

BOURGEOIS BEHAVIOR

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TIME: Independence Day - 1995

LOCATION: Any large metropolitan city

Act I & II

Setting: The exterior of a gay bar/club/lounge/
Disco named 'THE TIGHT BOX', consisting of a
Brick/wood exterior wall, double doors in
the center, a couple of wooden benches
along the exterior wall, one stage right
the other stage left. The club name is
painted on the exterior; in addition, there
is a large banner which reads: HAPPY JULY
4TH - 1995. Strung above the double doors.
There are myriad sets of neon flashing
lights on the exterior.

CHARACTERS IN
ORDER OF

APPEARANCE: LANCE: 30'S - 40's gay male

ROGER: 30'S - 40'S gay male

CLINT: Late 20's - early 30's
incredibly handsome and
well built male

TOM: Late 20's - Mid 30's
very attractive gay male

ANITA: 30's attractive woman -
Roger's wife

GEEQUE 30'S attractive Hispanic
Gay Male - Roger's former lover
(Pronounced GEE - KEY)

ACT I

(At rise, lights up to reveal the brick/wood Exterior of a bar/club/lounge/disco, neon lights Flashing on the exterior of the building. A sign On the building denotes the name of the club: THE TIGHT BOX. A white banner strung over And above the closed doors displays the message: HAPPY JULY 4TH - 1995. Heavy-based, pulsing house Music can be heard through the double doors. The doors open, MUSIC UP, and two men, ROGER and LANCE step through the doors outside. MUSIC DOWN As the doors close behind them. (Every time The doors open/close MUSIC UP and MUSIC DOWN Throughout the play). Both men are shirtless, Their t-shirts crammed in their jeans at the Back. They both remove their t-shirts and begin To wipe sweat from the faces/bodies. Lance Eventually slips on his t-shirt.)

ROGER: I'm going right back in there. Did you notice that little guy in the far right corner, tight white shorts? Edge of the dance floors? Hispanic?

LANCE: No.

ROGER: God Lance, how could you miss him? He is **so** cute. Got a great chest, pecs, ummm, hmmmmmm!

LANCE: Roger, we need to have a talk.

ROGER: *(Ignoring what Lance has said)* And that tall guy, wire-rimmed glasses, nice wide shoulders. *(Looks at Lance while he wipes off sweat)* Aren't you hot?

LANCE: No. I haven't been dancing with every guy in the whole damn place.

ROGER: *(Again ignoring what Lance has said)* Oh, did you see that creep Marvin Shephard, and his tackly little lover, Eric?

LANCE: Yeah, I saw them slither through and bolt in the other direction the moment Marvin spotted you.

ROGER: That little Eric had on a damn dog collar. Can you imagine? And Marvin was holding the chain, leading him around.

LANCE: Priceless! Roger, you've got to do something about that damn little Marvin bastard. He's running all over this city saying things about you in all the business circles. He's out, everybody knows, so it won't hurt him, but you're not, and most people don't know that Marvin's an idiot, so they probably listen to him. Now, I'm not one to say, "I told you so"....

ROGER: Then don't.

LANCE: *(Pays no attention to Roger)* But I -- no **we** -- lots of us warned you not to go into business with him. He's slime, slithering out from whatever rock he's under. And the only damn reason he broke off the partnership was because you wouldn't sleep with him. *(Looks hard at Roger)* Or did you sleep with him?

ROGER: *(Preturbed)* Hell no. Not that he didn't try on a daily basis.

LANCE: Well, there are people around that still think that something was going on between the two of you other than business, but I always felt like you had better taste. He and that Eric probably spend most of the time in the back hall of this club.

ROGER: *(Hesitantly)* I, well, um, I have been down that

hall five times tonight myself.

LANCE: Yeah, and you made me go with you the first two times, and I ain't goin' again, 'cause the last time some fat guy behind me pushed me through the hall with his crotch, and I couldn't tell who's hand was on who's what.

ROGER: (*Giggles*) Reminds me of that club we were in last year in New York.... New Year's Eve 1994!

LANCE: Uh uh, that place was much worse than this one.

ROGER: What did they call those closets in that dark hallway?

LANCE: Buddy boxes.

ROGER: Yeah, put your money in, take your buddy in, close that door. Hell, we were there three hours before we knew that hallway existed.

(Lance begins to act out the scene)

LANCE: And when we discovered that hallway... (*Lance takes Roger's hand leading him*) I'm pulling you along, and we hear the most God awful sounds.

ROGER: Never did find out for sure what they were.

LANCE: Oh, trust me, we knew what they were. (*Pulling Roger along*) And when you hear *those* sounds, you yell loudly...

ROGER: Lance!

LANCE: ...letting every pervert within earshot know my damn name. (*Lance lets go of Roger's hand*) And I finally pushed my way through to the tiny smidgen of light at the end of that hallway, and I'm no longer holding your hand, but some Neanderthals who says, in an extremely slurred voice, "I think I'm going to kiss you," to which I reply as his lips zero in on mine, "No hell you're not," and I turned my face, and he kissed me on the neck, and I'm certain that the skin on my neck is going to immediately rot and fall off.

ROGER: *(Laughs)* That was fun.

LANCE: Might have been for you. I promised myself that this year, 1995, I would NOT let anything like that happen again.

ROGER: Well, somebody else grabbed my hand, and a lot of other things in that hallway. Hey, did you notice tonight, in this hallway, that real knockout about halfway through, left side, against the wall, tall, blond guy?

LANCE: How the hell can you tell what anybody looks like? There's no light in the whole damn hallway.

ROGER: Oh, I can tell.

LANCE: *(Mock's Roger)* Oh, I can tell. *(Beat)* No you can't. That's what I've been trying to get through your thick head, you can't tell. Anybody, in the right kind of light, usually dim, from a distance, looks good. I keep telling you that you need to see these guys in the daylight.

ROGER: Okay, okay, so you've been right a couple of times.

LANCE: A couple of times? You met that guy, Maxwell, wasn't that his name, for lunch at Eisensteins, and how did that tall, handsome hunk -- your words Roger -- look in the daylight.

ROGER: *(Grins sheepishly)* Short, scaly, and bald.

LANCE: Thank you. And that Latino, Roberto, the Ricky Martin look alike, in the daytime?

ROGER: Speedy Gonzales on steroids.

LANCE: Gracias! I've been trying to have a serious talk with you for days, and there's never been a proper opportunity to bring this up, and now that we're both slightly inebriated...

(The doors to the club burst open loudly, MUSIC UP, as a devastatingly handsome, shirtless, sweaty young man, Clint, exits the club, doors closing behind him, MUSIC DOWN. Roger and Clint watch Clint as he walks to a bench and

sits down.)

CLINT: Whew, it's hot in there.

LANCE: *(To Roger, quietly)* And it just got hot out here.

(Roger elbows Lance as if to make him shut up.)

CLINT: *(Not quite hearing the comment)* Pardon me?

ROGER: Oh, Lance just said he agreed. We came out here to cool off.

CLINT: Hey, I'm Clint. Happy 4th of July, guys.

(Clint rises and shakes hands with Roger.)

ROGER: Hi Clint, I'm Roger. Happy 4th. This is Lance.

(Lance nods to Clint, trying not to stare.)

CLINT: You two partners?

(Roger and Lance answer simultaneously and rapidly.)

ROGER/LANCE: No!

ROGER: We're best friends. 10 years now.

CLINT: Damn! That's nice. Really nice. Wish I could say someone was my best friend.

LANCE: *(To Roger, under his breath)* I'd **love** to be his best friend, for about twenty minutes.

(Again, Roger slightly elbows Lance.)

CLINT: *(Again, does not catch what Lance has said)*
Excuse me?

LANCE: Oh, I'm sure you'll meet someone someday who can be your best friend.

(Clint turns and starts back to sit back down on

the bench, notice a piece of trash on the
ground and bending down and picking it up. As
Clint bends down Lance quickly points to
Clint's well developed ass, motioning to Roger
who nods in agreement, but tries to stop Lance
from pointing.)

LANCE: (To Roger, while pointing at Clint's ass) I used to
have one of those. (Glances over his shoulder toward his
own ass) Where did it go?

ROGER: Um, Clint, don't you have any good friends?

CLINT: Unfortunately, I don't.

ROGER: Do you live here?

CLINT: Yes, for three years now.

LANCE: Not **one** good friend?

CLINT: Well, not a *best* friend.

LANCE: Why not?

CLINT: Honestly?

ROGER: Yeah.

CLINT: Well, I seem to have a problem with male friends.
And some females. But mostly males. I...I don't know how
say it, but seems like men...guys...that I think might
become a friend, always seem to get interested in me for
more than friendship.

LANCE: (Rolls his eyes and shakes his head) Why does that
not surprise me?

ROGER: Well, you are a handsome man, you know. Extremely.

CLINT: There are plenty others out there like me.

LANCE: Where the hell are they, so I can lasso me one,
Kimosabe.

CLINT: That's why I'm at a place like this.

LANCE: (*Slightly offended*) Like this? What does that mean?

CLINT: Oh, no offense, but you know this club has a reputation.

ROGER: As?

CLINT: As a pick up place, I mean, like tonight, shirtless night, can't get on the dance floor unless you take your shirt off, or wear something revealing.

LANCE: Well, you are wearing the hell out of those jeans.

CLINT: Then Wednesday's underwear only, Thursday, bare as you dare. Oh I'm sure you guys know this stuff, if you can't find something here, you've got to be a pitiful case.

ROGER: And if you're not here to be picked up, why are you here?

CLINT: (*Adamant*) I'm **not** here to be picked up. Are you?

LANCE: I'm not. (*Points to Roger*) But he is.

ROGER: (*Loudly*) I **am** not.

LANCE: Tell that to the 17 guys you've met here in the last 21 days.

CLINT: I know this is going to sound trite, but I get... (*Hesitantly*) ...I get, lonely sometimes. I can come here, get lost in the blackness of this club, have a couple of drinks, stare at some handsome men, some not so handsome. Maybe dance. And daydream.

ROGER: Are you saying that you've never picked anyone up, or gotten picked up?

CLINT: Not once. Honestly. It's too dangerous. It's just a fantasy for me. A fantasy that fulfills, or should I say replaces, a primal urge and you know what I'm talking about.

LANCE: (*Points to Roger*) He does.

CLINT: *(To Lance)* Don't you?

LANCE: Look...I'm a little older than you, Clint. Been around the block, and believe it or not, I still feel those urges on occasion, but I've learned to control them in this day and time, as you apparently have also.

(Roger has become visibly nervous about the Conversation)

ROGER: Ready to head back in Lance?

LANCE: No, I need to talk to you about something very important. *(Serious)* Really!

ROGER: I gotta pee.

LANCE: And take another stroll down the even more crowded dark hallway, huh?

ROGER: No!

LANCE: Bull.

(Roger smiles slyly, and moves to the double Doors.)

ROGER: Be right back.

LANCE: Sure.

(Roger opens the double doors, MUSIC UP, and enters the club, with the double doors closing quickly behind him, MUSIC DOWN. Lance and Clint kind of look off in the opposite direction, trying hard not to notice each other, then look back toward each other, quickly averting their eyes. They again look off in the opposite direction, then back again when they both speak in unison:)

(Simultaneously)

LANCE: Haven't you ever... CLINT: Does Roger really...

(They both giggle)

LANCE: Sorry! You first.

CLINT: Just wondering, has Roger really gone out with 17 guys that he's met here? In the last three weeks?

LANCE: At last count, I think so, but I can't really say 17, exaggeration a bit, but yeah, he's gone out with a lot of guys, but nothing has worked out so far. Roger's in a lot of emotional pain. Too big of a hurry, grasping, searching, just can't be alone.

CLINT: Why?

LANCE: Long story, Clint, and not sure I should be telling you this about my best friend. In a nutshell, Roger has been living a double life for the past five years. He's married, to a woman, and has a male lover, rather **had** a male lover, Geeque, from Brazil.

CLINT: Did Geeque die?

LANCE: God no. Right now Roger probably wishes he had. Geeque dumped Roger.

CLINT: Found someone else?

LANCE: Not exactly. I think Geeque got fed up with Roger living his double life. Three days over at this house with Anita, Roger's wife, and three days with Geeque. If Anita or Geeque ever got pissed over any little thing, Roger had to run over and placate whichever one was doing the cussing, crying and carrying on. Roger's put himself in the hospital twice with anxiety attacks. How he's managed to avoid a stroke or heart attack amazes me. Talk about stress duress.

CLINT: Wow. So Geeque has said "Adios", or is it "Adeus" in Portuguese?

LANCE: It's goodbye no matter how the hell you say it. And by God, Roger has gone Goddamned crazy.

(*BEAT*)

I know you could probably care less, Clint, but I have spent the last 21 days in a bar, club, disco, whatever, with Roger, 'cause he can't be alone. I've been trying to tell him all night that I'm about to go AWOL.

CLINT: Bailing out on him in his time of need?

LANCE: Now that's exactly what Roger's going to say. Or think. But it's not true. I do have a life. Family. Friends. I'm very socially active, and I've put everything on hold for Roger's unending crisis. Now, don't get me wrong. Roger and Geeque have been so supportive of me, especially when I split with my ex Antonio, a year and a half ago, and God knows I'd do anything for Roger, short of murder. But there's a lot more to me and my life than **just** being gay.

(BEAT)

Hey, am I boring you?

CLINT: Not in the least.

LANCE: Your turn's coming, and I'll keep my mouth shut. It must be obvious that I need to vent.

(Suddenly the double doors open and Roger pops his head through the opened door. MUSIC UP.)

ROGER: Lance!

(BEAT - LOUDER)

Lance!

LANCE: Yo?

ROGER: That little guy from Saudie Arabia is in here. He cornered me near the back bar and said the only words he knows how to say in English.

CLINT: What's that?

ROGER: *(Said with heavy accent)* I want to fuck you.

LANCE: Well you know how to say the only word he **understands** in English...**NO!**

ROGER: *(Sly grin crosses Roger's face)* But I don't want to say no!

(Beat)

Bye.

(Roger quickly retreats inside the club, the Double doors close, MUSIC DOWN.)

LANCE: (*Looks at Clint*) See what I mean? I don't think he's being safe. I'm worried about him. He's very unhappy right now, drinking more than normal, and I try to keep up with him. He's close to the edge. One frayed nerve ending waiting to explode.

CLINT: Lance, what you've told me is none of my business, and I hope this won't sound offensive to you, I just get the feeling,

(*Beat*)

Ummmm, could it be that you might just be a little more interested in Roger than **just** as a friend?

LANCE: (*Angry*) Goddamn it, no! A lot of people have that same idea, even that damn Geeque asked me if I was interested in Roger, can you imagine? He knows better than that. My own family thinks that something might be going on between us. That's disgusting. It would be like incest to me.

CLINT: Does Roger know that?

LANCE: Of course he does.

CLINT: You're sure?

LANCE: Positive. We're truly good friends, who can depend and rely on each other, though lately he's definitely been relying heavily on me, and others, emotionally. He's a good enough friend that when I tell him that I can't handle anymore of this rapid fire, break neck pace, all night, bar, dance, crazy, 21 day, 24 hour life, after tonight...he can handle it.

CLINT: You know, if this is all true, I envy the friendship that the two of you have.

(*The double doors swing open, MUSIC UP, and Another handsome man -- Tom -- wearing a leather Vest and jeans walks out and looks in three Directions, as if looking for someone. The Double doors close, MUSIC DOWN. Tom looks over At Clint and Lance.*)

TOM: Hey.

LANCE: Hi.

TOM: I'm Tom.

CLINT: Clint.

LANCE: Lance.

TOM: You guys haven't seen an attractive brunette come up to the door or come in to the club, have you?

(Tom looks at his watch)

CLINT: A real woman?

TOM: *(Giggles)* Yeah, a real woman. I'm expecting a straight female friend to meet me here, and she's late. It's her first time coming to a gay club, we work together.

CLINT: I've seen a couple of women come in earlier tonight, but as soon as I looked at their hands and feet, I knew they weren't real women. They tried to cram that size twelve foot into a size six pump. Didn't work.

(Tom and Lance laugh)

TOM: *(Leans against the club wall)* I'm just gonna wait a few minutes to see if she shows up. She probably won't want to come in if I'm not out here.

CLINT: Do you blame her? Real women are a rarity here.

TOM: Yeah!

(Clint moves close to Lance)

CLINT: Lance...

LANCE: Yes?

CLINT: I need to ask you, about something you said earlier.

LANCE: What?

CLINT: You said something about being gay wasn't the only thing you were about.

LANCE: It isn't.

CLINT: What do you mean exactly?

LANCE: I think, sometimes, it seems so many people get locked into whatever they are, or think they are. I'm just using being gay as an example, really. It's like people have blinders on, it's the only thing they see. Like Roger, at this very moment. Right now is entire world is GAY, GAY, GAY!

CLINT: And what's wrong with that?

LANCE: He lives, eats, sleeps and breaths gay. Example, he just got a new car, Beamer, top of the line, takes me for a ride, nice car, yeah, and he turns and looks at me and says, "you know this car can get me lots of men."
(Pause) I was stunned. I said, "Roger, listen to what you're saying...why would you want someone who you can get with your car? How shallow."

CLINT: Sheese. What was his response?

LANCE: It actually penetrated his brain, and he realized how stupid his statement was. You know Clint, I'm proud to openly say that I am a gay man. Roger won't do that, mind you, and that's his decision. Yet, at this point in his life, he's not interested in a restaurant, bar, film, or anything that isn't gay or gay-related. I feel like I'm much more than just a gay man. I'm a son, I'm a brother, an uncle, a nephew, a cousin, a friend, a co-worker, a reader, a socializer...

CLINT: A lover?

*(Tom is listening and gets caught up in
The conversation.)*

LANCE: Oh no, that's not in the picture, right now. And even tho I used it earlier, the use of the word 'lover' is passe. I think companion, life partner, or friend is politically correct.

CLINT: Well pardon the hell out of me.

LANCE: (*Fixes his eyes on Clint*) What about you?

CLINT: I'm a very boring person.

LANCE: You certainly don't look boring.

*(Tom moves closer and obviously wants to
Become part of the conversation.)*

LANCE: In fact, you kind of remind me of one of those dancers at Hombres, that club that has the naked men. Ever been there?

CLINT: (*Laughs*) NO!

TOM: I've been there, lots of times. Great looking men.
(*To Clint*) They'd hire you in a second.

LANCE: (*To Tom*) Every seen Baby Boy or Stone?

TOM: Hell yeah. They've been in my dreams quite a few times.

LANCE: One night I took my friend Miriam, straight woman...

CLINT: (*Interrupts*) Are the dancers gay? And isn't most of the cliental gay?

TOM

TOM: (*Points to Clint*) Oh, and he hasn't been, hah!
Ninety percent of the dancers claim they are not gay.

(Beat)

The cliental is gay on certain nights of the week, Sundays, Tuesdays is amateur night, that's the best night, gay on Fridays, but on Saturdays there's far too many straight women there.

CLINT: You do know the schedule don't you.

(Tom laughs)

LANCE: What I was going to tell you about taking my friend Miriam is that this guy Stone, that Tom and I are talking about, well, he's sort of like you Clint, right Tom?

(Tom gives Clint the once over from head to toe.)

TOM: *(Slowly and seductively)* Ummmmm hmmmmmm.

(Clint is obviously embarrassed, which Lance notices, and Lance quickly begins to talk.)

LANCE: Well, Miriam went bananas over Stone, and I'm sitting there with my tongue hanging out over Baby Boy, he has the best personality of any of those dancers.

TOM

TOM: *(Laughs/interrupts)* Yeah, I bet that's exactly why you're there, because Baby Boy has the **best** personality.

LANCE: That's the only reason, asshole. *(Giggles)* And Stone, bless his little chiseled features and body perfect, didn't appear to have the greatest of horse sense.

TOM: Oh, he's just shy.

LANCE: Oh yeah, he's real shy, and that's why he's standing there in front of you with nothing on.

CLINT: Totally naked?

LANCE: As the day he was born...no secrets whatsoever. Miriam got Stone to do a table dance.

CLINT: Table dance?

TOM: You know what a table dance is.

CLINT: I really don't.

TOM: Well, not on top of the table, like you think, the guy takes you over to a dark corner, sits you in a chair and dances for you exclusively...

(Beat)

In the buff, and of course for the bucks!

(Clint shakes his head in disbelief)

LANCE: I think Baby Boy was born dancing, but Stone can't dance at all. Not one ounce of rhythm in his body, right Tom?

TOM: None, kind of dances like this.

(Tom imitates a guy dancing that has no rhythm. Clint and Lance laugh. Tom continues to dance As if he is dancing at the club. Tom moves close To Lance and Lance is eyeballing Tom from head To toe as if he is at the club.)

LANCE: Stone's dancing two inches away from Miriam and I, and I'm looking him over from top to bottom, trying to find something on his body that doesn't look good, and I can't... Stone says:

TOM: I know I can't dance. I have no rhythm.

LANCE: *(Looking hard over the dancing Tom)* True! But the way you look, you don't have to dance. Just stand there and wiggle.

(Tom stops dancing and he and Clint break Into laughter.)

TOM: *(To Clint)* You know, you could certainly get a job there. Easily.

CLINT: *(Insulted)* I wouldn't want a job there. Is that his real name, Stone?

TOM: I'm sure it's not. They all have weird names, stage names I guess you'd call them.

CLINT: That same night that Miriam and I were there, the dancers were coming up to our table, hustling drinks and wanting tips, I'm sure, 'cause that's what they're supposed to do. And it's funny how they introduce themselves to you.

TOM: Hi, I'm stone, what's your name?

LANCE: Rock.

TOM: They call me Blaze, how 'bout you?

LANCE: Flame!

(Beat)

I'm Onyx, who are you?

TOM: Zircon.

LANCE: Rain.

TOM: Thunder.

LANCE: Chase.

TOM: Manhattan.

LANCE: Sunshine.

TOM: Partly cloudy.

*(Tom and Lance give each other the high five
Hand shake and break into laughter.)*

CLINT: You two are really into this, aren't you. You must be regulars.

LANCE: I've been about 3 times this year. That's enough. Everybody wants to have their birthday party there.

TOM: I go more than that. At least once a month.

CLINT: Alone?

TOM: Sometimes. But with friends, also.

LANCE: It's kind of like karaoke, you try it once, like it, go a bunch of times until it's out of your system. After an hour, I get tired of seeing those dangling participles.

CLINT: Does Roger go there?

LANCE: Sure, he's been several times, probably more than I know.

CLINT: Does he meet anyone there?

LANCE: Meet anyone? What do you mean?

CLINT: I mean, anyone to go out with?

LANCE: Oh no, it's not that kind of place, at least I don't think it is.

(Beat)

You ask a lot of questions about Roger. Interested?

CLINT: Are you his social secretary?

LANCE: I should be. I made him up a chart for all the guys he's talked to on that Man Power Call Line.

CLINT: What's that?

TOM: Oh, I'm sure you've heard of it. There's ads in all the gay magazines. It's a personals phone line. A place to meet and date. I've called it before. Didn't work for me.

LANCE: It's just a little too weird for me.

CLINT: Weird?

LANCE: Oh, Roger thinks it's wonderful. God knows I've had to listen to him calling it day and night over the last 21 days.

CLINT: Is it a sex line?

TOM: Well, not exactly.

CLINT: I've never heard of it.

TOM: Where do you live? The boondocks?

CLINT: Guess you could say I lead a sheltered life.

TOM: Aw, you can call, for free, and listen to ads that guys have place. However, if you want to respond to an ad, you have to pay.

CLINT: So that's how they sucker you in.

LANCE: Exactly.

TOM: I wouldn't call it, suckering you in. I think it serves a purpose, for some people.

CLINT: How?

TOM: I know three couples that have met through the phone ads, and they've all been together over two years. Amazing.

LANCE: It's dangerous, these days.

TOM: No more dangerous than being at a club like this and going home with someone. At least, through the phone, you get to talk to the person, learn a little more about them, and as long as you're talking on the phone, you **are** being safe.

CLINT: I think, it might be a little weird to me too!

LANCE: Oh, to Roger, it's the '90's' way of dating, and he keeps going out and meeting these people, here and there, and I keep telling him he's going to end up on a tomato sandwich in somebody's refrigerator the next morning. People are crazy.

CLINT: Yep, they are. You're right. Does Roger really meet people on this phone line, or just basically talk to them?

LANCE: Both. He calls, leaves a message, they call him back.

TOM: **If** they're interested.

CLINT: Well, how do you know for sure if you're interested in them, I mean, how do you know who to talk to? How does it work?

LANCE: You pick up the phone...

(Lance and Tom begin to act out calling the Man Power Phone Line. Lance dials the number on an Imaginary phone.)

TOM

TOM: *(Uses his best announcer type voice)* Welcome to the Man Power Call Line. This is a free call in the 555 area code. Toll charges may apply. If you're seeking dates and friendships, press 1. Casual dating or alternative lifestyles, press 2.

LANCE: Let's try 2.

(Lance presses an imaginary number on the

Imaginary phone)

TOM: If you'd like to listen to ads by singles seeking intimate relationships press 1, by those attached and seeing a discreet encounter, press 2. Casual dating press 3. Alternative relationships press 4. If what you are seeking does not matter, press 8. Make your selection now.

LANCE: Okay, let's try 4.

(Lance presses an imaginary number 4.)

TOM: We suggest listening to all categories before making a selection as you never know what you might be missing. To listen to ads by those who are into leather and denim press 1, jocks and bodybuilders, press 2, bisexuals and straight men, press 3, group action press 4, phone buddies, press 5, transvestites and cross dressers, press 6, sock chewers...

LANCE: Sock chewers?

TOM: ...press 7. To listen to all the categories again, press 9.

(Lance presses an imaginary number.)

TOM: There are sixteen ads recorded in the last forty-eight hours. Fifty ads in this category. To listen to ads recorded in the last forty-eight hours, press 1. To listen to all the ads, press 2.

(Lance presses an imaginary number.)

(Tom immediately begins to saunter around the Stage and breaks into the character in the message.)

TOM *(Extremely affected and phony voice.)* Hi, this is Max in box 555B. I'm six foot one, 180 pounds, thick light brown hair, hazel eyes, roman nose, Mediterranean features, swimmers build, 48 inch chest, 33 inch waist, overall tan, well developed thighs and calves...

LANCE: *(To Clint)* He's told us everything except how many freckles he's got on his ass.

TOM: ...and seven freckles on my bubble butt.

LANCE: Thank you.

TOM: I have a BS, MBA, PHD...

CLINT: Sounds like he's also an S.O.B.

TOM: ...self employed, with an extremely busy and fulfilling lifestyle...

CLINT: Then why did you place this ad?

TOM: ...including a demanding travel schedule that takes me to four continents on a regular basis...

LANCE: Ah ha....flight attendant.

TOM: ...therefore, I must insist that any responses to this ad be limited to those who are looking for something superior in a relationship, who are self sufficient, have an annual salary of six figures or more, and personal appearance and habits are equal to, or exceed my own.

CLINT: Let's give this guy a mirror, 'cause that's all he'll ever be happy with.

TOM: (Best announce voice again.) If you'd like to respond to this ad, press 1. If you'd like to hear the previous ad, press 2. If you'd like to hear the next ad, press 3.

LANCE: (*Hands the imaginary phone to Clint.*) Why don't you try it.

(*Lance moves away from Clint, as Clint presses a Number on the imaginary phone.*)

LANCE: (*In a very red neck voice.*)

Hey guys, this is B.B.

(*BEAT*)

I'm single, thirty-two, no facial hair, well, not much hair anywhere, really, but I got a great old big dick -- uh oh -- I mean penis. I don't think we're supposed to say dick in this ad.

CLINT: *(Laughing)* This guy gets straight to the point.

LANCE

LANCE: *(Continues in Red Neck voice.)* Uh, this stuff is all new to me, and I need somebody that's patient and can teach me the ropes. I got muscles. Lift weights, when it ain't rainin', 'cause I got my weights outside my double wide. If this sounds interestin', give me a shout. B.B. in box 555C.

(Clint hangs up imaginary phone.)

CLINT: Has Roger met anyone on this line that he's really interested in?

LANCE: God only knows, but I think so. There's a potential Geeque replacement standing in the wings. I've met him, Ellis, nice guy, great personality, but I can't get Roger to slow down long enough to take a good look and listen to the guy.

TOM: Is that your job?

LANCE: It is when you care about your friends.

CLINT: I hope Roger values your friendship as much as you do his.

(Tom suddenly waves to an unseen figure stage Right.)

TOM: Hey, hey girl. Over here.

(Clint and Lance both look stage right. Clint is partially blocking Lance's view as an attractive Woman, Anita, runs onstage and up to Tom. They Embrace.)

TOM: I was about to give up on you.

ANITA: Sorry, I got delayed.

(Lance quickly turns his back to Tom and Anita, As if trying to hide behind Clint. Clint notices Lance's actions and turns around to face Lance While Anita and Tom make silent small talk in the Background.)

CLINT: Something wrong Lance?

LANCE: (Trying to hide and be quiet.) Shhhhhhh. That's Anita.

CLINT: Who?

LANCE: Roger's wife, Anita.

CLINT: Oooooooooooooooooo.

*(Clint turns and looks at Tom and Anita, then
Back to Lance.)*

You know her, don't you?

LANCE: Hell yes, we're friends.

CLINT: Don't you mean, she's Roger's ex-wife?

LANCE: No, they are **not** divorced.

CLINT: Sheese. Why don't you speak to her?

LANCE: I don't think Roger would want Anita to know that he's here, in a place like this.

CLINT: Doesn't she know about Roger's lifestyle.

LANCE: Well kind of.

CLINT: Kind of? If Roger has spent the last five years migrating between her house and this other guy -- Geeque's -- house, where does she think he's been?

LANCE: It's complicated.

CLINT: No shit. It's also crazy.

*(Tom turns and opens the double doors, MUSIC UP,
For he and Anita to enter, however, Anita has
Caught sight of Lance and pauses, staring around
Clint at Lance, then moves close enough to*

realize

*That it is Lance, as Tom closes the double doors,
MUSIC DOWN.)*

ANITA: Lance!

*(There is a visible electric shock of recognition
That moves through Lance's body, but he doesn't
Turn around. Clint turns to face Anita as
Anita walks over to Lance.)*

ANITA: Hi!!!

*(Anita reaches out and touches Lance on the
Shoulder and turns him toward her.)*

ANITA: Lance, it's me. Anita.

LANCE: *(Smiling, yet grimacing.)* Hey.

ANITA: How are you?

LANCE: Well fine, just fine. I'm ummmm, I'm, ummmm,
really surprised to see you here.

ANITA: I work with Tom...

(Points at Tom waiting at the double doors.)

Do you know each other?

LANCE: We've just met.

(Points to Clint.)

This is Clint, a, a...new friend.

(Points to Anita.)

Clint, this is Anita.

CLINT: *(Extends his hand and shakes Anita's hand.)*
Nice to meet you.

(Anita nods and smiles at Clint.)

ANITA: *(To Lance)* Going back in?

LANCE: No, just thought I'd sit out here and cool
off...hot in there.

ANITA: Mind if I sit with you a few minutes?

LANCE: *(Shocked)* Oh, mmmmm, mmmmm, sure.

(Anita turns toward Tom at the double doors.)

ANITA: Tom, give me a few minutes to catch up with Lance, and I'll be in. I'll find you.

TOM: Okay, I'll be at the first bar that you see or on the dance floor.

CLINT: Hey Tom, wait up, I'm a little thirsty, want anything Lance, Anita?

(Behind Anita, Lance is motioning to Clint not to leave, and Anita turns and Lance quickly jerks his hands down.)

LANCE: No thanks, Clint.

ANITA: I'm fine, thanks.

CLINT: Okay, see you later, I'm sure.

LANCE: Ummmm mmmmmmm.

(Clint crosses and quick joins Tom who opens the double doors, MUSIC UP, and the two enter, MUSIC DOWN as he doors close.)

ANITA: Wow, that Clint certainly is a nice looking man, isn't he.

LANCE: That he is.

ANITA: Probably a model?

LANCE: Don't know, just met him tonight.

ANITA: He certainly is in great shape. Is he single?

LANCE: *(Mouth drops open)* Now Anita, you certainly wouldn't think, considering where you are, that Clint would be interested in you? I mean, you're a gorgeous woman...but you're....you're a woman!

ANITA: *(Laughs)* I'm not talking about me, Lance. I'm talking about my friend, Tom.

LANCE: Oh.

ANITA: Tom's a great guy, you know. We work together at the clinic. He's been alone for about a year and a half. Like you.

LANCE: Really?

ANITA: Roger's never met Tom. At one point, I actually thought about introducing you and Tom to each other, having a little dinner at our house, me inviting Tom and Roger inviting you, but Roger quickly put a stop to that. Said that you don't want anyone to try to pair you up with anyone.

LANCE: He's right.

ANITA: You want to be alone?

LANCE: I choose to be alone.

ANITA: You know Lance, I've wanted to talk to you for a long, long time.

LANCE: I know. Roger even asked me to talk to you when all this began to come out, but I didn't think it fair Anita.

ANITA: Fair?

LANCE: I didn't want to talk to you. See, no matter whether Roger is right or wrong in your situation, my sympathies will always be with him, because I did exactly the same thing that he's doing. I've been through it, I know how it feels.

ANITA: No. You didn't do it exactly like Roger. You didn't meet someone, another man, and split your time between your wife and your male lover, for years. You didn't do that.

LANCE: No, I divorced Karen. I don't think I could have lived under the kind of pressure and stress that Roger has placed upon himself for the past five years.

ANITA: Can I ask you...

LANCE: What?

ANITA: Did you ever love Karen?

LANCE: (*Obviously painful*) Oh, that was so long ago. I...I sometimes think maybe I did. Not for the right reasons though, but there were so many suppressed issues that I was dealing -- or not dealing -- with. Believe me, though, what Karen and I had was nothing in comparison to what Antonio and I shared. He's the only person in this lifetime that I have ever loved. Been in love with, is what I'm trying to say.

ANITA: Then why did you end the relationship with him?

LANCE: You can love someone, and still not be able to live with them.

ANITA: Well, why couldn't you just date, or see each other?

LANCE: It just wouldn't work, not after all we'd been through. Let's not get into this, we were talking about Roger.

(*BEAT*)

You may not want to hear this Anita, but I felt that Roger and Geeque might could have had what Antonio and I had at one time, and also... (*Hesitantly*) I don't really think it's over between them.

ANITA: Neither do I.

LANCE: Something in here... (*Points to his head*) ...tells me that there is a strong possibility that Roger and Geeque will be back together, despite how ugly and angry this whole thing has been.

ANITA: I agree. I don't know if Roger has told you, since he seems to tell you everything...

LANCE: And anybody else who will listen.

ANITA: ...I've been in therapy for the last six months, and it's helped me tremendously. When I finally confronted Roger, and he admitted the truth, my first inclination was...

LANCE: ...to blame yourself.

ANITA: Precisely. I hope I'm not making you uncomfortable, Lance.

LANCE: You were. But now, who gives a shit.

ANITA: You've known Roger and I for what, nine...

LANCE: Ten.

ANITA: Ten years. Did you always know that he...

LANCE: No, I didn't. It's the one time that the dickometer failed me.

ANITA: Dickometer?

LANCE: You know that lie I always tell about have a built-in dickometer

*(Lance holds up an imaginary instrument as
If pointing it in the direction of an
Imaginary man.)*

And it can take a reading on a man -- any man -- and know whether he's gay or straight, or bi.

(Anita begins to laugh.)

ANITA: I remember you talking about that. Something about the dickometer having a dial, and when you point it at a man, if the needle goes to the...

(Looks to Lance)

LANCE: Left!

ANITA: He's gay, to the right, he's straight, and if the needle stays in the middle, he's bi.

(Anita laughs)

LANCE: And you damn sure better be careful then, with those bi boys.

ANITA: *(Giggles)* You know, you've always had the ability to make people laugh, even at the worst of times.

(There is a strained moment of silence.)

ANITA: So your original dickometer reading on Roger was wrong?

LANCE: Hate to admit it, but sure as hell was. Antonio said, 'he's gay', Kira and Liz said, 'he's gay', Lil says, 'he's gay', and I said, over and over, 'no he's not, he's just a sensitive straight man who happens to have a knack for decorating.'

ANITA: Well, you were wrong, and so was I.

LANCE: May I ask you, you've known Roger since you both were 13, right?

ANITA: Ummmm hmmm.

LANCE: You two married at 21, and you never had any remote inkling, any idea? Nothing?

ANITA: My first inclination is to say, 'I had no idea.' But I wouldn't be honest if I did. Somewhere, buried back in the deepest recesses of my subconscious, I knew. I just couldn't admit to it, or face the truth. Because, Lance, for a straight woman, who thinks she knows her husband, who thinks her world is etched in stone for the duration of her life, finding this all out is shocking and -- and devastating.

LANCE: I can imagine.

ANITA: Would you believe that at one point, I even wondered about you and Roger.

LANCE: Join the damn crowd.

ANITA: Well, you've always been so 'out', and Roger couldn't ask you enough questions, spend enough time around you. Don't you understand why I might suspect you?

LANCE: No! Antonio and I spent 13 years together, and though the last three years were not that great, I would think that you'd recognize that I'm not into breaking up anyone's marriage or relationship, coupled with the fact that Roger is the best friend I've ever had, and I **don't** sleep with friends.

ANITA: I think I knew that in my heart, but you have to understand the emotional roller coaster I've been on.

(Beat)

When I think back, and when my therapist makes me remember, I ignored so many classic signs.

LANCE: Does that make a difference now?

ANITA: Yes...and no.

LANCE: Do you still love Roger?

ANITA: (*Thinks silently for a moment*) Not any more. Well, that's not exactly true. I do love him, but I'm no longer 'in love' with him. Can you understand that?

LANCE: Completely.

ANITA: I actually feel sorry for Roger, in the sense that he is like a lost little puppy now that Geeque has told him it's over.

LANCE: You've never met Geeque, have you?

ANITA: No, but I've talked to him many times on the phone, sounds like a nice guy. You know, at first, Roger would never let me know exactly where Geeque's house was, just the general vicinity. Once he felt strong enough he took me by Geeque's house one day, to pick something up. Oh, Geeque wasn't there. Roger asked, but I just couldn't go in.

LANCE: I didn't know that. You know, Roger's kept me on the road for the last three weeks, between your place and mine, and I can imagine the car phone bill he's going to have. I'm tired, Anita. I'm emotionally drained, and it ain't even my relationship. I'm afraid for Roger in so many ways. He's not in control, for the first time in his life, and -- and Anita, he won't leave Geeque alone.

ANITA: I know. You probably know much, much more than I do, but he's like a caged animal. Unable to sleep, unable to concentrate, can't be left alone.

LANCE: If he's not with me, he's calling me. I am very worried about him, but I'm also worried about myself. I can't go through anymore of these days and nights on the

town. I told Roger that I'm beginning to recognize these people in these bars. Therefore, they're beginning to recognize me, and him. And they're also thinking that he and I are a couple, and probably think we're looking for a threesome.

ANITA: Roger's here isn't he?

*(Lance pauses for a moment, contemplating
Whether to lie or tell the truth.)*

LANCE: How did you know?

ANITA: Doesn't require a lot of detective work, now does it. First you're here, and he's practically been with you or Kira around the clock since all this started, and even though he's inside this club, and you're out here, he knows that you're near, so I'm sure he feels safe. I think that's really sad.

LANCE: Will it bother you to see him here?

ANITA: I don't think so. I've become acclimated to this lifestyle indirectly, and he's allowed me in to a certain depth. Do you think it would bother him to know that I'm here?

LANCE: I sure as hell do. My first thought when you came up was to somehow manage to get inside before you did and let Roger know you were here so we could leave or he could hide.

ANITA: *(Looking around at the exterior of the club.)*
Well, **The Tight Box** isn't exactly on my tour of the social scene, but Tom has invited me so many times, and he's such a good friend. I just couldn't say no anymore.

*(Out of the corner of his eye, Lance has
Caught site of someone offstage right and
Stares in that direction.)*

LANCE: Well, well, this is getting very interesting.

(Anita looks offstage right.)

ANITA: What is?

LANCE: You said you'd never met Geeque, right?

ANITA: That's right. Seen some pictures, talked to him on the phone several times. Sort of feel like I know him -- why?

LANCE: You're about to meet him.

(The double doors open, MUSIC UP, and Clint Walks out with Beer/Drink in his hand, doors Close, MUSIC DOWN. Clint strolls over to Lance and Anita.)

CLINT: It's a busy night in this club. The boys are getting wild.

LANCE: Did you see Roger?

(Before answering, Clint looks suspiciously Toward Anita, as if not wanting to answer The question in her presence.)

CLINT: Ummmm, yeah.

LANCE: He's on the dance floor, right?

CLINT: Ummmmmm, sometimes.

(A voice calls out to Lance from offstage right. It is Geeque, who speaks with an accent.)

GEEQUE: *(Offstage)* Lance...hey Lance.

(Geeque runs onstage, Lance waves, Geeque rushes Up to Lance and gives him a hug, which Lance does Not return.)

GEEQUE: I thought it was you. You look great. Can you imagine, we haven't seen much of each other, or talked, since the Gay Pride Parade, when we said our goodbyes, and I've heard that you've been Roger's constant companion everywhere for the last few weeks.

(Giggles)

Careful Lance, people are going to start to talk.

LANCE: They already are, Geeque, I'd like to intro...

GEEQUE: (*Interrupts*) I bet you're surprised to see me here. Especially dressed like this, and by myself. You know I never go anywhere alone, but I'm meeting friends here.

LANCE: Geeque, this is...

GEEQUE: (*Continues talking, rapidly, nervously*) I -- I've met someone special, I think. Didn't plan to meet anyone so soon, but as my Avo would say, 'the mind does not control what the heart has chosen.'

*(Lance and Clint look at each other puzzled,
The back to Geeque.)*

GEEQUE: (*Giggles*) It loses something in the translation. Who are your friends?

*(Geeque gives the once over to Clint, ignoring
Anita. Lance notices.)*

LANCE: Oh, this is a new friend, Clint.

*(Geeque quickly extends his hand, almost blushing
At meeting the handsome Clint.)*

GEEQUE

GEEQUE: Nice to meet you.

*(Clint extends his hand and he Geeque shake
Hands. Lance pulls Anita up beside him.)*

LANCE: Don't you recognize who this is? Maybe from pictures?

*(Geeque is smiling, trying to think of who the
Woman is.)*

GEEQUE: I'm sorry. Am I supposed to know you? Have we ever met?

ANITA: Not personally, but we've talked on the phone many times.

LANCE: This is Anita.

(Beat)
Roger's wife.

(The smile immediately drops from Geeque's face.)

BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT I