

Elaine: The breakfast was delicious.

Arsenio: Grazie signora. Er, are you sure there is nothing I can do for you?

Elaine: Is the pool open at this time of the morning?

Arsenio Oh yes signora. It is at its best in the morning.

Elaine: That sounds good. I'll go and change.

Reg: I'll meet you here.

*Arsenio allows Elaine to exit R before following her.*

*Reg crosses to C and takes a mobile telephone from his back pocket. He punches in the numbers and places the phone to an ear.*

Reg: Ah, buon giorno Raymond. What? I said good morning....in Italian. I'm in Italy, the Amalfi coast. Is Larry there? Larry, is he there? Oh, it's just that he wanted me to call him. Oh I see. Well would you let him know I arrived yesterday evening and I'll fax a report within the next few days? Don't forget will you? Yes, he has my mobile number; yes it's the same one. Yes, he can text me. OK then, arrivederci. I said...oh never mind. Goodbye, au revoir!  
*He switches off phone*

What a bloody moron!

*Yvonne, a slim blonde in her early thirties enters R. She looks striking in a salmon coloured bikini. A beach towel is draped like a long scarf about her neck. She crosses L. Reg nods a greeting without looking as she passes him, but when he sees her, he does a double take and smiles broadly.*

Reg: Buon giorno mademoiselle, er signorina.

*Yvonne stops and turns to him.*

Yvonne: Hi, have you just arrived?

Reg: Oh, you're English.

Yvonne: You sound disappointed.

Reg: No, no I....

Yvonne: *(interrupting and smiling)* Yes, I'm from boring old Brighton. There's nothing exotic about my background unfortunately.

Reg: I don't know; I rather like Brighton.

Yvonne: Anyway I've lived and worked in London these past five years.

Reg: I didn't see you at breakfast.

Yvonne: Should you have done? Forgive me, I was being silly. I never have breakfast. I jog most mornings and then plunge into the pool. I love it here. My third year on my own; I never holiday with friends. It's a dangerous occupation where I'm concerned. I like to do what I want to do and if I can do that no one else suffers, don't you think?

Reg: That's reasonable I suppose.

Yvonne: It is. Anyway, I'm sure I'll see you around. I must have my dip. Bye!

*She quickly exits L*

*Reg holds up a hand in farewell at the moment Elaine, in a bathing robe and carrying a colourful canvas bag, enters R*

Elaine: Reg?

*Reg turns to her still holding up his hand, which he quickly drops*

Elaine: Are you alright?

Reg: Of course. Right, are you ready?

Elaine: Yes, but what're you going to do?

*Reg gives her a withering look.*

Reg: I've no idea. As you know, I don't swim and I'm not into sunbathing.

Elaine: Don't worry I've got your iPad.

Reg: *(sarcastically)* Well done Elaine, what would I do without you?

Elaine: Ha bloody ha. Come on let's go.

*She crosses L and Reg follows, but is interrupted by his mobile ringing, which is very loud and an excerpt from the song, 'O Sole Mio' or something similar.*

Elaine: Who the hell is that?

*Reg speaks into the phone.*

Reg: Yes! Raymond?

*He motions Elaine to leave, which she does, L.*

Reg: Yes? What? Oh for fuck sake! Amalfi, A, M, A, L, F, I. Got it? Yes Amalfi coast, Italy. Larry knows where I am. No, I can't say when I'll fax him my report. I told you, within the next few days. I'll call him later today if you like. No I don't want to really, provided you're able to pass on the bloody message. OK? Goodbye. What? Oh, arriva bloody merci!

*He replaces phone in his pocket and just as he utters the following, Arsenio enters R with a tray containing two glasses of Campari and Soda and nibbles causing him to spill the drinks onto the tray.*

Fucking idiot!

Arsenio: Signor, I do something to upset you?

Reg: What? Oh no, no. I was on my mobile, my phone. Are they Camparis'?

Arsenio: Si signor, and sodas.

Reg: I'll have one.

*Reg crosses L*

I'll be at the pool side.

*He exits L*

Arsenio: *(to himself)* Mama Mia, yesterday I am a waiter, Today a juggler, a Campari Juggler!

*He crosses R very carefully with the spilt drinks and nibbles and exits. There is a loud crash off R.*

*Arsenio: (off) Merda! Shit!*

*End of Scene 1*

Scene 2 – Later that morning

*The setting is the same.*

*Elaine enters quickly L wrapped in her robe and drying her hair with a towel. Reg follows her carrying a book.*

Elaine: Why did you have to tell him that I am your partner?

Reg: We're sharing the same rooms for God's sake

*Elaine laughs*

Elaine: So what? He's not to know that we share the same rooms? Why would he care?

*She drops into a patio chair and continues to dry her hair.*

Reg: I couldn't say you were my colleague, could I? I wanted to make our relationship seem...

Elaine: (*interrupting*) Normal? Look, the only reason we're sharing the room is there are no other rooms available, which is ridiculous when you consider the size of the place and the small number of guests.

Reg: Then it is OK I give everyone the impression you're my partner?

Elaine: As long as you remember I'm not. OK?

Reg: Don't worry I'll continue to dress and undress in the bathroom and knock when I return to the bedroom.

Elaine: And remember not to drink too much.

Reg: I never drink too much. (*He laughs briefly*) God, I wonder what they'd say back at the office.

Elaine: We shan't give them the opportunity, shall we? Oh yes, I noticed your interest in that young Yvonne thing.

Reg: Thing? She's gorgeous.

Elaine: You couldn't stop leering at her.

Reg: I don't leer, I appreciate a fantastic figure. It was very difficult not to admire her and she's no fool either. I enjoyed her company.

Elaine: As long as the company you keep is confined to the pool area.

Reg: You sound like you're my wife.

Elaine: God forbid. I'm concerned that your personal life might affect the object of our visit here.

*She rises from chair*

I'm peckish. Shall we have lunch?

*Reg looks at his watch.*

Reg: We should dine in town, I nice seafood meal would go down a treat.

Elaine: Come on then, let's change.

*Reg smiles broadly*

Reg: Why not?

*They exit R*

*Bernard enters L with a bundle of newspapers and his hat which he places on a patio table.*

*Alan and Yvonne follow. Yvonne wears a towel around her waist, exposing the top half of her bikini. She falls into a chair. Alan sits opposite.*

Bernard: Well that was very pleasant. Thank you for your company, it was most enjoyable.

*Yvonne addresses Alan.*

Yvonne: It was lovely catching up with you again. It made a change to enjoy decent conversation. Incidentally, I read the last in the trilogy.

Alan: Anniversaries?

Yvonne: Yes, what was it called?

Alan: The Final Celebration.

Yvonne: That's the one, it was so sad, but a great read.

Alan: I'm pleased; I think it was the best of the three. It was sad I suppose, but that's my trouble dear, I'm terribly melancholy.

Bernard: It probably shows you're human. I must read your books.

Alan: Please do.

Yvonne: Shall we three have lunch together?

Alan: What a good idea.

Bernard: Sadly I must decline. I have arranged to meet my dear friend Stephen at the beach.

Yvonne: Phew! It will be so bloody hot there. Good luck.

Bernard: Don't worry, I shall peel him off the sand and take him hot foot to the nearest bar (*looks at watch*) I shall be late I'd better fly.

Alan: I take it you're driving

Bernard: Er, no, Stephen has the car but I'll be fine. The walk will do me good.

Alan: Not in this heat it won't. I'll take you in my car.

Bernard: No, no!

Yvonne: He'll insist and so shall I.

Alan: She's right.

Bernard: That's very kind.

Yvonne: I'd better get ready. Give me a few minutes. I'll meet you in the lobby.

Bernard: Of course.

*She rises and exits R on the run.*

She's a lovely young lady

Alan: Oh yes. I'm surprised some lucky beau hasn't snapped her up, but then again she's very independent. Well come on, to the lobby, unless you need to change.

Bernard: Hardly. I shall stay my scruffy self.

Alan: On holiday, clothes don't maketh the man.

*Bernard chuckles, rises, and leaves his hat on the table.*

Bernard: To the lobby then.

*They exit R*

*Jonathan, tall, slim, in his early thirties, enters R. He wears smart shorts and a T shirt.*

*He surveys the patio area and then exits L.*

*Yvonne enters R brushing her hair. She wears a simple colourful print dress. She looks about the area and is about to cross L when Jonathan enters L*

Yvonne: For pity's sake, what're you doing?

Jonathan: Looking for you. *(He turns briefly and looks L)* Nice pool.

Yvonne: How did you know I was staying here?

Jonathan: I followed you yesterday after our time on the beach.

Yvonne: You were stalking me!

Jonathan: I wasn't doing anything of the kind. I thought you'd be happy to see me after our chat.

Yvonne: It wasn't a coincidence we met on the beach; you knew I was staying at this resort. If that's not stalking I don't know what is.

Jonathan: I admit I knew you were coming here.

Yvonne: Then why the hell didn't you mention it back at the office in London.

Jonathan: I've always been keen on you.

Yvonne: We hardly speak at work, apart from passing the time of day. The whole thing's creepy.

*He smiles.*

Jonathan: I'm shy.

Yvonne: Shy my arse!

Jonathan: Look, I've struggled all the way up here; the least you could do is to have lunch with me.

Yvonne: No, I've already made arrangements.

Jonathan: *(disappointed)* Oh.

Yvonne: I'm having lunch with a guy who must be over ten years older than me, and a perfect gentleman.

Jonathan: Oh, if that's what turns you on.

Yvonne: You've got a cheek.

*Arsenio enters R*

*He looks at them both and goes to exit R.*

Yvonne: Arsenio, can I help you?

Arsenio: I've come to collect the gentleman's hat. *(To Jonathan)*  
Scusi signor, are you a guest?

Jonathan: No, no, I've come to see this lady. Look Yvonne, I'll catch you later, OK?

Yvonne: I don't think so.

Arsenio: The gentlemen are waiting signorina.

Jonathan: I'd better go.

Arsenio: Next time signor; please inform reception you are here. It is for security you understand.

Jonathan: Yes, I apologise, I'll be off.

Yvonne: *(Turning away from him)* Yes, go.

*Jonathan reluctantly exits R*

*Arsenio crosses to patio table and collects Bernard's hat and pulls sunglasses from his pocket.*

*Arsenio shows Yvonne the sunglasses.*

Arsenio: Were you looking for these?

Yvonne: Why yes, how did you know?

Arsenio: It's my job to know.

*Yvonne briefly laughs incredulously*

Yvonne: Really?

Arsenio: You left them on the table inside and of course I see you wearing them.

*Yvonne takes them*

Yvonne: Thank you.

Arsenio: Prego. I thought you, me, are good friends.

Yvonne: I suppose in a way we are, yes.

Arsenio: I don't understand... in a way?

Yvonne: Yes we're good friends. OK?

Arsenio: After our drinks in the beach bar, er, two nights ago, it was romantic, yes?

Yvonne: It was nice.

Arsenio: You let me kiss you.

Yvonne: Did I? Yes, I suppose I did. I had a lot to drink. Thank God it was only a kiss.

Arsenio: Sorry? You say you liked it. You say to me...

Yvonne: *(interrupting)* Please Arsenio, I don't want to discuss this now, I have a luncheon date.

*She crosses R*

Arsenio: Is he your man?

Yvonne: Who Jonathan? No, he's a bloody nuisance. Nobody is my man and I'm now going to lunch. Thank you for the sunglasses.

*Arsenio shrugs.*

Arsenio: It is my job.

Yvonne: And you are very good at your job.

*Yvonne exits R after throwing him a sympathetic smile. He looks at hat and shakes his head slowly.*

Arsenio: *(quietly scoffing)* Si, it's just my job and I'm... very good at it. *(Suddenly realising)* The hat! *(Dramatically)* I go!

*He quickly exits R.*

Scene 3: Late afternoon of the same day.

*The setting is the same, apart from the fact that there are few more patio chairs and tables. The light is rosy and will become more so as the sun sets.*

*Elaine and Reg are sitting L enjoying cocktails.*

*Elaine sighs heavily.*

Elaine: What a great ending to a beautiful day.

Reg: I don't think it's ended yet.

Elaine: What does that mean?

Reg: It means I intend painting the town red. I reckon it could be a vibrant evening after yet another delicious meal.

Elaine: Eating and drinking appear very important to you.

Reg: Well, they keep me alive. Aren't you keen to see the lights, have a few drinks, and dance perhaps?

Elaine: Not necessarily.

Reg: You surprise me.

Elaine: Lunch was embarrassing. I couldn't count the number of times you returned to the smorgasbord.

Reg: I often do that. I take a small selection at a time. The food was exceptional you've got to admit.

Elaine: Even the waiters were becoming concerned. Their brows were knitted with frowns as you boldly shovelled seafood portions

onto your plate and also into your mouth as you returned to our table.

Reg: That's a total exaggeration.

*Elaine smiles broadly. Reg shakes his head in disbelief*

Elaine: I shan't leave the hotel. I'm sure the view of the town from up here at night must be a gift from the Gods. In any case I'm not hungry, I'm tired and I shall hit the sack early.

Reg: I might join you.

Elaine: Like hell you will.

*Reg laughs briefly*

Elaine: You'll not enter our room until I'm fast asleep.

Reg: What?

Elaine: I mean it.

Reg: And how will I know you're asleep, listen for snoring from the hallway?

Elaine: Don't be funny.

*His mobile rings loudly.*

Reg: Oh, shit!

Elaine: Charming I must say.

*Reg pulls out his mobile*

Reg: I must answer this. I won't be long.

*He rises and exits L.*

*Alan enters R wearing an open neck brown shirt with a cream collar, a cream linen jacket, dark brown trousers and casual shoes. He carries a glass of Scotch and ice. He crosses to the balcony.*

Elaine: (*without looking up*) Good afternoon.

*Alan turns to her.*

Alan: It's almost evening Elaine.

Elaine: And it'll be a beautiful I expect.

Alan: Oh yes, one of those typical romantic evenings in this part of the world.

Elaine: Romance is not for me tonight. I'm knackered, it's the heat.

Alan: Oh, that's a shame. Strangely enough one gets used to it, the heat I mean. As I said this morning, I spend a great deal of time here. Where d'you intend eating tonight?

Elaine: After a rather heavy lunch I shan't be eating anywhere or anything. I'll retire early.

Alan: Where's Reg?

Elaine: He's in the pool area taking a phone call.

Alan: His insurance clients no doubt.

Elaine: His what? (*Realising*) Oh yes, they just can't leave him alone.

*Alan sits opposite her*

*Bernard and Stephen enter R. Stephen is wearing a blue collared striped blue and white shirt over white trousers, and smart casual shoes. Bernard is wearing a colourful shirt over creased tan trousers, and sandals. He continues to walk with the aid of a stick. They rearrange the chairs and tables to enable them to join Elaine and Alan.*

*Stephen completes the arrangement.*

Stephen: That's better.

*Bernard falls heavily into a chair.*

Bernard: I think it must be drinkies time. Can I buy someone a drink?

Alan: How civilised. I'll have one of those Camparis' we had earlier, thanks Bernard.

*Stephen and Elaine indicate with hands and the shaking of heads that they do not wish to have drinks.*

*Stephen rises.*

Stephen: I'll find Arsenio.

Bernard: Great stuff. Gin and tonic for me Stephen!

*Stephen exits R*

Bernard: Another eventful day, eh?

Alan: You had no trouble finding Stephen?

Bernard: No, thanks. He was flat out soaking up the sun. We had pizza for lunch, fucking awful *(to Elaine)* I apologise my dear, but it was god awful.

*Elaine waves away his apology*

Bernard: Apart from that we visited a couple of churches, so cool inside, and did a little shopping. I believe that people who visit churches on hot days are not there on religious or architectural grounds; they merely seek a break from the heat of the blasted sun. And, of course, they light up the interiors with incessant flash photography *(he chuckles)* Later, they bore the arses off their friends with the photos.

Elaine: *(sardonically)* How cynically observant of you.

Bernard: *(a little taken aback)* Cynical? Was I?

*Stephen enters R and crosses to chair*

Stephen: He's on his way and I think we are about to meet the owner.

Alan: Oh really. I wonder how she got on.

Stephen: Sorry?

Alan: I was thinking aloud.

*Reg enters L rubbing his chin and replacing his mobile phone in his pocket.*

Alan: Someone giving you a hard time Reg?

Reg: You could say that.

Elaine: Everything alright?

Reg: (*guardedly*) I'll tell you later.

*He sits*

Stephen: Bernard and I are going to make up for the terrible lunch we had by finding a good restaurant. Please feel free to join us.

Bernard: Yes, please you're all welcome, as long as you bring enough cash to pay for the food and drinks, especially the latter.

*He chuckles and the others smile, except Reg.*

Alan: What a great idea, thank you.

Reg: (*unenthusiastically*) Yes, why not.

Alan: (*To Elaine*) It looks as though you're going to miss out on your early night.

Elaine: No, I shall stay in my room. (*She gives Reg a false smile*) Reg understands don't you dear?

Reg: (*sardonically*) Yes my dear.

Bernard: Too much sun perhaps Elaine?

Elaine: Yes, I expect so.

Alan: Are you sure you don't want to come with us?

Elaine: (*a little tetchily*) Thank, very sure.

Reg: I don't think Elaine has got over the journey here.

Bernard: It wasn't that bloody far, surely?

Reg: It was from London.

Bernard: That's what I mean.

Elaine: I'm a poor traveller and in any case I've been extremely busy lately.

Bernard: Oh dear.

Stephen: That's enough Bernard; I sense a scene coming on.

Bernard: What? I don't create scenes Stephen.

Stephen: OK I'm not going to argue with you.

*Arsenio enters with a tray of two gin and tonics, Campari and soda and bowls of snacks.*

Bernard: Here's the man. Well done Arsenio.

Arsenio: Prego.

*He hands out the drinks to Alan, Stephen and Bernard and places bowls on tables.*

Bernard: Nuts, chippies and all!

*He leans forward and takes a handful*

Stephen: Go steady on those; remember you're having dinner soon.

Bernard: Hardly soon dear boy.

*Stephen sighs heavily*

Reg: May I have a scotch and water?

Arsenio: Si signor.

*Arsenio exits R as Yvonne enters and passes him. Arsenio turns back to her momentarily, frowns and exits. Yvonne is wearing a short floral chiffon dress. Her hair appears coiffured and she carries a light coloured clutch bag.*

Bernard: You look most delightful my dear.

Yvonne: Thank you.

Elaine: *(smiling)* Sometimes I wish I could gain the same reaction when I enter a room.

Alan: Oh but you do! Doesn't she Reg?

Reg: *(unconvincingly)* Of course.

Stephen: Bernard, you've a habit of saying the wrong thing at the wrong time.

Elaine: *(quickly)* Bernard's right she does look delightful, doesn't she Reg?

Reg: *(ignoring her)* Where's that bloody drink?

Alan: Anything planned tonight Yvonne?

Yvonne: As you can see I'm ready to hit the town.

Alan: Really?

Yvonne: *(smiling)* Well, I'm having dinner with a younger man Alan.

Alan: What a pity.

*Arsenio enters with Reg's drink and a bowl of snacks.*

Bernard: Who's the lucky blighter?

*Arsenio hands the drink to Reg as Yvonne replies.*

Yvonne: His name's Jonathan.

*Arsenio spills the bowl of snacks and glares at Yvonne.*

Reg: Steady on man!

Arsenio: So sorry, scusi signor.

*Arsenio clears the table.*

Bernard: Not the bloody stalker?

Yvonne: It seems everyone knows my business.

*She glares at Alan who throws up his hands in defence.*

Bernard: I'm afraid you leaked the information earlier in the pool area my dear.

Yvonne: Did I?

Stephen: You've done it again Bernard.

Bernard: Oh for God's sake! Look I'm sorry my dear. Sometimes I put my foot in my mouth.

Stephen: Sometimes? It's becoming a habit.

*Bernard glares at Stephen and shakes his head.*

Arsenio: *(a little fiercely)* A drink Signorina?

Yvonne: *(smiling sweetly)* Yes, why not, a margarita please.

Arsenio: Of course.

*He crosses to exit R*

Reg: And make sure you don't throw it at her when it arrives.

*Arsenio stops and slowly turns to him, fighting hard to control his anger.*

Arsenio: Do you want more snacks sir?

Reg: Of course I do.

Arsenio: Yes signor, right away signor.

*He mutters angrily and exits R*

Stephen: *(To Reg)* Rather uncalled for don't you think?

Reg: What?

Elaine: *(quickly)* I'm sorry; Reg has a problem which we need to sort out. It's been playing on his mind. Come on let's leave Reg.

*She stands and beckons Reg.*

Reg: I said I'd discuss it with you later. In any case it's not a bloody problem.

*She crosses R and stands at the exit*

Elaine: Are you coming or not?

Reg: *(to the others)* Excuse us.

*He crosses R and follows Elaine to exit R*

Reg: What's the matter with you?

Elaine: Oh, don't show us up Reg.

*They exit*

Yvonne: Excuse me I think I might assist Arsenio, he seems upset.

*She crosses R and exits*

Bernard: Well, we are happy campers aren't we?

Alan: There's something going on between our star waiter and Yvonne, but of course it's none of our business.

Stephen: No, but as long as it doesn't affect the efficient running of the hotel.

Alan: Hardly.

Bernard: Don't be so pompous Stephen. There's nothing better than a bit of spice. Anyway, she's seeing the stalker tonight isn't she?

Stephen: Oh shut up Bernard.

Alan: I feel sorry for Arsenio. Over time I've been aware of his feelings for her.

*Jonathan enters furtively R. He is smartly dressed in a crisp yellow shirt and tan trousers.*

Bernard: Can we help you?

Jonathan: Good evening gents.

*Bernard mutters and the others return his greeting.*

Jonathan: I'm here to meet Yvonne.

Bernard: I'll be blowed!

Alan: She shouldn't be long.

Jonathan: (*eagerly*) I'm Jonathan.

Bernard: (*Quietly*) Don't we know it.

*Yvonne enters R and stops suddenly when she sees Jonathan*

Yvonne: What're you doing here?

*She looks at the others and then takes Jonathan aside and leads him DC. The others throw looks at them and then engage in quiet discussion and drinks.*

Jonathan: I thought we were having dinner.

Yvonne: I told you to meet me outside the hotel. In any case, you're far too early.

Jonathan: I said we'd have drinks first. Not here of course.

Yvonne: You don't listen to a thing I say. You're harrassing me.

Jonathan: I'm not harrassing you. I'm trying to get to know you. I hope you're not going to make a scene.

Yvonne: There will be a scene if Arsenio finds you here. Now go quickly and wait outside.

*She takes his arm and leads him R*

Jonathan: Outside? What time will you meet me?

Yvonne: When I'm ready.

Jonathan: You look ready enough to me.

Yvonne: I'll be there in half an hour.

Jonathan: (*louder, which makes the others cease their conversation and glance over at them*) Half an hour?

Yvonne: Keep your voice down. You've got yourself into this situation and now you must pay.

Jonathan: Pay?

Yvonne: Just go before Arsenio comes.

Jonathan: I'm not afraid of him you know.

Yvonne: Don't be so childish.

*She quickly leads him to exit R and pushes him off. He returns briefly.*

Jonathan: Steady on!

Yvonne: Go!

Jonathan: Half an hour then?

Yvonne: Yes.

*Jonathan exits*

*Yvonne sighs deeply and attends to her dress. She crosses to the others.*

Alan: Is everything alright?

Yvonne: It will be after tonight.

Bernard: That was all rather furtive my dear.

Yvonne: I shall tell you all about it tomorrow.

Stephen: That really won't be necessary.

*He glares at Bernard*

*Diane Culthorpe enters R with a glass of margarita. She is tall and willowy, and in her seventies. She appears confident, well dressed in a sweeping pale blue and white chiffon dress and jewellery. She carries a sequined clutch bag. Her hair is immaculate with touches of blue highlights. She has a slightly deep voice and enunciates well.*

Diane: Ah Alan, how are you my dear?

*Alan stands as indeed the others do so. Diane offers a cheek for him to kiss, which he does.*

Alan: Always a pleasure to see you Diane.

*Diane offers Yvonne her drink*

Diane: Yours I'm told.

Yvonne: Oh, thank you.

Alan: *(to Diane)* You look splendid, your choice of fashion is always delightful.

Diane: You are very kind Alan, as usual.

Bernard: Absolutely ravishing!

Diane: I think I was when I was younger.

Alan: Nonsense you are evergreen Diane.

Diane: You make me seem like a tree Alan *(To Bernard and Stephen)* I believe we met when you first arrived. I hope my staff has met your needs and in a courteous manner.

Stephen: Very much so, we are very impressed with the service and the room. The view .....

Diane: *(interrupting)* Oh yes the view. It is rather spectacular isn't it? However, I often wonder if it was not a feature of the hotel, whether guests would bother to return.

Alan: I'm sure they would, I know I would, but of course I do.

Diane: You are overly kind Alan. I was hoping to see the other guests, but no doubt they'll be here soon.

Alan: One has confined herself to her room. Hot and tired I understand.

Diane: I believe her name is Elaine and he is Reginald Moss.

Bernard: We know him as Reg.

Diane: I haven't had the pleasure of meeting him or her. No matter, tomorrow will do. Yvonne, would you do me a favour. I wouldn't normally ask a guest to do this, but would you mind asking Arsenio for four champagne glasses, flutes will do, and a bottle of champagne. Since you have been rather friendly with him in the past or currently perhaps, I'm sure you won't mind.

*Yvonne is nonplussed and stares open mouthed at Diane who smiles at her sweetly.*

*The men look at each other uncomfortably.*

Diane: *(to Yvonne)* Please my dear. If I've embarrassed you I apologise.

*Yvonne quickly crosses R and exits*

Bernard: This could turn out to be a very interesting evening.

Diane: Gentlemen, I have a knack of saying the wrong thing at the wrong moment. I bear no malice, none whatsoever.

Stephen: *(glancing at Bernard)* I understand that trait perfectly.

Diane: Yvonne is a beautiful girl and I don't blame Arsenio being swept off his feet, after all he is a hot blooded Italian and I suppose for that reason I forgive him. But I really don't like members of my staff fraternising with guests or vice versa. I try to keep him in check like a mother hen.

*Arsenio enters with Champagne and glasses. Yvonne follows with an ice bucket.*

Diane: Ah, thank you so much Yvonn

Yvonne: Anything else madam?

Diane: I didn't mean to upset you my dear.

Yvonne: Just remember I'm a guest here.

Diane: And such a beautiful one. Again, I apologise.

*Stephen addresses Yvonne*

Stephen: It is indicative of how much she thinks of you.

Diane: Thank you. Indeed I do.

*She approaches Yvonne and kisses her on a cheek. Yvonne reciprocates.*

Yvonne: In that case I forgive you.

Diane: I'm so pleased. Arsenio, fill the glasses and leave us.

Arsenio: Si Madam.

