

## Act I

**Set:** The casting office. There is a door stage right that leads to an outer waiting room. There is a door upstage right that leads to the auditioning room. There is a window stage left. There is a desk with a chair, stage left by the window. There is a phone on the desk. There are two chairs angled towards each other, located centerstage right.

**Scene:** Ethan sits in the stage right chair and Devon sits in the stage left chair. Ethan is fidgeting.

**Devon:** Will you knock that off? Everything's gonna be fine.

**Ethan:** No, it's going too smoothly. Something's bound to go wrong.

**Devon:** Relax.

**Ethan:** How can I relax? We could go to jail for this. (Ethan stands up)

**Devon:** Only if we get caught.

**Ethan:** Are you trying to make me feel better or are you trying to make me piss my pants?

**Devon:** Sorry. (Devon stands up) Look, this is what we've wanted since high school.

**Ethan:** It's what you wanted. Besides, now I'm starting to have second thoughts.

**Devon:** This is something that really should've been addressed before we rented this office and paid for the temp.

**Ethan:** I know, but you made it all sound so simple and fool proof that I didn't realize how stupid we were being.

**Devon:** Stupid? We are not being stupid.

**Ethan:** Then what would you call it?

**Devon:** Enterprising.

**Ethan:** By cheating people out of their money?

**Devon:** (Moving to Ethan) Hey, we are not cheating anyone out of anything. They will be giving it to us on their own free will.

**Ethan:** Under false pretences.

**Devon:** Ethan, the only difference between us and real producers or directors is that instead of taking people's money and spending it on a film, we're taking their money and spending it on ourselves.

**Ethan:** And that makes us a couple of petty thieves.

**Devon:** Thieves work just as hard as regular folks do. We're just more creative in how we make our money.

**Ethan:** You really have a warped sense of reality don't you?

**Devon:** So?

**Ethan:** So, we're not young entrepreneurs. We're crooks.

**Devon:** Not yet we're not.

**Ethan:** But we're going to be.

**Devon:** Yes, but the money will more than make up for our lack of moral values.

**Ethan:** Yeah, I guess.

**Devon:** You guess? You know I'm right!

**Ethan:** Okay, okay.

**Devon:** So you're not wussing out on me right?

**Ethan:** Right, I'm in.

**Devon:** Good, now let's get this money train moving. (Devon moves stage left to the desk and picks up the phone. He pushes a button on the phone) Starla, could you come in a moment? Thanks. (Devon hangs up the phone and sits at the desk)

**Ethan:** (Ethan moves stage left, next to the desk) What're you doing?

**Devon:** Exercising authority. (Starla enters stage right) Ah, Starla, um...first of all is there something else we should call you?

**Starla:** What like sugarlips or muffin?

**Devon:** Huh?

**Starla:** Cupcake, babe, toots, or any other name by which you would like to sexually harass me.

**Ethan:** No, we're not going to sexually harass you.

**Starla:** Why not? Am I not good enough for you to harass?!

**Ethan:** That's not what I meant.

**Starla:** Oh, so now you're playing the innuendo game?!

**Ethan:** No!

**Starla:** Quit toying with my emotions!

**Devon:** Starla, (Devon moves stage right, to Starla) what my associate here is trying to say is that yes, we would like to harass you, but no, we are not going to.

**Starla:** Oh.

**Devon:** Now, Starla, do you have a last name?

**Starla:** It's Summers.

**Devon:** Okay. In order to be professional here, we'll be calling you Miss Summers.

**Starla:** What do I call you?

**Devon:** I'm Mr. Steele and my associate is Mr. Banks.

**Starla:** Steele, Banks, got it. What else?

**Devon:** Other than getting our names right all you have to do is send in the auditioning talent as it arrives.

**Starla:** Simple.

**Devon:** That will be all, Miss Summers.

**Starla:** Yes, Mr. Steele. (Starla exits stage right)

**Ethan:** How do you do it?

**Devon:** Do what?

**Ethan:** You totally handled that situation like it was nothing.

**Devon:** Years of practice kissing up to parents and teachers. I don't think I had one honest "A" my entire high school career.

**Ethan:** Then maybe you should do all the talking. I'm not cut out for this.

**Devon:** No, I need you to set up each mark by talking to them so I can find out their hidden desires. Then when the moment is right I'll step in and knock 'em down.

**Ethan:** You plan on finding out their hidden desires by listening to them talk to me?

**Devon:** Yeah. (Ethan starts to laugh) What?

**Ethan:** I can't even get a girl's phone number let alone her deepest desires.

**Devon:** Look, just do what we discussed and everything will be fine.

**Ethan:** (Reluctantly) Okay. (Phone rings)

**Devon:** Looks like we have our first victim. (Devon moves stage left to the desk and picks up the phone) Yes, Miss Summers? Okay, show her in. (Devon hangs up the phone) Ready?

**Ethan:** Do I have a choice?

**Devon:** No.

**Ethan:** Okay then. (Devon sits at the desk, facing the stage left window. Ethan stands in front of the stage left chair. Starla and Charlene enter stage right)

**Starla:** Mr. Steele, Mr. Banks, this is Mrs. Charlene Anderson. (Devon doesn't respond)

**Ethan:** Thank you, Miss Summers.

**Starla:** (Dryly) Yeah. (Starla exits stage right)

**Ethan:** Uh...please have seat, Mrs. Anderson. (Charlene sits in the stage right chair. Ethan sits in the stage left chair) I'm Mr. Banks...the producer.

**Charlene:** I'm Charlene!

**Ethan:** Uh...yes, I know.

**Charlene:** Oh.

**Ethan:** So, uh...you're interested in film?

**Charlene:** Oh yes! I go to the movies all the time!

**Ethan:** You...go to the movies?

**Charlene:** Yes and I just get so into a good performance that I can't stop myself from being part of the movie!

**Ethan:** And so you feel that you're good enough to be in a movie now?

**Charlene:** I don't know about that, but I need a release since I can't go to movies anymore.

**Ethan:** Why is that? Too expensive?

**Charlene:** Oh no, not at all! I've got plenty of money, but I have been banned from all the movie theaters in the area.

**Ethan:** Banned?

**Charlene:** Yes, apparently people don't like it when you jump up in front of the screen and start acting along with the movie.

**Ethan:** Uh, yeah I could see that.

**Charlene:** Some people just don't have any vision. (Devon turns stage right)

**Devon:** (French accent) But you, I see, do.

**Charlene:** Well, of course!

**Devon:** And zat is what we are looking for. (Devon moves stage right, ushers Ethan out of the stage left chair and sits in his place. Ethan moves stage left and sits at the desk)

**Charlene:** Really?

**Devon:** Oui! You could be just what we are looking for! You have charisma! Like...Julia Roberts-No, better zan Julia Roberts! You shall be auditioned immediately!

**Charlene:** Thank you!

**Devon:** Just as soon as you pay us one hundred dollars.

**Charlene:** What?

**Devon:** In zis business we meet so many frauds. So many people who make empty promises. I need some sort of reassurance zat you are serious about being in film.

**Charlene:** Oh, absolutely! (Charlene pulls out her checkbook and begins filling out a check. Devon stands and moves stage right, crossing behind the chairs to the stage right side of Charlene. Devon winks at Ethan) Who should I make the check out to?

**Devon:** No need to worry about zat now. Why don't you and I go into ze auditioning room and we can make it out zere. (Devon stands Charlene up)

**Charlene:** (Excited) Oh my! (Devon escorts Charlene upstage right and Charlene exits into the upstage right room)

**Devon:** (No accent) I'll go milk this one. Can you handle things out here?

**Ethan:** (Ethan looks around for a moment) Oh sure.

**Devon:** Good. (Devon exits into the upstage right room)

**Ethan:** Okay, just got to exercise my authority. (Ethan stands and begins to pace. Starla enters stage right)

**Starla:** Mr. Banks?

**Ethan:** (Ethan jumps) Ah!

**Starla:** Someone needs to switch to decaf.

**Ethan:** Uh...what is it?

**Starla:** You have another sucker waiting out front. Shall I send her in?

**Ethan:** Um...(Looking strangely at Starla) Yes, send her in. (Starla exits stage right. Ethan composes himself and sits at the desk, propping his feet up on it. Starla and Callia enter stage right)

**Starla:** (Sarcastically, to Callia) Now be careful 'cause Mr. Banks will sweet-talk your soul away from you. (Starla exits stage right)

**Callia:** (Seductively) So, Mr. Banks, does this mean you're going to talk dirty to me? (Ethan falls back in his chair and quickly stands up)

**Ethan:** I'm okay. (Callia moves stage left, next to the desk)

**Callia:** Good. I wouldn't want you to hurt yourself before you get me onto your casting couch.

**Ethan:** (Clueless) Casting couch? We don't have one of those. We do have an auditioning room. Will that work?

**Callia:** Wherever you want to do this.

**Ethan:** (Ethan starts to move stage right) I should get my associate first.

**Callia:** Whoa, Casanova, one at a time!

**Ethan:** Huh?

**Callia:** Can't you handle business by yourself?

**Ethan:** Of course I can!

**Callia:** Defensive. Hmm...shall we?

**Ethan:** Uh...we should go into the auditioning room first.

**Callia:** Why wait? Take me right now! (Callia throws herself on the desk)

**Ethan:** (Nervously) Uh, well I uh, maybe we should...

**Callia:** Just shut up and work! (Ethan nervously laughs and passes out. Callia stands up and looks at Ethan) You've got to be kidding me. (Devon enters from upstage right)

**Devon:** Ethan, what's going on out here...Callia?

**Callia:** So glad you recognize me, Devon.

**Devon:** Wha, wha, what are you doing here?

**Callia:** Surprised to see me?

**Devon:** Well, yeah. I mean after last summer and all.

**Callia:** (Bitterly) Yes...last summer.

**Devon:** (Nervously) You're not still sore about that are you?

**Callia:** (Callia moves to Devon) Of course not.

**Devon:** Good. (Ethan starts to wake up) You still seem to have that effect on people.

**Callia:** It's a gift. (Ethan wakes up and stands up. To Ethan) You're good.

**Ethan:** (Excited and confused) Did we?! I mean, did we just?! Did, did I just?!

**Devon:** No.

**Ethan:** (Relieved) Oh good.

**Callia:** What?!

**Ethan:** No offense Miss, but we hardly know each other. I couldn't live with myself if we had... you know.

**Callia:** Oh.

**Devon:** Don't worry, Ethan still thinks that girls have cooties.

**Callia:** I see.

**Ethan:** Do you two know each other?

**Devon:** Uh yeah. Do you remember last year when I went away to work?

**Ethan:** Yeah, I know what you did last summer. (Devon moves to Ethan and hits him in the arm)

**Devon:** Don't ever do that again. I hate stupid puns.

**Ethan:** Sorry.

**Devon:** Anyway, this is Callia, my ex-girlfriend.

**Ethan:** Oh! From the uh-

**Devon:** Yeah.

**Ethan:** Well, I'll just leave you two to catch up on old times. (Ethan exits upstage right)

**Devon:** (Nervously) So, Callia, I suppose you'll be wanting to see the sights since you traveled all this way. Why don't we meet up later and-

**Callia:** Save it! I know you're not a director.

**Devon:** So?

**Callia:** So I owe you.

**Devon:** No please! Don't ruin this for me!

**Callia:** Why shouldn't I? (Devon gets down on his knees)

**Devon:** Because I'm begging you! Please! Please don't do it! (Starla enters stage right) I'll do anything! Anything you- (Seeing Starla, Devon composes himself) Yes, Miss Summers?

**Starla:** Sorry to interrupt your little whatever, but you have more hopefuls waiting out front.

**Devon:** (Stands up) Oh, uh, send them in.

**Starla:** Would you like to regain your self-respect first?

**Callia:** That's not possible for him.

**Devon:** Hey, hey! Miss Summers, that will be all!

**Starla:** Yeah sure. (Starla exits stage right)

**Devon:** Callia, what do you want?

**Callia:** What does any woman want?

**Devon:** Oh...okay. (Devon goes to kiss Callia, but she slaps him)

**Callia:** Not what every man wants you idiot!

**Devon:** So...you want money?

**Callia:** Fifty percent.

**Devon:** What?!

**Callia:** And just pray I don't ask for more.

**Devon:** But- (Starla enters stage right followed by Shelly and Alana)

**Starla:** Here they are, Mr. Steele.

**Devon:** (French accent) Merci.

**Starla:** Oh boy.

**Shelly:** (Excited) So how do I become an actress?!

**Devon:** Do you have any experience?

**Shelly:** Uh...no!

**Devon:** Well zen- (Seeing Starla) Shouldn't you be out front?

**Starla:** (Sarcastically) You're going to deny me the privilege of watching the master at work?

**Devon:** (Fighting back anger) Of course not.

**Starla:** (Sarcastically) Oh goody!

**Devon:** (To Shelly) What is your name?



**Shelly:** I'm Shelly!

**Devon:** (To Alana) And you are?

**Alana:** I'm Alana.

**Devon:** Do you both have money?

**Shelly:** Uh huh!

**Alana:** What for?

**Devon:** You do want to be an actress don't you?

**Alana:** No, I don't.

**Devon:** (Put off) You don't?

**Alana:** No.

**Devon:** Zen why are you here?

**Starla:** (Sarcastically) Maybe she felt like giving money away.

**Alana:** I think I might have gone to the wrong building.

**Devon:** (Overdramatically) No!

**Callia:** What building were you looking for?

**Alana:** The Church of Scientology. I was going to a seminar on getting a job.

**Callia:** Then you're in the right place.

**Alana:** This is the Church of Scientology?

**Callia:** No, but if you're gonna be scammed you might as well do it here.

**Alana:** Huh?

**Devon:** What she means, of course, is zat you can find work here as an actress.

**Alana:** I can?

**Devon:** Oui.

**Shelly:** (Blankly) We what?

**Starla:** He meant yes, spacecase.

**Shelly:** Oh.

**Alana:** But I don't really want to be an actress.

**Devon:** You must zough! You simply must! You have zat certain quality we look for!

**Alana:** What's that?

**Starla:** (Trying to be a pain) Yeah, what's that?

**Devon:** Charisma!

**Shelly:** Do I have that?!

**Devon:** You have somezing different. Have you ever been a cheerleader?

**Shelly:** No, why?

**Devon:** We have a part for a cheerleader, but seeing as you have no experience-

**Shelly:** I can do it! I can!

**Devon:** I will need to see some proof. Do a cheer for me.

**Shelly:** How?

**Devon:** Jump up and down. (Shelly does so. Devon watches intently)

**Shelly:** How was that?

**Devon:** Hmm...once more with excitement! (Callia elbows Devon) I mean, zat was perfect! Go into ze auditioning room and my associate will handle ze rest. (Devon points to the door upstage right)

**Shelly:** Okay! (Shelly exits upstage right)

**Alana:** Look, I don't think I'm cut out for this whole acting thing. Could you just give me directions to-

**Devon:** Nonsense! You are just what we are looking for! Zat other girl is just extra material. You have what it takes to be a star!

**Alana:** You really think so?

**Devon:** I know so!

**Alana:** Well, I guess it wouldn't hurt to audition.

**Devon:** Zat is all I wanted to hear. Ze auditioning room is right back zere. My associate, Ethan, will get you prepped for ze audition.

**Alana:** Thank you.

**Devon:** Ze pleasure is all mine. (Alana exits upstage right)

**Callia:** (To Devon) You're good, I will give you that.

**Devon:** (No accent) Thanks.

**Starla:** Hey, Frenchy.

**Devon:** (Annoyed) Yes, Starla?

**Starla:** I think we need to renegotiate my contract.

**Devon:** Oh not you too.

**Starla:** I want twenty-five percent of whatever you're making off this scam.

**Callia:** Why not ask for fifty?

**Devon:** (To Callia) You keep quiet!

**Starla:** Actually, fifty does sound better.

**Devon:** No.

**Starla:** Forty.

**Devon:** No.

**Starla:** Thirty.

**Devon:** Absolutely not.

**Starla:** Thirty or I talk to every reporter in the city.

**Devon:** Oh fine! But you have to start cooperating!

**Starla:** I'll see what I can do about that.

**Devon:** Will you just go watch the front office?!

**Starla:** You don't get laid much do you?

**Devon:** Go!

**Starla:** Okay. Would you like anything while I'm out?

**Devon:** That's more like it. I could use a cup of coffee.

**Starla:** Well, the coffee shop is one block over and two blocks up so you might want to hurry and get over there. (Starla exits stage right)

**Devon:** (Frustrated, shouting stage right) Why you- You- You temp!

**Starla:** (From offstage) That's temporary assistant to you! (Devon sighs and sits in the stage right chair)

**Callia:** I don't think I've ever seen anyone get you worked up like that.

**Devon:** Yeah I know and that's not even the worst part of it.

**Callia:** Oh?

**Devon:** I find myself strangely attracted to her because of it. (Callia laughs) Knock it off. (Ethan enters upstage right)

**Ethan:** Devon, I need you in there! I'm freaking out!

**Devon:** (Devon stands) Here we go. Callia would you expose us- Excuse us, would you excuse us for a moment?

**Callia:** Anything for you, Devon. (Callia moves stage left and sits on the desk)

**Devon:** (Glaring at Callia) Right. (Turning attention to Ethan) Ethan, come here. (Ethan moves to Devon) Listen, if this plan of ours is going to work you need to think like a jerk.

**Ethan:** Why?

**Devon:** Because nice guys finish last!

**Ethan:** And so will we if we get caught!

**Devon:** (Trying a different approach) Okay...do you remember in twelfth grade English when we read Othello?

**Ethan:** Yeah.

**Devon:** Who was everyone's favorite character?

**Ethan:** Iago.

**Devon:** And why is that?

**Ethan:** (Unsure) Because he was the villain?

**Devon:** Yes and not just that. He was the most intelligent, charismatic, manipulative, and evil villain ever. That's how we need to be.

**Ethan:** Why?

**Devon:** Don't you want to be the guy that woman want and men want to be?

**Ethan:** Yeah.

**Devon:** Then be Iago.

**Ethan:** But he gets caught in the end.

**Devon:** (Pause) You're right. Okay, maybe that wasn't the best example. Do you at least understand what I'm trying to say?

**Ethan:** I think so, but will you still go handle the situation in there?

**Devon:** You're hopeless.

**Ethan:** Sorry.

**Devon:** I'll be right back. (Devon exits upstage right)

**Callia:** (Callia stands and moves to Ethan) Ethan is it?

**Ethan:** Yeah.

**Callia:** Tell me something.

**Ethan:** What's that?