

GODDESS OF THE HUNT

A light comedy about dark people leading private lives in public places

By Doug DeVita

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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
Charlie Windsor	A naive, grieving, independently wealthy widower	53	M
Diana Black-White	A charming Interior Designer	55	F
Ed McGrath*	A Broadway performer, and Charlie's best friend	53	M
Percy Shelley Tanenbaum	A Hotel Bar Pianist/Singer	35	M
Jeff White**	Diana's current husband	70	M
Jordan	A bartender at Joe Allen, NYC	60-ish	M
Jean Louis	A bartender at The Ritz, Paris	60-ish	M
The Detective...	A Detective who looks like Ed	50-ish	M
The Flight Attendant...	A Flight Attendant who looks like Ed	50-ish	M
The Conductor...	A Conductor who looks like Ed	50-ish	M

*Also plays The Conductor Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't, The Detective Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't, and The Flight Attendant Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't.

**Also plays Jordan and Jean-Louis.

SYNOPSIS

Just how well do you know all your "friends" on social media? In this fast-moving comedy, when the grieving Charlie Windsor meets the gregarious Diana Black-White in a New York Theater District bar, they become instant BFFs. Much to the consternation of his closest friend since childhood, Broadway actor Ed McGrath, Charlie is almost immediately hurled into an overwhelming whirl of dark secrets, questionable loyalties, and highly dysfunctional family dynamics; a world for which Charlie is completely unprepared. Especially when Diana's secret life is revealed and she goes full-on, batshit crazy. Despite the mounting body count, *GODDESS OF THE HUNT* is a gleefully silly homage to those romantic comedy thrillers of the 1960s, updated to the creepy, contemporary world of social media and information sharing.

LOG LINE

A light comedy about dark people leading private lives in public places.

SET REQUIREMENTS

The play's many locales can, and should be represented simply by projections, lighting and sound effects, and a few pieces of all-purpose furniture that can be moved around as needed.

DOUG DEVITA BIO

Doug is a two-time O'Neill Semi-Finalist (*Fable* and *Just A Rumor*), Semi-Finalist for Barrington Stage Company's Burman New Play Award, Normal Avenue's New American Play Series, and Campfire Theatre Festival (*Phillie's Trilogy*), Semi-Finalist for B Street Theatre's New Comedy Festival (*Goddess Of The Hunt* and *Upper Division*), and Semi-Finalist for We

Screenplay's Diverse Voices Competition (*The Fierce Urgency Of Now*).

In addition, he has won Fresh Fruit Awards of Distinction for Outstanding Play (*The Fierce Urgency Of Now*) and Outstanding Production (*Fierce...* and *Phillie's Trilogy*) as well as the Inaugural (and so far only) Scrap Mettle Arts Emerging Playwrights Competition (*Phillie's Trilogy*).

Doug is currently an advisory board member for All Out Arts, and formerly an Artistic Director for Westside Repertory Theater. His work has been seen in New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, New Jersey, Connecticut, and London, and has been developed at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC (Mark Bly, Gary Garrison, Jacqueline Goldfinger, and Caleen Jennings), and at ESPA/Primary Stages in New York (Robert Askins, Rogelio Martinez, Winter Miller, and Michael Walkup). He has also studied with Karen Hartman, Jeffrey Sweet, and Eric Webb.

A member of the Dramatists Guild, he has had work published by Next Stage Press, and Smith Scripts UK.

RECOGNITION

SEMI-FINALIST

New Comedy Festival 2020

B Street Theatre

An Information Bar like the one on a computer/laptop screen runs across the top of the stage. It reads: Friday April 13, 11:05 PM EST.

A projection of Diana Black-White's Facebook page fills the back wall. She has checked-in to Joe Allen, New York City. The image is a map of the West 40s in Manhattan, a red dot indicating the location. Her comment is "Looking forward to a nice, relaxing Kir Royale after seeing "Crazy For Abe" again tonight. Always too exciting to watch Mary Todd Lincoln go nuts singing Sondheim." Throughout the play, we will hear the comments being read out-loud as they are typed.

In the soft white and brick-red light of Joe Allen's, we see Charlie and Ed. They are both 53, and seated at a table across from the bar. Ed has a glass of Red Wine, Charlie has a Gibson. Diana, 56, sits at the bar, sipping a Kir Royale. Seemingly engrossed in her iPad, in reality she is listening to Charlie and Ed's conversation. All three are attractive and well-heeled.

CHARLIE

Benny un-friended me.

ED

He un-friended you?

CHARLIE

He un-friended me.

ED

And you're upset because...

CHARLIE

HE UN-FRIENDED ME!

ED

What are you, thirteen?

CHARLIE

Excuse me?

ED

It's not like you really knew each other, Charlie.

CHARLIE

I slept with him, Ed.

ED

25 years ago.

CHARLIE

He found me on Growlr, then sent a Facebook friend request.

ED

Charlie! It's barely 6 months since Mark...

CHARLIE

I was lonely. And horny.

ED

You've been horny since you were 12.

CHARLIE

Don't judge me. Okay, so maybe I rushed into the Facebook-friending thing again. But does anyone really know *all* their Facebook friends?

ED

What's so fascinating about all the boring, insignificant details that someone you barely know shares with the world?

CHARLIE

I don't know, it's fun? Makes me feel better about the boring, insignificant details of my own pathetic life?

ED

I know it was a shock, Charlie, but spending all your time trolling Facebook and Growlr, watching old sit-coms you've seen hundreds of times, only leaving that dusty wreck of an apartment for a butt-fuck with an old flame...

CHARLIE

Mark and I were supposed to fix up that wreck together, and we never did. And now we never will... I don't know if I can go to Paris by myself. Come with me, Ed.

ED

You know I can't just take off on a whim like you can.

CHARLIE

C'mon, you haven't missed a performance in over two years. Give your stand-by a shot at Lincoln.

ED

(Mimicking a rim-shot.)

Ba dum bum.

CHARLIE

(Wheedling.)

April... in Paris...

ED

Shut up.

CHARLIE

The Eiffel Tower... The smell of the rain on the chestnut trees... The Ritz...

ED

And... you lost me.

CHARLIE

Why? What's your excuse this time?

ED

I don't want to spend that much.

CHARLIE

You're so damn cheap! I'll pay. It's only a few nights, just so I can say goodbye to Mark by visiting some of our favorite places.

ED

Yeah, see... Charlie... I really don't want to be part of "The Mark Memorial Tour."

CHARLIE

Ouch.

ED

That was harsh. I'm sorry. I would love to go to Paris with you.

CHARLIE

I wish I could believe that.

ED

No, really I would. But you need to make this trip alone.

CHARLIE

Alone. What a horrible word. I'm 53, Ed. What if I never find someone again?

Diana comes over and taps Ed on the shoulder.

DIANA

I'm so sorry for interrupting, but you're Ed McGrath, aren't you?

ED

You know who I am?

DIANA

Of course. I saw *Crazy For Abe* tonight. Eighth time.

ED

Oh. Wow. Eight times. That's... flattering?

DIANA

Nothing against you, you're wonderful of course, you totally deserved that Tony no matter what those nasty little children say on BroadwayWorld, but I wanted to see Rosie O'Donnell one more time before Roseanne Barr takes over next month.

(She chuckles and shakes her head.)

Roseanne Barr as Mary Todd Lincoln singing Stephen Sondheim. I hope she doesn't kill it.

ED

We're all hoping that. Thank you for stopping by, uhm...

DIANA

(Extending her hand.)

Diana. Diana Black-White.

Diana clearly expects some recognition. Finally:

CHARLIE

You're kidding!

DIANA

Swear to God.

CHARLIE

Have you thought of changing it to Gray?

DIANA

That would also be a great name for a designer. That's what I do: I own an interior design firm in Boston.

CHARLIE

You could have your own show on HGTV: "Diana Gray: She's Not Just Black and White." Friday nights at 9:00, right after "Billion Dollar Shit Shacks."

DIANA

I do have my own show on HGTV. "Diana Black-White: Goddess Of The Hunt." I travel around looking for stuff for my wealthiest clients. That's why I'm in New York, actually; I'm shooting intros for next season all day tomorrow.

CHARLIE

I don't really watch HGTV that much.

DIANA

(She laughs.)

No worries. They've got me in the death spot: Saturday mornings at 7:00, right after "Suzanne Somers' Perfect Abs."

CHARLIE

That sucks. Who's gonna watch HGTV at 7:00 in the morning?

ED

(To Charlie.)

That was rude.

(To Diana.)

Excuse me while I help him pull his foot out of his mouth. Again.

CHARLIE

Sorry. I just meant who's up that early on a Saturday morning? Neither one of us are.

DIANA

No worries. You two aren't a couple, are you?

CHARLIE

Who, Mr. Married-To-His-Career-Here? We've only been best friends since kindergarten.

ED

Sometimes it seems longer.

CHARLIE

I'm usually up all night, and I go to sleep around 6:00. He sleeps late every morning. He's old and needs his rest, especially during 5 show weekends.

ED

Fuck you too, Charlie.

DIANA

Oh, is that your name? Charlie?

CHARLIE

Yes. Charlie Windsor. Charles Philip Arthur George to be exact. I took George as my confirmation name at Her Majesty My Mother's request.

DIANA

Now you're kidding!

CHARLIE

Swear to God. My mother had a Queen fixation. I think she only married my father because his last name was Windsor. Her name is Elizabeth.

DIANA

Of course it is. Don't tell me: your father's name is Philip?

CHARLIE

No.

DIANA

Edward?

CHARLIE

No.

DIANA

George?

CHARLIE

No. Herman.

DIANA

Herman?

CHARLIE

Herman!

They both laugh.

DIANA

Can I buy you both a drink?

CHARLIE

Sure!

ED

One is my limit these days.

CHARLIE

Since when?

ED

Since I have two shows tomorrow and two on Sunday. I'm old, remember?

DIANA

Just one more?

(She signals the bartender.)

Jordan? Another round.

(To Charlie.)

So what do you do, Charlie?

ED

(To Diana.)

Nothing. He does nothing.

(To Charlie.)

I keep telling you: take a class. Join a gym. Volunteer!

CHARLIE

I used to work in advertising, but my 30-something supervisor had the hots for a 6-foot-4 20-something Gaysian, so... I don't really need to work now, but the job would have been someplace to go now that Mark's passed away.

DIANA

Oh, your husband died.

(Whispering.)

Cancer?

CHARLIE

Stray bullet in Bloomingdale's. The White Sale.

DIANA

Oh, my God! The Bloomingdale's Silk Sheet Shooting? I heard about that up in Boston!

CHARLIE

Mark and some bull-dyke both grabbed for the last Calvin Klein King-sized Silk Sheet Set, they got into a fight, she pushed him, there was a shot, and the dyke walked away with the sheets.

DIANA

They still don't know who did it, do they?

CHARLIE

No.

DIANA

I'm so sorry that happened. So tragique. I've lost a husband or two myself, so I understand the pain. Ed's right, you know; you really should shake up your routine a bit. (She starts scrolling through her iPad.)

The other day I read this, hold on, let me find it, I've got it somewhere... Here it is: "If you think adventure is dangerous, try routine. It is lethal."

CHARLIE

Paulo Coelho.

DIANA

Yes! I saw it as a meme on Instagram.

ED

Paulo Coelho reduced to a social media meme? I'm going to take a whiz. Start saying your goodnights, Charlie.

CHARLIE

You're not the boss of me, Ed.

ED

(As he exits.)

Whatever. I'm leaving after I pee.

An awkward silence, while Charlie and Diana each wait for the other to say something.

CHARLIE

Don't mind him, he's always a little grumpy right before a major cast change.

DIANA

No worries, I totally get it. Changes like that are always stressful.

CHARLIE

So... Uhm... You're from Boston?

DIANA

New York originally. Well, Long Island. Huntington. But we don't talk about that.

CHARLIE

You're kidding! I'm from Deer Park!

DIANA

You're kidding!

CHARLIE

Diana. From Huntington.

DIANA

Charlie. From Deer Park.

CHARLIE

There's something almost mythic about that, like we were destined to meet.

DIANA

Serendipitous, even.

CHARLIE

But you live in Boston, now?

DIANA

For about 2 years now, yes.

CHARLIE

"Cheers."

DIANA

(Toasting Charlie.)

Cheers.

CHARLIE

I meant the show, "Cheers." I watch the reruns every morning. 4:00 – 6:00. See? Pathetic.

DIANA

You're going to Paris and staying at the Ritz. There's *nothing* pathetic about that.

Diana's phone rings. She looks at it.

CHARLIE

Do you need to take that?

DIANA

No, it's just Jeff. My husband.

CHARLIE

I'd give anything to ignore a phone call from my husband again.

Ed comes back.

ED

You coming, Charlie?

CHARLIE

I think I'll stay a bit longer, Ed. You go on.

DIANA

Good night, Ed. Perhaps we'll see each other again soon?

ED

I'm at the Shubert 8 times a week for the foreseeable future. Goodnight, Charlie. Have a good trip. See you next Friday.

Ed slaps a 20 on the bar and exits, rolling his eyes at Charlie and indicating "Call me!" Jordan enters with a new round of drinks.

JORDAN

We're closing in 20 minutes. Would you like to settle up now?

DIANA

Put it on my house account, Jordan. Their drinks, too.

CHARLIE

That's not necessary, Diana.

DIANA

But I insist.

Jordan exits. She waits until he's gone, then takes a bottle of Cassis from her bag and mixes up a Kir Royale.

CHARLIE

Thank you... What are you doing?

DIANA

I like this brand of Cassis better than the one they use, and anyway, it's cheaper to just buy a glass of Champagne and make my own.

(As she puts the bottle back in her purse.)

So, how long were you and... Mark, was it?

CHARLIE

Yes. Mark.

DIANA

How long were you and Mark together, Charlie?

CHARLIE

20 years. That's 200 in gay time. How long have you and Jeff been married?

DIANA

2 years. That's 200 in Jeff time. We don't have as much in common as I initially thought. He has his interests, I have mine, and they rarely intersect anymore. If you get my drift.

CHARLIE

Oh. OH! You mean he cheats on you?

DIANA

It's not really cheating when your husband is bisexual.

CHARLIE

How did you two meet?

DIANA

Christian Mingle.com. We both joined as a goof. That made me think "This guy is FUN!" He's not. He's rich. But he's not fun. I like having fun. I like surrounding myself with happy people. I like you!

CHARLIE

But I'm sad, Diana.

DIANA

Not deep down, you're not. Not to sound insensitive, but you'll grieve, you'll move on, and you'll be happy again, I know you will. I have a sixth sense about these things.

Charlie tears up.

CHARLIE

Oh, shit. This is so embarrassing. A middle-aged gay man sobbing in a theater bar.

DIANA

Have you ever been here on Tony night? Charlie, do you know who Adriana Ivancich* WAS? (*Pronounced Ah-DREE-ahna Ee-VON-chitch.)

CHARLIE

Who?

DIANA

Adriana Ivancich. She was one of Hemingway's muses, supposedly the model for the girl in "Across The River."

CHARLIE

I've never read that. I've been meaning to.

DIANA

No you haven't.

CHARLIE

No, I haven't.

DIANA

It's a piece of crap. But for some reason, I have never forgotten a People Magazine interview where she talked about the last time she and Hemingway saw each other. He started to cry, and said "Look – now you can tell everyone you've seen Papa cry." So you see, even Ernest Hemingway cried over a lost love.

Jordan comes with the receipt, eyeing the Kir Royale.

JORDAN

One of these days, Diana, I'm not going to be here, and you're going to get caught.

DIANA

(Laughing as she signs the bill.)

Jordan, you're adorable. Too bad you're not single.

JORDAN

Or straight.

DIANA

Or rich.

CHARLIE

You two know each other?

JORDAN

She knows everybody, Charlie.

Taking the signed receipt, Jordan exits.

DIANA

(Toasting Charlie again.)

Here's to new friends, and a new life with a new man for you, soon.

CHARLIE

I don't know about that, Diana.

DIANA

I do. And now I must go. I have to be at the studio early for my shoot. Have a wonderful time in Paris, Charlie. Go to the Hemingway bar for a drink, and tell Jean-Louis to put it on my account. And remember what I told you about Papa.

CHARLIE

I enjoyed talking with you, Diana.

DIANA

Same here. Maybe I'll send you a friend request.

CHARLIE

Maybe I'll accept it.

Kissing Charlie on both cheeks, she exits. Charlie finishes his drink, looks at Ed's glass of wine, downs it in one gulp, and exits.

The Information Bar changes to read: Saturday April 14, 11:40 PM EST. The projection of HGTV's Facebook Page. The image is of a rather masculine looking young woman holding a clipboard in front of a camera on set. The caption reads "HGTV mourns the sudden loss of one of our best and brightest Production Assistants, Tonia Lee Rathburn, in a tragic on-set accident earlier this evening. Her work for "Flipping Your AirBNB," "Goddess Of The Hunt," and "Wreck Site Flea Markets" was extraordinary, and she will be sorely missed. From all of us at HGTV, R.I.P. Tonia Lee." We hear Diana as she leaves a reply: "Thank you, Tonia Lee Rathburn for all of the work you did on my show. You will be missed. Rest in peace, darling."

The Information Bar changes to read: Sunday April 15, 10:15 AM EST. A projection of Percy Shelley Tanenbaum's Facebook page. He has checked-in to a Starbucks on Park Avenue and 29th St., New York City. The image is of the Murray Hill area of Manhattan, a red dot indicating the location the Starbucks. His comment is "Iced Hazelnut Mocha and Morning Buns before church."

In the bright morning light pouring through the huge windows, we see Percy Shelley Tanenbaum, 35, at a table, staring at a smart phone in a red leather case, and giggling. A bike helmet and backpack are on a chair next to him. Jeff White, 70, enters with drinks and pastries.

JEFF

I waited for you last night.

PERCY

Sorry, I had an emergency at work and had to stay a little later than usual.

JEFF

An emergency? At a hotel piano bar? Like what? You spilled your gin and your sheet music got sticky?

PERCY

Sheet music? Join the 21st century, Jeff. They had to refocus the lights. My spot was off.

JEFF

I was worried, the way you race around Manhattan on that bike of yours.

Jeff moves the helmet and backpack to the table and sits.

PERCY

Oh, Jeff, you do care. I'm a very good, very careful cyclist. I'm fast, but agile. I need to be, because of self-involved jaywalkers like you.

JEFF

Yeah I know, but a lot of other cyclists aren't.

PERCY

You should know. You're going to get decimated one of these days.

JEFF

So are you, Perce.

PERCY

I've told you, Jeff: don't ever call me "Perce." Percy, or Shelley, but never "Perce."

JEFF

Percy Shelley. It's like your mother was trying to make you gay from the start.

PERCY

My mother is crazy.

JEFF

Yes, I've met her once or twice.

A Scruff alert beeps. Percy looks at the phone.

PERCY

Ha! Look at this one!

JEFF

Scruff, Percy? I'm buying your breakfast and you're looking at a gay hookup app?

PERCY

(Handing the phone to Jeff.)

It's your phone. Why would I have Scruff?

(Showing him the screen.)

He's right over there. Look.

JEFF

(He looks at the screen, at the guy, and at the screen again.)

Forty-five!?! Ten years ago. Maybe.

PERCY

I'll never understand why any man thinks a profile pic of himself wearing underwear embroidered with ram horns around his crotch is even remotely attractive. It's just so desperately gay.

JEFF

Speaking of desperately gay – here's your Iced Venti Skim No Whip Fat Free Hazelnut Mocha *and* your Morning Bun. Undoubtedly one of the most embarrassing things I've ever had to order.

PERCY

Don't take this the wrong way, Jeff, but when the hell are you leaving?

JEFF

All those years at Miss Vera's Finishing School for Boys Who Want To Be Girls, and tactful charm still eludes you.

PERCY

Vexing, isn't it? You know what's also vexing: When are you leaving? Not that I don't enjoy a few hours with you every now and then, but I do have a boyfriend, you know. And you have a wife. In Boston.

JEFF

Or shopping somewhere. I'm never quite sure where she is. I should check her Facebook page. Or Instagram. Or Twitter, or...

PERCY

Does she ever know where you are?

The Scruff alert beeps again.

JEFF

Good point.

(Picking up his phone.)

It's the ram horns.

PERCY

Persistent little bugger, isn't he?

JEFF

(Shouting across the store.)

Sorry, not interested.

(To Percy.)

Happy?

PERCY

Yes, as long as my rent's paid, daddy.

JEFF

I've told you, Percy: call me Jeff, or Sir. But never "daddy." I am not your father.

PERCY

Thank God for that. Otherwise this would be really, really icky.

(Finishing his drink and taking the pastry.)

I've got to go. I'm late for church. My rent check, Sir Jeff?

Jeff takes out his checkbook and writes a check.

JEFF

“Church.” I’m surprised the whole place doesn’t spontaneously combust the minute you flounce in.

PERCY

Ha. Ha. Ha. You’re very funny. For a lawyer. I’m paid to play the organ.

JEFF

You certainly are.

PERCY

Will you be staying in New York tonight, or are you leaving on the next train?

JEFF

I think I’ll fly back tomorrow morning, if that’s alright with you?

PERCY

Suit yourself.

Jeff hands Percy the check.

JEFF

Am I ever going to see this apartment I’m paying for?

PERCY

You know Phillie is a writer and works from home. He never leaves.

(He kisses the back of Jeff’s neck and
whispers in his ear.)

Besides, hotel sex is hot.

JEFF

Don’t make any plans for this afternoon. There’s a hymn I’d like you to play on the organ. Every verse.

The Scruff alert beeps yet again.

PERCY

You’re awfully popular this morning. Must be a refreshing change, huh?

JEFF

It’s a good thing you’re such a good fuck.

PERCY

Thank you. You too.

Picking up his bicycle helmet and backpack, he leaves.

The Information Bar reads: Sunday April 15, 7:00 PM EST. We see a projection of Charlie's Facebook Page. He has checked-in to the Delta Sky Lounge, John F. Kennedy International Airport. The image is of a dotted line going from NYC to Paris, France. His comment is: "Off to Paris, for the first time without Mark. (Sad Face and Broken Heart Emojis.)" We hear a jet taking off.

The Information Bar reads: Tuesday April 17, 7:45 PM CET. Projection of Diana's Facebook Page. She has checked in to "The Hemingway Bar, Hotel Ritz, Paris France." The image is a map of Paris, the location of The Ritz Hotel indicated by a red dot. Her comment is: "At The Hemingway Bar in Paris, finding new treasures and hopefully meeting for drinks with a new friend."

Looking particularly chic in the flattering pink-white light of the Hemingway Bar, Diana is seated in a plush chair, her phone in one hand and a Kir Royale in the other.

DIANA

... Don't start, Jeff. I decided at the last minute to take the late flight from JFK Saturday night, and I was jet-lagged on Sunday. ... I was at a bunch of auctions all day yesterday and I had the phone turned off. ... Oh, for Christ's sake, so you found out I'm in Paris from a tweet! It's not the first time, and it won't be the last. ... You know our deal, and so far I'm keeping up my end...

Charlie enters. Diana waves at him.

CHARLIE

Diana?

DIANA

I've got to go. ... I'm meeting a new friend for drinks at the Ritz. ... Yes, he's gay. ... No, not that one. I met him at Joe Allen. ... No, not the London Joe Allen, the New York Joe Allen. ... Can this wait until I get back? ... I don't know when I'm coming home!... Check my Twitter, that's when! ... I'm disconnecting, Jeff!

(To Charlie.)

Surprise!

CHARLIE

When the concierge called and told me a friend was waiting at the bar, I was hoping Ed had changed his mind. What are you doing here?

DIANA

I found some auctions I should attend for one of my clients, and I thought why not spend a few days tearing up the town with my new friend Charlie?

CHARLIE

I'm flattered, Diana, but I'm flying home tomorrow night.

DIANA

Flying home to what? As your friend Ed said: Spending all your time watching old sitcoms you've seen hundreds of times, only leaving your apartment to hook up with an old flame? You know that isn't the answer, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Yesterday morning, as the plane was descending, I could see the Eiffel Tower. I've never been to the top. I'd never even been to Paris before meeting Mark, and he had vertigo, so we never went. I almost cried, but I didn't. When I checked into the hotel, and the concierge asked why I was here without Mark, I almost cried as I told her what happened, but I didn't. I went for a walk along the Seine as I waited for my room to be ready, like Mark and I always did on our first morning here, I stopped for a cafe au lait at Deux Magots – Mark's favorite café – and I didn't cry once. And this afternoon, I finally went to the top of the Eiffel Tower. It was breathtaking. And I threw a few rose petals over the railing. Most of them got caught in the suicide netting. But one or two fluttered down, slowly, gently drifting in the breeze... I said goodbye, and it wasn't healing. It was worse than I imagined. Everywhere I go I'm reminded of him. Paris was our city. We shared it, and it will never be the same for me again. Perhaps it will hurt going back to our apartment, alone, but it hurts so much more being here without Mark that I can't even let myself cry. I want to go home. And cry.

DIANA

Charlie? I'm so sorry. I want to make it up to you.

CHARLIE

Why? You hardly know me.

DIANA

You've touched me. I want you to have a little fun. I think you need it.

CHARLIE

That's so... unexpectedly kind.

Jean-Louis enters with two cocktails on a tray.

JEAN-LOUIS

We would like to celebrate the return of Madame Noir-Blanc to the Hemingway bar with two of our signature cocktails, le Serendipity.

DIANA

Oh, how sweet. Merci, Jean-Louis.

JEAN-LOUIS

De rien. No film crew?

DIANA

Not this time.

(Looking at Charlie, thoughtfully.)

I wish I'd thought this through! This would have been a marvelous episode for the show!

JEAN-LOUIS

A votre santé, Madame Noir-Blanc.

Jean-Louis exits.

DIANA

A votre santé, Jean-Louis. See, Charlie. Like we said at Joe Allen the other night: Serendipity.

She raises her glass, and they toast.

CHARLIE

Serendipity.

DIANA

Charlie? What would you think about me working with you to fix up that wreck of an apartment? We could film it for my show!

CHARLIE

I don't know, Diana. Let me think about it?

DIANA

Of course. And how about we do some shopping while we're in Paris? Wouldn't that be fun? A whole new look for a whole new you!

(Looking for Jean-Louis.)

Will you excuse me a moment?

CHARLIE

Sure.

Diana goes over to Jean-Louis.

DIANA

Jean-Louis, how much are you taking for those busts of Hemingway now?

JEAN-LOUIS

(Coolly, quietly.)

600 Euro.

DIANA

100.

JEAN-LOUIS

400.

DIANA

200.

JEAN-LOUIS

Deal.

Jean-Louis takes the bust off the bar and hands it to Diana as she hands him the cash. He exits.

DIANA

Here you go, Charlie. My gift to you. "Papa" Hemingway.

CHARLIE

Is that the bust from the bar?

DIANA

Don't worry, they have hundreds of these in storage. Americans love them and it's a sort of side business for the waiters.

CHARLIE

Oh. Cool. Thank you!

DIANA

A souvenir of tonight, and a reminder to be open to a new life. To a new love. And to new friends. As Papa said: "I can't stand it to think my life is going so fast and I'm not really living it."

Charlie takes his phone, taps it, and smiles at Diana.

CHARLIE

Friend Request accepted.

They toast again.

The Information Bar reads: Friday, April 20, 11:15 PM EST. For once there is no Facebook Page check-in. But we see we're in Joe Allen again.

Ed is at the bar, with his post-show Red Wine. He's looking at his phone.

JORDAN

Charlie's still in Paris with Diana, huh?

Ed shows Jordan his screen. We see a projection of Charlie's Facebook Page. He's checked-in to "Beaubien, 21 Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth, Paris, France." The image is a selfie of Charlie and Diana, laden with shopping bags. His comment reads "Shopping for a new look with my new friend Diana Black-White, HGTV's 'Goddess Of The Hunt.'" He has tagged both Diana and the show.

ED

You know her, right?

JORDAN

Diana? Yeah. She comes in here whenever she's in town filming, or on a buying spree.

ED

I've seen Charlie get carried away like this before. He gets all chummy with strangers too fast, I mean, look: he's tagged her! That means they're Facebook friends already!

JORDAN

I'm Facebook friends with her. I'm surprised she hasn't sent you a request.

ED

I ignored it. "A new look." Charlie doesn't need a new look. He's fine just the way he is.

JORDAN

Uh huh.

ED

That woman has got him racing around Paris spending all of Mark's money.

JORDAN

It's his money now, Ed.

ED

I know that, Jordan, but look at these posts, all these selfies at the Eiffel Tower, at Versailles, at the Parthenon, eating at Voltaire, drinking at the Hemingway bar, shopping at all those ridiculously expensive stores on the Rue de blah blah blah...

Jordan takes Ed's wine, tosses it, and pours another glass.

JORDAN

Can I refresh that wine for ya? Its nose is looking a little... out of joint?

ED

Very funny, Jordan.

JORDAN

He's a grown man, Ed, he can take care of himself.

ED

That's just it. I've known him since we were kids. He can't. He's like this giant puppy, just so eager for any attention thrown his way, loving everyone and everything without thought / to the consequences

JORDAN

He looks happier than he has in months.

ED

He always ends up getting hurt. And now that Mark's gone, who's going to be there for him when it all goes south? Me. It's always me.

JORDAN

But it's not your job to take care of him, is it? Let him have a little fun. Aren't you the one who told him to get out of that apartment and shake up his life?

Ed is a bit flummoxed. Perhaps Jordan has hit a nerve?
Ed pushes the glass towards Jordan, throws a couple of 20s on the bar and gets up.

ED

One's my limit. Two shows tomorrow.

JORDAN

And two on Sunday. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

(As Ed leaves.)

Ed? Forgive me for being so blunt, but... does Charlie know you're in love with him?

ED

Goodnight Jordan.

Ed storms out.

The Information Bar reads: Saturday April 28, 6:55 PM CET. Projections of Charlie's and Diana's Facebook Pages. They have both checked-in to "Paris-Charles de Gaulle, 95700 Roissy-en-France, France." The image is of a dotted line going from Paris to NYC. His comment is "Coming home, Ed! Can't wait to see you!" Her comment is "Another successful hunt! Now back to New York with my new friend and new client, Charlie." *Everyone* is tagged. We hear a jet taking off.

The Information Bar reads: Saturday April 28, 8:05 PM Mid-Atlantic Time. The Facebook page projections merge into one, showing a red dot a bit beyond Iceland, indicating the location of the plane over the Atlantic.

In the soft, low-level light of a night flight, Diana and Charlie are comfortably reclining in their Business Elite seats. He's been transformed, sporting a stylish haircut and wearing elegant new clothes. They are watching an episode of "Goddess Of The Hunt" on her iPad. Sound of a jet whooshing across the sky underscores this scene.

DIANA

I had a lot of fun shooting this episode.

CHARLIE

Wow, that's just gorgeous. You do beautiful work, Diana.

DIANA

Well, clients like him make my job easy.

CHARLIE

I saw there was a bust of Hemingway in his apartment, too. Is this a thing of yours?

DIANA

I told you, all the Americans want them. Besides, Phillie is a writer. It was a natural.

CHARLIE

I'm not sure I want mine in *my* bedroom; I'd feel like Papa was judging my snoring.

Diana laughs.

DIANA

So what do you say? Would you like to be on my show?

CHARLIE

I don't know. I've been thinking I might just sell the place and buy something a little smaller. What does a single man really need with a full floor apartment?

DIANA

Why sell a wreck? You've got to think about resale value, Charlie. Let me fix it up for you, and you'll make twice as much money! Especially if it's been on a TV show! And then I can help you with your new apartment! A two-episode story arc!

CHARLIE

I don't need the money. Mark is... I mean, he was... I inherited... I don't need the money.

DIANA

I know that, Charlie. But why let someone else renovate and profit off that apartment?

CHARLIE

You have a point, I guess, but... me? On TV?

A Flight Attendant Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't comes over to them and leans into Charlie, smiling.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS
LIKE ED BUT ISN'T

May I get either of you anything else? More Champagne, perhaps?

CHARLIE

(He looks at the Flight Attendant closely.)

Oh, my God. You look / just like

FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS
LIKE ED BUT ISN'T

/ That actor who plays the butler on "Mrs. Maisel?" Yes, I've been told.

CHARLIE

Oh, no, I meant you look like my best friend, Ed.

DIANA

Champagne would be lovely! Thank you, Stefan.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS
LIKE ED BUT ISN'T

My pleasure, Ms. Black-White.

The Flight Attendant Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't goes.

CHARLIE

Is there anyone, anywhere you don't know?

DIANA

I guess I do know a lot of people. Stefan certainly noticed you.

CHARLIE

Oh, yeah, I guess. Doesn't he look like Ed?

DIANA

Hmmm. I don't see it. So what do you say, Charlie? When we get back to New York, shall I come over to your apartment and we do a few test shots?

CHARLIE

It's going to be kind of late when we get back, isn't it?

DIANA

Oh, I didn't mean tonight. I have other plans tonight. Maybe I can come over tomorrow? Or Monday?

CHARLIE

I'm pretty sure I'd need to get permission to bring a camera crew into the building.

DIANA

You know, Charlie, I just had a marvelous idea! I'm staying at the Marriott Marquis, and a friend of mine entertains in the lobby bar. Why don't you come with me tonight? We can have a drink after I check-in, and you can meet him? He's a delightful young man, and I think the two of you would hit it off beautifully.

CHARLIE

I thought I'd text Ed and see if he wanted to get a drink at Joe Allen after the show. I've missed him.

DIANA

By the time we land, get through immigration and customs and get back into Manhattan, it'll be after midnight. Didn't he have two shows today? And doesn't he have two shows tomorrow?

CHARLIE

Yeah, I guess. Maybe I'll just go home and go to bed, then.

DIANA

If you go home tonight, you're just going to get right back into your old habits and become sad little Charlie again!

The Flight Attendant Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't comes back with two glasses of Champagne.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS
LIKE ED BUT ISN'T

Your Champagne, Ms. Black-White.

(Leaning in to Charlie and smiling.)

Mr. Windsor.

DIANA

Thank you, Stefan.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS
LIKE ED BUT ISN'T

My pleasure, Ms. Black-White.

(Still smiling at Charlie.)

Would you care for anything else, Mr. Windsor?

CHARLIE

(A little flustered by the attention.)

Oh... I... uhm... no, thank you.

DIANA

Perhaps some more of that smoked salmon if you have any left?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS
LIKE ED BUT ISN'T

I'll check.

He goes.

DIANA

See! I told you he was into you!

CHARLIE

He is not!

DIANA

He totally is.

CHARLIE

(Blushing, flattered.)

Really?

DIANA

Really.

CHARLIE

He is kind of cute. Like Ed. But not.

DIANA

I meant it when I said you'd have a new man soon. You don't want to get involved with a flight attendant, though.

CHARLIE

I don't?

DIANA

No, you don't. Some of them may be cute, but trust me, they're dumb, selfish, money grubbing sky whores, and they fuck around in every city. Can't trust them for shit.

Diana opens her purse and takes out a pill bottle filled with a dark liquid.

CHARLIE

What is that?

DIANA

My Cassis.

CHARLIE

How the hell did you get that through security?

DIANA

Oh, Ian and I are old friends.

CHARLIE

You're crazy, you know that?

DIANA

I've been told. Oh, Charlie, you're going to love my friend Percy. He's as wonderful as you are, and a very, very talented musician. He plays the organ beautifully.

Charlie laughs as she happily mixes her own Kir Royale.

The Information Bar reads: Sunday April 29, 1:00 AM EST. We see a projection of Diana's Facebook page. She's checked-in to The Marriott Marquis Hotel and tagged both Charlie and Percy. The image is a map of midtown Manhattan, a red dot indicating the location of the Hotel. Her comment is: "My home away from home in little old New York. Enjoying drinks with two of my favorite handsome men."

We hear someone playing the piano and belting out a classic show tune.

PERCY (OFF)

JUST TRY, AND YOU'RE GONNA SEE
HOW YOU'RE GONNA NOT AT ALL
GET AWAY FROM ME.

In the soft white light of the Marriott Marquis Lobby Bar, we Diana and Charlie are sitting at table, a Martini and a Kir Royale in front of them. Diana is her usual perky self, but Charlie looks exhausted.

DIANA

Isn't Percy wonderful?

CHARLIE

Yeah, sure, I guess. I'm so tired.

There's a smattering of applause.

PERCY (OFF)

Thank you. My mother loved singing that to me when I was a wee tot, but you don't really give a shit, do you?

You're a pathetically blasé audience and I know you don't care I'm bursting my vocal chords for your benefit so I'm going to take a 15-minute break, and if I come back at all we'll conclude with my one-man, 45-minute rendition of *The Mikado*, because I can. Be ready to get your Yum Yum on.

DIANA

I keep telling him he's got to watch that snide patter, but I guess no one ever really listens, do they?

CHARLIE

(Yawning.)

What?

Percy enters. He's wearing a tux. He goes up to Diana and Charlie. He gives Charlie the once over.

PERCY

Diana. I thought you were still in Europe. What the hell are you doing here? Don't you have a husband, in Boston?

DIANA

Lovely to see you too, Percy. No, I decided to come to New York with my new friend, Charlie. We landed a couple of hours ago.

PERCY

Does Jeff know you're in New York?

DIANA

He's not here too, is he?

PERCY

How would I know?

DIANA

I'll be in New York for a while. Charlie's going to be a new client. He might even be on the show.

PERCY

(To Diana.)

Lovely.

(To Charlie.)

A pleasure to meet you, Charlie.

CHARLIE

(Yawning.)

Sorry. Yes, a pleasure to meet you too. How do you two know each other?

PERCY

Diana is an old friend of my mother's. An old, old friend.

DIANA

(Glaring at Percy.)

Very funny, darling.

(To Charlie.)

Yes, Miriam Estelle Tanenbaum and I were both at Sarah Lawrence, Charlie. I've known this little bastard his whole life.

PERCY

I love you too, Diana.

(To Charlie.)

I assume you have a big, old apartment, Charlie? Diana has a thing for big, old apartments.

CHARLIE

What? Oh, yes. It's big. It might be too big.

PERCY

Nothing is ever too big for Diana. She just loves her real-estate porn.

DIANA

(Glaring harder.)

Percy, stop.

CHARLIE

I'm sorry, Diana, I just can't keep my eyes open. It's...

(Looking at his watch.)

My God, it's 7:00 AM in Paris. I've been up for 24 hours. I need to go home now.

DIANA

Just one more drink?

CHARLIE

(To Diana.)

No, I'm too tired. I'll see you tomorrow?

DIANA

(For Percy's benefit.)

Let me make sure I have the address: 146 Central Park West, right?

CHARLIE

Yes.

DIANA

10:00?

CHARLIE

Make it 1:00. Please?

(To Percy.)

Excuse me, Percy, it was lovely meeting you but I'm going to go now. Perhaps we'll meet again sometime, when I'm a bit more lucid.

PERCY

Oh, you can count on it.

Diana gets up, and kisses Charlie on both cheeks.

DIANA

Au revoir, mon ami. 'Til tomorrow.

Charlie smiles at her, and goes. He turns back to smile at Percy, then exits. Percy waits until he's out of earshot.

PERCY

Central Park West?

DIANA

The San Remo. A classic eight room, full floor apartment in one of the towers.

PERCY

Does he have any idea?

DIANA

Not a clue. And if we play our cards right, you'll be living rent free in an 8-room, beautifully decorated apartment overlooking Central Park.

PERCY

Until you get tired of him, at least. Like you have with Phillie. And Michael. And / Peter

DIANA

(Interrupting him.)

/ Speaking of Phillie, have you dumped him yet?

PERCY

Not yet.

DIANA

What are you waiting for? I've already restricted him from most of my social media.

PERCY

Where the hell am I going to live until we snare this Charlie guy?

DIANA

Use some of the money Jeff's given you for "rent" and find a room somewhere.

PERCY

And I thought Jeff and I were being so discreet, only meeting at his hotel. I should've known you'd know.

DIANA

Really, Percy. You underestimate me. You always have. Look, darling, I don't care who you fuck outside of the relationships I set up for you, but I really have to draw the line at my husband.

PERCY

Why? Aside from his bank account, you don't give a crap about him.

DIANA

That's the pot calling the pot a pot. Just dump him. Sooner than later. And as for Phillie, let's not waste any time there, either. Come with me to Charlie's apartment tomorrow.

PERCY

I have church at 11:00.

Diana bursts out laughing.

DIANA

I'm sorry, but the thought of you in a church always kills me.

PERCY

The only thing funnier is the thought of you in a church.

DIANA

Bitch.

PERCY

Bitch.

PERCY

I kind of like things the way they are with Phillie. And Jeff.

DIANA

Don't I work my ass off to find clients in New York so you can keep being kept here?

PERCY

Yes.

DIANA

And don't I work my ass off to find men who suit both our needs?

PERCY

Yes.

DIANA

And we both know Jeff isn't that good in bed.

PERCY

How would you know?

DIANA

Charlie is richer than Jeff. He's better looking than Phillie, and has a potentially nicer apartment. And he's perpetually horny. He couldn't be any worse.

PERCY

That's probably true.

DIANA

So then what's your problem? Charlie is perfect. AND HE'S NOT YOUR STEP-FATHER!

PERCY

THAT'S where you draw the line? Me fucking my step-father? Jesus, Diana!

DIANA

Hush. Look, here's what we'll do: I'll take Charlie to brunch, and text you where we are. You just casually show up like it's a chance meeting, and then charm the pants off him.

PERCY

I'm getting tired of you getting tired of the boyfriends you foist on me.

DIANA

Moi? Foist?

PERCY

It was fun when I was 12. It's getting old now.

DIANA

You owe me.

PERCY

(Rolling his eyes.)

Oh, not this again.

DIANA

(Jewish Mother Dramatic.)

You ruined my life!

PERCY

(Mimicking her.)

You ruined my life!

PERCY

That one night stand ruined your life. I was just the unfortunate by-product. Why didn't you just abort me? Or put me up for adoption?

DIANA

You've met your grandmother, right? That wasn't going to happen. I had to pay for my sins.

PERCY

But why should I have to pay for them too?

DIANA

What's gotten into you? And what are you bitching about? I've never denied you anything, have I?

PERCY

I've never denied you anything either. So we're kind of even on that score.

DIANA

Percy, must we have this conversation every single time? You know you're going to give in, you always do.

PERCY

There's always a first time.

DIANA

As if. Don't forget, darling, I control the money. And I have a knife. I know how to use both... Now, about Charlie. Remember what I always say:

DIANA

Never fall in love with the target.

PERCY

Never fall in love with the target. As if.

DIANA

There's always a first time. There's something strangely endearing about Charlie... he's like an adorable giant puppy, just wagging his tail and wanting to be loved... and, well... his life is a mess, and he needs to have fun with someone fun. Besides me, I mean.

PERCY

Be careful, Diana. You're sounding dangerously sentimental. Especially considering you're the reason his life is a mess.

DIANA

If you hadn't fucked up that Bloomingdale's job by shooting his husband instead of Tonia Lee, / he wouldn't be

PERCY

/ How was I supposed to know that Mark guy would make a dive for those damn Calvin Klein sheets just as I pulled the trigger?

DIANA

Oh shut up. I'll see you tomorrow. Wear something nice. And tight. Now go get your Yum Yum on.

He goes as Diana settles back into her chair, quite satisfied with herself. As she contentedly sips her Kir Royale, we hear Percy banging out the opening notes to *The Mikado* overture.

The Information Bar reads: Sunday April 29, 2:15 PM EST. The projection is of Diana's Facebook page. She's checked into Nice Matin, 222 W 79th St, New York, NY 10024, and tagged Charlie, Percy, and the restaurant. The image is a selfie of her, Charlie and Percy. Percy has his arm draped casually over Charlie's shoulder. Her caption reads: "Brunch with Charlie Windsor and Percy Shelley Tanenbaum, two of the most charming men in New York City. I sense a little magic starting, too. (Wink and heart emojis.)"

The Information Bar reads: Sunday April 29, 5:34 PM EST. The projection is of Percy's Facebook page. He's checked into "Strawberry Fields, Central Park, New York City." The image is a red dot indicating their location in the park between 74th / 75th streets on the west side of Manhattan.

His caption reads: “Diana has kicked us out of my charming new friend Charlie Windsor’s apartment to surprise him with a spontaneous little rearranging to show him what she can do, so I’m introducing him to the joys of an Iced Venti Skim No Whip Fat Free Hazelnut Mocha. Can you believe he’s never had one?” He’s tagged both Charlie and Diana.

Warm, leaf-dappled, late-afternoon sunlight bathes Charlie and Percy, sitting on a bench in Central Park across from Charlie’s apartment building. Percy is indeed wearing something rather tight and seductive. They have Iced Venti Skim No Whip Fat Free Hazelnut Mochas; Percy is sipping his, Charlie has barely touched his.

PERCY

Thanks for the Iced Mocha.

CHARLIE

What? Oh, sure, you’re welcome... I hope she’s not making too much noise up there. My downstairs neighbors bitch every time I drop a pillow!

PERCY

I’m glad that guy blew me off for brunch; what are the odds you and Diana would show up at the same restaurant? Fate, right?

CHARLIE

I guess.

(Looking up his building.)

What’s taking her so long? She said she was just going to rearrange a few things.

PERCY

She’s a perfectionist, but trust me: she knows what she’s doing.

CHARLIE

I hope so.

PERCY

(Putting his arm around Charlie’s shoulder.)

Jeez, you’re so tense. Relax, Charlie.

CHARLIE

I know Diana is trying to fix us up, and I guess I’m a little nervous.

PERCY

Do I make you nervous?

CHARLIE

No. Yes. Not really. I'm just... not used to being fixed up, I guess.

Percy gets up and starts massaging Charlie's shoulders.

CHARLIE

Oh, that feels so good. Thank you.

As Charlie begins to relax, something in Percy shifts, and he becomes a little more genuine than up till now.

PERCY

Diana was right, there is something about you unlike anyone else she's ever tried to fix me up with.

CHARLIE

She's fixed you up before?

PERCY

How long were you and Mark together?

CHARLIE

20 years.

PERCY

That's 200 in gay time!

CHARLIE

That's 200 in gay time!

They both laugh.

PERCY

And you never saw anyone else?

CHARLIE

Of course not.

PERCY

Wow. That's... amazing. Like something out of a Gay Ripley's Believe It Or Not.

CHARLIE

Gay monogamy?

PERCY

Something like that. I've never been with anyone more than two years. And I've never been monogamous with anybody. What's it like?

Charlie's phone rings.

CHARLIE

It's my friend Ed. Excuse me. ... Hey, Ed. ... Yeah, I got back late last night. I thought you might like to grab a bite after the show tonight? ... Oh, yeah... No, I get it. 5 shows, and all. How about during the week? ... Oh. I understand. It's just it's been three weeks since we've seen each other... Yeah, Friday for sure! ... Yeah, me too. I can't wait either. I have so much to tell you! ... See you Friday.

(Disconnecting. To Percy.)

Sorry. I was hoping to see my friend Ed tonight.

PERCY

And he dissed you? How dare he!

CHARLIE

Well, he does have eight shows a week, and rehearsals with the new star of his show haven't been going well...

PERCY

(Shrugging.)

Well. That sucks for him.

(Moving in on Charlie, smiling.)

And leaves you free for dinner with me tonight. Right?

Before Charlie can respond, Diana enters.

CHARLIE

Diana!

DIANA

I'm sorry I took so long, but when I'm inspired, I just can't have anything get in the way of my vision. For a room, I mean.

PERCY

(To Charlie.)

I told you, she's a perfectionist.

Diana takes out her phone and shows it to them.

DIANA

I hope you don't mind, Charlie, but I took a few pictures and posted them to my Instagram.

PERCY

Of course you did.

CHARLIE

Oh, wow! THAT'S my bedroom?

DIANA

Do you like it?

CHARLIE

I'm not sure about Hemingway staring at my bed like that, but...

DIANA

Oh, you'll get used to it. See, Charlie, just by moving and accessorizing your chest of drawers with a few books and the Hemingway, it already improved the look and flow of the room. Books truly *are* decorative. And it does kind of spice up the room to have Papa guarding over some of your favorite books.

CHARLIE

I guess. The room does look much nicer than it did.

DIANA

Wait until I'm done with the place. You might not even want to sell it! How are you two getting along?

PERCY

Aside from the fact he doesn't seem to like Iced Hazelnut Mochas...

CHARLIE

I'm sorry, but I really don't.

Percy takes Charlie's Iced Mocha and starts drinking.

PERCY

Don't be sorry. Just have dinner with me.

DIANA

Oh, that's a lovely idea!

CHARLIE

(To Diana.)

Maybe you'd like to join us?

PERCY

I'm sure she's busy tonight.

DIANA

(Exchanging a glance with Percy.)

As a matter of fact, I am. I have to go to a memorial service for Tonia Lee Rathburn.

PERCY

Who?

DIANA

That poor little lesbian Production Assistant at HGTV. The one who got crushed by that loose light on my set last month? Remember? The night I left for Paris?

PERCY

Oh yeah. Her.

CHARLIE

Oh my God, that's horrible!

DIANA

So sad. So young. Such an unnecessary death.

(Shrugging.)

Oh well. Enjoy your dinner, gentlemen. Charlie, I will see you tomorrow.

And she's off.

CHARLIE

That's so sad about that young girl.

PERCY

She wasn't *that* young. She was older than me.

CHARLIE

But it's still sad. You'd think something like that would've been all over the news.

PERCY

Yeah, you'd think. HGTV probably wanted to keep it all hush-hush. Bad PR if word got out about tech problems on their sets, you know?

CHARLIE

I guess.

Percy resumes rubbing Charlie's shoulders.

PERCY

Let's talk about dinner.

CHARLIE

Why do I have the feeling you don't really want to talk about dinner?

PERCY

What do I want to talk about, then?

CHARLIE

You're trying to seduce me.

PERCY

Would you like me to seduce you?

CHARLIE

I... uhm... it's been such a long time for me, Percy.

PERCY

Not that long.

CHARLIE

Well... that guy from Growlr was a mistake.

PERCY

It's only dinner, Charlie. And maybe dessert.

(Rubbing Charlie's shoulders a little more aggressively.)

You really are tense. I hope you don't mind, but I have to get a little more aggressive. That's a really hard knot, Charlie.

Percy goes full steam on Charlie.

CHARLIE

Oh. Yes. Right there.

PERCY

There?

CHARLIE

Yes.

Percy shifts his focus to Charlie's back.

PERCY

And how about here?

CHARLIE

Oh, yes.

Percy reaches around to Charlie's crotch.

PERCY

And here?

CHARLIE

OH MY GOD!

PERCY

That's a pretty hard knot, too.

(Leaning into Charlie's ear.)

Let's go up to your apartment and do things that will make Papa Hemingway cry.

CHARLIE

What about dinner?

PERCY

We'll order in.

Charlie hesitates.

CHARLIE

How many guys are you involved with right now, Percy?

Percy leans in and kisses Charlie.

PERCY

I think I'm willing to try this monogamy thing. If you are.

Charlie melts, and then nods. Percy takes him by the hand, and they go off.

We see a projection of Diana's Facebook page. She's checked-in to "The San Remo, 146 Central Park West, New York NY, 10023." The image is a chest of drawers, the bust of Hemingway positioned on top of it, resting on and next to several artfully displayed books.

Her caption reads: “A simple rearrangement of a chest of drawers and a few books can do wonders for a bedroom, and my new client was so thrilled he just agreed to a total renovation job for the rest of his apartment at the legendary San Remo on Central Park West! As Hemingway once said: “There is no friend as loyal as a book.” This is only a hint of what’s to come in what may be the biggest and best love affair with my job yet. Stay tuned, darlings!”

The Information Bar reads: Friday May 4, 11:25 AM EST. The projection of Diana’s Facebook page changes again. She’s checked-in to (and tagged) Épicerie Boulud, Lincoln Center. The image is a selfie of Diana with her coffee and pastry. Her comment is “In New York at Épicerie Boulud, enjoying my café au lait and making plans for my biggest job yet. Details to come, darlings.”

Bright late-morning sunlight floods the outdoor seating area. Diana is at a table with a café au lait, a pastry, her iPad, and some paperwork. Jeff enters.

JEFF

Aren’t you the not-quite famous Diana Black-White, HGTV’s Goddess Of The Hunt? My name is Mr. Jeffrey White, Esquire. Do you remember me? I believe I’m your husband.

DIANA

Jeff. What a disagreeable surprise. What the hell are you doing in New York?

JEFF

One: I thought it would be nice to see my wife for a few minutes, and two: I was horny.

DIANA

Oh. Well... one: I’m busy right now, and two: you know that’s not my problem.

JEFF

Oh, but I have a lover in New York, so don’t worry, I’m holding up *my* part of the deal, too. At least, I had a lover before I left Boston this morning. Now, I’m not so sure.

DIANA

What do you want me to do about it?

JEFF

I’d like you to help me convince Percy to keep the status quo.

DIANA

(Feigning surprise.)

Percy? What the hell does he have to do with this?

JEFF

He's my lover.

DIANA

Oh. I see. Quel surprise. (Pronounced "kell surprreeze.") Well... I wish I could help you, darling, but I think Percy has found a new lover.

JEFF

You think? You know he's found someone else. And I know you know he has. You want to know how I know you know?

DIANA

No, not particularly.

JEFF

Oh, but I think you do.

DIANA

Jeff... please don't say anything else. I don't want to know how you know what you think you know.

JEFF

I don't think I know, I know I know. What's laughable is you think I don't know about the cameras.

For the first time, we see a slight crack in Diana's usually glossy facade.

DIANA

What cameras?

JEFF

You know, Diana, don't you think it's time to use a different objet d'art from your decorating arsenal? Even an untrained observer must have noticed there's a bust of Hemingway in the bedrooms of every gay man you've ever had on your show.

The crack may deepen a little, but she remains as calm, cool and collected as ever.

DIANA

What of it?

JEFF

I know you get off by pimping Percy out and watching him fuck other men silly. I've known for years. I'm just astonished none of those rich, lonely gay men you collect have ever discovered the cameras you install in those busts in their bedrooms. Or have they?

DIANA

Jeff, this is not a good time.

JEFF

That poor little production assistant at HGTV. What was her name? Tonia Lee Rathburn?

DIANA

You know her name. What are you up to, Jeff?

JEFF

You can't have forgotten I was her father's attorney? Isn't that how we met? When I was settling his estate for you?

DIANA

Jeff, please, get to the point.

JEFF

I found an interesting little email last week, while I was settling *her* estate.
(Pulling out his phone and shoving it in her face.)

Care to see the message she wrote to the bigwigs at HGTV about you and the Hemingways?

She quickly reads the email. He takes his phone back.

DIANA

(Cool as a cucumber.)

I see.

JEFF

Aren't you lucky she didn't have a chance to send it?

DIANA

I've got to get this proposal done for my new client.

JEFF

Is this the "client" Percy so delicately referred to as "Diana's new rich schmuck" when he dumped me this morning? Via a text message?

DIANA

I wish it hadn't come to this. I really hate that you know what you know.

JEFF

Just so you know that it doesn't bother me in the slightest that I know what I know. Why shouldn't you like watching two men go at it? Lord knows, a lot of men get off watching two women doing it. Although I am slightly offended you never watched me and Percy. But only slightly.

DIANA

Jeff, please stop.

JEFF

Why? Frankly, I admire how you've been able to turn your gay porn fetish into a highly profitable industry for yourself. Brilliant target marketing.

DIANA

But it bothers me that you know what you know. And it bothers me that I know you know what you know.

JEFF

Alright that's enough. But I really hate to think what might happen if the Goddess of information over-sharing ever found this particularly juicy bit of information shared all over her social media. That would be just dreadful, you know?

DIANA

Jeff, get to the point. I'm very busy and I don't have time for these little games you like to play. What do you want?

JEFF

As long as we maintain our status quo, your – shall we say, little proclivity – shall remain nestled in the hollow core of plastic Papas in gay men's bedrooms everywhere.

DIANA

Be careful, Jeff. You're skating towards the black ice.

JEFF

Do you really think you're in the driver's seat?

DIANA

Do you?

JEFF

You know I am.

(Waving his phone in her face.)

One click, Diana. Click, send, whoosh, and it all falls apart. So. We'll continue as we are? You. And me and Percy. Agreed?

DIANA

Don't you, amongst other things, find fucking your step-son to be more than a trifle, shall we say, "non-naturel?"

Jeff roars with laughter.

JEFF

You kill me, Diana. You really do. Don't you, amongst other things, find getting off by watching your son butt-fucking his brains out, shall we say, "non-naturel?"

DIANA

You already know Percy has taken on a new lover.

JEFF

Yes, I know. "New Rich Schmuck." But since fidelity has never been part of our equation, I don't see what the problem is.

DIANA

Not that I want a divorce, but why do you want to stay in this marriage?

JEFF

We're both attractive, we're both successful, we're both good for each other's image, and we have the same contempt for humanity and inability to love anyone even remotely like a "normal" person. What's your excuse?

DIANA

I'll make more money as your widow than as your ex-wife.

JEFF

And if you predecease me?

DIANA

Then it doesn't matter, does it?

JEFF

That's what I like most about you, Diana. Eminently practical. Cold-hearted, but practical. We deserve each other.

DIANA

Thank you. Now go away. I have to get this proposal done. If I can get this San Remo job on my show, I'm hoping to parlay it into a better time slot.

JEFF

8:00 on Sunday morning?

DIANA

Very funny. Not. Why are you still here? I told you, I'm busy.

JEFF

I was thinking we could have lunch.

DIANA

Not today, Jeff.

JEFF

Then dinner tonight.

DIANA

We'll see. If you're still around.

JEFF

I'm going to make a reservation at Jean-Georges for 8:00. (Pronounced Zhawn Zhorge) Will you please clear your schedule and join me?

DIANA

Maybe.

JEFF

It wasn't a question. Even a minor "star" should be "seen" with her "husband" occasionally, don't you agree? Even if the photos are only on her own social media.

DIANA

I said maybe.

JEFF

Click. Send. Whoosh. Your call. See you at dinner.

He exits, chuckling. She watches him go, fuming.

DIANA

(To herself.)

I wouldn't bet your life on that, Jeff.

(Making a call.)

Hello, Percy darling, it's me. ... I've been "seen." ... Jeff. He knows about the cameras in the Hemingways. ... I told you to make sure to scrub Tonia Lee's email accounts! ... Well, dammit, you missed one! Never mind, I can take care of that this afternoon. I need you to execute the escape clause. ... Tonight. Before dinner, if possible. ...

Because I suspect he suspects. He could make things very sticky for both of us.

(She roars with laughter.)

Oh, Percy, you're kidding! You know how conceited Jeff is! No matter what he may or may not suspect, he thinks *he's* driving this train. And he's being pretty cocky about it. Trust me, he'll never see it coming. ... Jean Georges at 8:00. ... And don't fuck this one up. We don't need another Bloomingdale's on our hands right now.

(Disconnecting and shrugging.)

Goodbye, Mr. White.

The Information Bar reads: Friday May 4, 7:48 PM EST.

We see Jeff crossing the stage, head down and buried in his phone. He exits, and we hear a car horn, brakes skidding, a terrible crash, and the hubbub of an excited crowd. As lights flash and the sounds of sirens begin to wail, a bicycle races across the stage in the opposite direction. The cyclist is wearing a white helmet and is moving so fast we can't really see who it is, but we all know it's Percy.

The Information Bar reads: Friday May 4, 11:35 PM EST.

The projection of Charlie's Facebook page shows he's checked-in to Joe Allen. The image is the map with the location. His comment is "Looking forward to catching up with Ed after three weeks!" Ed is tagged, and there are Martini, Wine Glass, and Smile emojis.

Ed, Charlie, a Red Wine, and a Gibson. Charlie is texting and giggling.

ED

As I've been trying to say for the past five minutes, I'm glad you're finally home.

CHARLIE

Me too. I missed you, Ed.

ED

I can top that! I missed you!

CHARLIE

You haven't said anything about my "new look!"

ED

I hate to admit it, but...

Charlie's phone dings. He looks, laughs, and replies.

CHARLIE

Sorry, Ed. It's the guy I was telling you about. Percy.

ED

PERCY? You didn't tell me his name was Percy!

Text ding. Charlie laughs & replies.

CHARLIE

Sorry. Yeah, his name is Percy. Percy Shelley Tanenbaum. Can you believe it?

Ding. Laugh. Reply.

ED

Will you put that thing down? I haven't seen you in three weeks!

CHARLIE

And who's fault is that?

ED

Yours.

Ding.

CHARLIE

You could've relaxed your rigid schedule for once, and met me during the week.

(Looking at his phone and laughing.)

I'm sorry. But this guy is hilarious.

ED

Who the hell is he?

CHARLIE

He's a friend of Diana's. Well, a college friend's son, I think? Something like that.

Anyway he's adorable. I think I could fall for him.

ED

You barely know him!

CHARLIE

(Giggling uncontrollably.)

Bare being the operative word.

ED

Oh Charlie! You didn't!

CHARLIE

Three times since Sunday. And it's wonderful!

ED

Is this what it's going to be like now? You following your dick to whoever smiles at you? Or makes you laugh? Jesus, Charlie! I think you really are still thirteen.

CHARLIE

I went 6 months with *nothing* after Mark died, I had one fling with that asshole from Growlr, and a couple of times with Percy, and I'm thirteen? What's wrong with you?

ED

Three times!

CHARLIE

Three times, four times, 1,000 times, why do you care?

ED

You're like this trusting little man-child who'll just follow anyone who offers you even the slightest bit of attention, like Winnie-The-Fucking Pooh in a never-ending hunt for honey! Except now you have a helluva lot more honey in that pot and everyone is hunting for it and you could lose it and then where will the bees be? They'll all be flying off to other honey pots and I'll be left to put the ripped-out stuffing of a shredded Pooh-bear back together again.

CHARLIE

That makes absolutely no sense!

ED

WELL IT DOES TO ME!

CHARLIE

Calm down, Ed. He's going to be here in a few minutes.

ED

Who?

CHARLIE

Percy.

ED

He's coming HERE? Horning in on *our* Friday night?

CHARLIE

You know, Ed you've had plenty of chances for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday nights even *before* I met Mark, so don't give me this "*Our* Friday Night" shit now.

Ed turns redder than his wine.

ED

I'm leaving.

As he gets up, Jordan enters, phone in hand.

JORDAN

Holy Cassis! Have you seen this?

He shows Charlie and Ed his screen. The projection changes to Diana's Facebook page. She's checked-in to Mt. Sinai West Hospital. Jeff is tagged. The image is a photo of Diana and Jeff, dressed to the nines and posing in front of a step and repeat backdrop for a major social event in Boston. Her comment is: "Well, after Jeff had an unfortunate accident with a bicyclist earlier this evening while texting and jaywalking across Columbus Circle on his way to meet me for dinner at Jean-Georges, I am once again just plain old Diana Black. Widow. Rest in peace, Jeffrey White, Esquire. We had some fun, didn't we?"

Percy saunters into the bar. He's carrying his bicycle helmet, which he places on a barstool. Neither Charlie nor Jordan notice, but Ed does. Percy comes up behind Charlie, throwing his arms around him.

PERCY

I'm here, darling!

CHARLIE

Percy?

PERCY

What's the matter?

ED

That's Percy? He's a child!

PERCY

(To Ed.)

I can hear you, Uncle Abe. I'm 35.

ED

And Charlie is 53.

CHARLIE

What's your point?

ED

(To Charlie.)

You're old enough to be his father.

(Sizing up Percy.)

Or should I say "Daddy?"

CHARLIE

Shut up, Ed.

(To Percy.)

Did you hear? Diana's husband was killed tonight.

PERCY

Jeff died? Oh. That's too bad. She was over him anyway.

CHARLIE

I should call her.

PERCY

I'm sure she'll be fine.

(Almost sincerely, slightly bitter.)

I mean, I'm sorry the guy's dead and all, but Diana only married him for his money and now she's got it.

Ed picks up the helmet.

ED

He was killed by a guy on a bicycle.

Percy puts the helmet back on the barstool.

PERCY

(To Ed.)

Tell me about it. It's getting harder and harder to ride around the city these days. I'm surprised I haven't been killed, some of those guys just don't care about anyone except themselves.

(To Charlie)

Was he jaywalking again, and got hit by the cab trying to avoid the cyclist?

ED

No one said anything about a cab. Charlie only told you the guy died.

CHARLIE

What the hell are you getting at, Ed?

ED

It's just a little odd this guy walks in here carrying a bicycle helmet. And knew about something that wasn't mentioned. That's all.

PERCY

I am friends with the woman, Ed. It is Ed, isn't it? She texted me about the accident. I didn't know he'd died, that's all.

ED

And all that texting back and forth with Charlie just now, and you didn't think to tell *him* about the accident?

Percy stares at Ed. It's kind of a scary stare.

CHARLIE

Stop it, Ed. You've been on too many "Law & Order" episodes.

ED

There's something fishy about all of this. For once, Charlie, get your head out of your ass and listen to me, or I swear I won't be there for you when this all blows up in your face.

CHARLIE

Who died and left you the boss of me?

ED

Mark.

Charlie gasps in shock. Jordan drops a glass. Long silence.

CHARLIE

Fuck you, Ed.

PERCY

C'mon, Charlie. Let's get out of here and find Diana.

ED

No, by all means, you stay. Stay in this little viper love nest you're creating with your social media diseased new friends. I'll go. And don't call me when they break your heart.

He storms out.

JORDAN

I'm sorry about Ed. He's been a little tense since Roseanne joined the show.

CHARLIE

How could he say that about Mark?

(He downs his Gibson in one gulp.)

Another.

JORDAN

I think you've had enough, Charlie.

CHARLIE

(Insistent.)

One more.

JORDAN

(Shrugging.)

It's your head in the morning.

Jordan reluctantly makes the drink. A man in a lightweight trench coat enters and looks around. He bears a striking resemblance to Ed. Charlie sees him and reacts as if he's seen a ghost. The man sees Charlie and also reacts.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED

BUT ISN'T

(Under his breath.)

Oh, shit.

CHARLIE

(Loudly.)

Shit. What the hell does *he* want now?

PERCY

That isn't Ed, Charlie. Why do you think every tall, scrawny guy you see is Ed?

CHARLIE

Ed isn't scrawny. He's... dapper.

JORDAN

No, it's that guy who plays the butler on Mrs. Maisel. Steve something or other. He comes in here occasionally.

Jordan gives Charlie his drink. He downs it in two gulps.

PERCY

Whoa, Charlie! Pace yourself.

CHARLIE

I'm going to be sick.

He races off. The man comes to the bar, flashing a badge.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

I'm Detective Benny Briscoe, NYPD. I'm looking for a Ms. Diana Black-White? She told me at the hospital she might be coming in here tonight.

Percy discretely moves in front of the barstool, hiding the helmet from the Detective's view.

JORDAN

She hasn't been in here all night.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

If she comes in, let her know I have a few more questions for her.

PERCY

Any leads on finding the cyclist?

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

(Staring intently at Percy.)

Nothing yet. He was an agile little fucker. All anyone knows for sure is he was wearing a white helmet.

Percy stares right back at the Detective, and cool as a cucumber, he picks up his helmet.

PERCY

Oh, like this one?

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Yeah. Like that one.

PERCY

(Laughing.)

Half of New York wears white helmets, Detective. Good luck.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Yeah.

(To Jordan.)

If Ms. Black-White comes in, you'll tell her to call me, right? She has my card, but just in case...

He hands Jordan a card.

JORDAN

Sure, I'll make sure to give her the message.

PERCY

Why don't you just call her, Detective?

Charlie comes back in. He's a little wobbly.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Now why didn't I think of that? She's not answering her phone, Einstein.

(To Jordan, indicating Charlie.)

Get this guy some black coffee.

(To Charlie.)

Ya might wanna lay off the Gibsons now, pal.

CHARLIE

Why do you care, pal?

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

(Stares at Percy, then back to Charlie.)

I'd hate to see another bicycle accident mangle that handsome mug of yours 'cause yer judgement's all screwed up.

(To Jordan.)

Tell Ms. Black-White to call me if she comes in here tonight.

Jordan nods. The Detective shoots another look at Percy, then goes. Before he exits, he turns and makes eye contact with Charlie. Charlie quickly looks away as Jordan brings him a black coffee. The Detective exits.

PERCY

You know what, Charlie? I think we should get out of New York for a few days. Maybe a nice long weekend at the beach?

CHARLIE

I don't know. What about Diana? Shouldn't we stick around for her?

PERCY

Trust me, she's going to be fine. I have access to a beach house in Provincetown, and I know for a fact the owner won't be there.

CHARLIE

I've never been to Provincetown.

PERCY

You've never been to Provincetown? Diana was right. You DO need to have some fun. C'mon, what do you say?

Charlie takes a sip of his coffee, and looks off where both Ed and the detective exited.

CHARLIE

(Under his breath.)

Fuck you, Ed. Fuck both of you.

(Defiantly, to Percy.)

Sure, what the hell. Let's go.

Diana sweeps into the bar, dressed in white from head-to-toe and in quite the merry mood.

DIANA

Bon soir, toute le monde!

CHARLIE

Diana, I'm so sorry about Jeff.

DIANA

Thank you. It was quite the shock, I'll tell you. I was waiting for him at Jean-Georges and I heard the crash, then there were all these flashing lights, and sirens, and I just knew. I knew! And then I got the call. Poor, mangled, decimated Jeff. Jordan, how about some Champagne?

JORDAN

There was a detective here a few minutes ago, wants you to call him.

DIANA

Oh, Detective Briscoe? Yes, he's been calling me. I wonder if he has any leads on finding the cyclist?

PERCY

He says he doesn't. C'mon Charlie, we'd better get going. We can just make the last train to Boston if we leave now.

DIANA

Oh. You're going to Boston?

PERCY

Provincetown. He's never been.

DIANA

Oh, that's a lovely idea. Get away for a few days. Absolutely.

CHARLIE

Maybe we should stay? For Diana?

DIANA

Don't be ridiculous, Charlie. I'm fine. Go, have a marvelous weekend. I have so many details to wrap up now that I'm a widow.

CHARLIE

If you're sure.

PERCY

She's sure.

DIANA

Of course I'm sure.

She hugs Percy, palming something into Percy's hand.

DIANA

(Whispering.)

Get rid of this.

She then hugs Charlie while Percy looks at the object discreetly: it's Jeff's mangled, red-cased phone.

PERCY

C'mon, Charlie. Let's go.

He pulls Charlie off.

DIANA

(To Jordan.)

I'm so glad Charlie's found a new love.

JORDAN

And so quickly, too.

DIANA

Don't you think they make a cute couple?

JORDAN

Didn't you and Jeff have a place up in Provincetown?

DIANA

Jeff did. Huh. I guess that's mine too, now. The death that keeps on giving. Jordan, darling? My Champagne?

The Information Bar reads: Saturday May 4, 4:55 PM EST. Charlie's Facebook check-in is Provincetown, MA. He's tagged Percy. The image is a map of Provincetown, Massachusetts, a red dot indicating the location of Jeff and Diana's beach house. His comment is "Having so much fun with Percy Shelley Tanenbaum in Provincetown. CRAZY FOR HIM."

The Information Bar reads: Sunday May 5, 7:55 PM
There is no Facebook check-in.

The stage is bathed in the soft purple of twilight mixed with the vanilla of a rising moon and the warm yellow spill from the opened French doors of a beach house perched behind a sand dune. The sounds of surf, and perhaps a late gull or two. Charlie is walking along the beach, alone and deep in thought. We become aware of a figure in the distance. It is the Detective Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't. He catches Charlie's eye, gives him a discreet thumbs up, and exits quietly. Charlie continues pacing back and forth, a bit more agitated now. Percy, wearing a bathing suit, with a towel draped over his shoulder, comes out of the house and throws his arms around Charlie.

PERCY

How about a twilight swim?

(Pulling at Charlie's trousers.)

Let's skinny-dip.

Charlie stops Percy, and moves away from him.

CHARLIE

No.

PERCY

What's wrong, Charlie?

CHARLIE

Nothing.

PERCY

You've been acting strange ever since you got back from the market this afternoon.

CHARLIE

Have I? Sorry, I'm just thinking about... some things. Mostly about Ed.

PERCY

Forget about him, Charlie. He's had so many chances with you, and he's blown them all.

Percy kisses him again. Passionately. Charlie begins to respond, and they sink down onto the sand. Diana pops her head over the dune to watch. She may moan a little.

CHARLIE

Did you hear something?

PERCY

Probably just a seagull squawking.

Percy begins to make love to Charlie. Charlie stops him.

CHARLIE

No, Percy. I can't do this now.

Charlie gets up and walks to the house, his back to the dune. Diana and Percy exchange glances, and he shrugs.

PERCY

Where are you going?

CHARLIE

I'm going back to New York. Before it's too late.

PERCY

Too late?

CHARLIE

I can just make the next flight to Boston, and then take the first Acela to New York in the morning.

PERCY

I don't understand.

CHARLIE

I just have to get out of here.

PERCY

Do I have time to pack at least?

CHARLIE

I'm going back alone.

PERCY

WHAT?

CHARLIE

Don't follow me. Please, Percy. Don't follow me.

Charlie exits into the house. Diana pops up from behind the dune.

DIANA

What the hell just happened?

PERCY

I don't know. He's been acting weird all night.

DIANA

Don't fuck this up, Percy.

PERCY

Why are making this my fault! You knew he was into that Ed guy the whole time. We never really stood a chance.

DIANA

Oh my God, you've fallen for him, haven't you?

PERCY

No, I haven't.

He heads toward the house.

DIANA

Where are you going?

PERCY

I'm going to try and salvage this mess before it blows up in our faces.

(Heading towards the house, he calls out to Charlie.)

Charlie, wait up!

He exits.

DIANA

Goddammit.

She exits.

The Information Bar reads: Monday May 7, 4:52 AM EST. There is no Facebook projection or comment.

ANNOUNCER

Amtrak Acela #2151 with limited service from Boston Back Bay to Washington DC, stopping at Providence, Rhode Island, New Haven, Connecticut, New York, New York, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Baltimore Maryland, and Washington DC, now boarding Track 2.

Dark, low-level lighting makes it hard to see the signage on both the platform and the train. We can just make out Charlie and A Conductor Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't, but who is really The Detective Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

It's all set. NYPD will be waiting to arrest them in New York.

CHARLIE

You're sure they'll be on the train?

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

They already are. Three cars back. With all the Yalies.

CHARLIE

And you're sure I'll be safe?

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Do you trust me, Charlie?

CHARLIE

No.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Yer going to have to. Now remember: when they come looking for ya keep the conversation simple. And for God's sake don't let either one of them know ya know what ya know, because if they know ya know what ya know, it'll be...

(He mimes slitting his throat.)

Ya know?

CHARLIE

I wish you'd never told me any of this yesterday at the market. You always ruin everything for me, Benny. 25 years ago. Last month. Yesterday.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Just get on the damn train. And remember, I'll be in the next car, watching everything.

CHARLIE

I hope so.

Charlie exits. The Detective takes out his phone.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Windsor's getting into the Quiet car now. Wait until the train leaves New Haven, then go.

The Information Bar reads: Monday May 6, 7:06 AM EST. There is no Facebook page projected. As we are in the quiet car, it's very quiet, and as it is very early in the morning, only low level lighting and whatever spills in from the early dawn outside. We hear a station stop announced.

ANNOUNCER

This station is New Haven. New Haven Connecticut. The next stop will be New York Penn Station. New York Penn Station, 1 hour 40 minutes.

Charlie is sitting by himself, looking miserable. He has his phone in his hand, trying to decide whether or not to make a call. He does.

CHARLIE

(Whispering.)

Hey, Ed, I know it's early, I know you're mad at me, but call me when you get this message. I really need to talk to you.

DISGRUNTLED PASSENGER

Hey, Buddy, this is the quiet car. I'm trying to get some sleep.

CHARLIE

(Even more softly.)

Call me? Please?

DISGRUNTLED PASSENGER

Buddy! I asked you once!

CHARLIE

(To himself.)

Crank.

DISGRUNTLED PASSENGER

Don't make me tell you again!

CHARLIE

You couldn't possibly have heard that.

Diana pops up from behind a seat.

DIANA

Oh, but I did, Charlie. Surprise, darling!

CHARLIE

Diana!

DIANA

What are you doing here? I thought everything was going so well between you and Percy.

CHARLIE

I... uhm... I changed my mind.

DIANA

Oh, but you two seemed made for each other! And I have so many wonderful ideas for your apartment!

Charlie snaps. He knows he shouldn't, but he snaps.

CHARLIE

Why, Diana? Why did you and Percy do this to me?

DIANA

What? What did we do except give you a fun time and a new lease on life?

CHARLIE

Don't play this game with me. We both know you and Percy killed Mark.

DIANA

Oh, Charlie. You've found out.

CHARLIE

Yes, I've found out. And I don't want any part in this sick, twisted little game you two are playing.

DIANA

(Calmly, glacially.)

I really hate this. I mean that I know you know, Charlie. And you know I know you know. And you know what that means, Percy.

Percy pops up from behind another seat.

PERCY

No. I won't do it, Diana. Not this time.

DIANA

Oh yes darling, you will. And you know you will.

PERCY

No. I won't.

(To Charlie.)

Charlie? Did you grow up feeling secure that your mother loved you? I mean, despite her egregiously naming you Charles Windsor?

CHARLIE

I guess so. What has this got to do with anything?

PERCY

I did not. My mother... Miriam Estelle Tanenbaum's love, if there was any at all, was entirely conditional. No sane mother would ask a child to do the things I was required to do to please Diana...

DIANA

Stop stalling, Percy, and take care of this now.

CHARLIE

What are you trying to tell me? Is Diana a lesbian?

(To Diana.)

Were you his mother's lover?

DIANA

(Laughing.)

Hardly. I just like watching two men have butt sex. And I don't like when they find out I've been watching.

CHARLIE

YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING ME AND PERCY!?!

DIANA

You didn't know?

CHARLIE

I didn't know.

PERCY

I told you he didn't know.

DIANA

Well, he knows now. And he knows entirely too much. Percy? Now.

PERCY

No. Not this time. Run, Charlie.

DIANA

Oh, Percy, darling, I did warn you, and you have no idea how sad this makes me. But you give me no choice.

She pulls out a knife and slits Percy's throat.

CHARLIE

JESUS CHRIST ON THE CROSS!

DIANA

(To Charlie, as Percy dies.)

Do you have any idea how difficult it is to kill your own son?

CHARLIE

Oh my God. *You're* Miriam Estelle Tanenbaum?

DIANA

I *was* Miriam Estelle Tanenbaum. Once. And Percy? Yes, he was my son. My darling, beautiful, little bastard son.

(As she smooths Percy's hair.)

A husband or two is easy, but getting rid of your own flesh and blood?

(To Charlie.)

It's the hardest thing I've ever had to do. This is so not how I wanted it to go, Charlie. I like you, a lot. Our affair with Percy was so enjoyable, and I hoped you'd be around a while longer than most.

(She sighs.)

But... Percy was right: I've been left with no other choices, have I? I am sorry Charlie. Goodbye, darling.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

(Putting his hand on Charlie's shoulder.)

I'm the best shot in New York. I wouldn't have let that happen. But I told ya not to let either of them know ya knew what ya know.

CHARLIE

I know. I lost my head. I'm sorry.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

(Looking out the window.)

I'd ask if ya wanna press charges, but I guess it's too late. Ain't much left to arrest, now.

(Miming someone drowning.)

Hard to swim with a slit throat or a bullet in yer leg. Gurgle, gurgle, gurgle, glug glug glug brbrbrbrbrb. Pfft. Gone.

(Stopping Charlie from looking.)

Ya better sit down, you look kinda wonky.

Charlie sits, shellshocked.

CHARLIE

(To himself.)

Ed was right. I should've listened to him. He was right about her. And Percy. And everything! I can't believe I slept with the man who killed Mark.

(Looking at the Detective.)

I wish you'd never found me on Growlr, Benny. I wish I'd never slept with you either. I wish after you unfriended me you'd just left me alone.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Yeah, I'm sorry about that unfriending thing, but ya understand why I had to, right? Once I realized ya was that dead guy's husband... I was tryin' to protect ya. Trust me, I wanted to keep ya out of the whole thing, but then ya had to go and get involved with her and that son of hers, and I had no choice.

CHARLIE

You never told me she was watching me and Percy... you know.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

I do. But I didn't want to freak you out any more than I had to.

He giggles a little.

CHARLIE

What the hell is so funny?

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

I'm sorry. I was just thinking: Charles and Diana. It really ain't a good combination, is it?

CHARLIE

Her real name was Miriam Estelle Tanenbaum.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Yes, I know. I'm a detective. Remember? Look, Charlie, I gotta go and see if we can find the bodies. You gonna be okay?

CHARLIE

Yeah. I suppose I should thank you for saving my life.

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

When we get back to New York and this is all over... do you think... well, maybe we could go out to dinner, or something?

CHARLIE

I don't think so, Benny. I'm grateful, but... well... uhm...

DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED
BUT ISN'T

Don't say it. I understand... But would you mind if I sent you another Facebook friend request at least? I promise I won't unfriend ya again.

Charlie looks at the Detective, aghast, and instinctively moves away from him.

The Information Bar reads: Friday May 10, 11:35 PM. EST. Once again, there is no Facebook page check-in, as Ed just doesn't do "check-ins" on Facebook.

Ed is at the bar, quietly sipping his Red Wine. Jordan is polishing a few glasses. Charlie enters and sits next to Ed.

CHARLIE

(To Jordan.)

Beefeater Gibson, straight up, Jordan.

JORDAN

Good to see you, Charlie.

CHARLIE

(To Ed.)

Hey.

ED

Hello.

CHARLIE

You never returned my calls.

ED

No.

CHARLIE

Why? Didn't you listen to my voicemails? I told you that you were right about her.

ED

So she's dead?

CHARLIE

Yes.

ED

That Percy fella too?

CHARLIE

Yes.

ED

That's good. You'd have thought a juicy story like that would've been all over the news.

CHARLIE

Benny said it's because a voyeuristic mother planting cameras and killing husbands would be too much negative publicity for HGTV so they had it all hushed up.

ED

So, did you two Facebook Friend again?

Who two?
CHARLIE

You and Benny.
ED

No.
CHARLIE

So you're not going to rekindle...
ED

NO, you doofus!
CHARLIE

Doofus? You haven't called me a doofus since 1978.
ED

I probably should have. I heard *Crazy For Abe* is closing.
CHARLIE

There's not enough box-office to justify letting Roseanne face the New York Times.
ED

Yeah, I read All That Chat. I'm sorry, Ed.
CHARLIE

It happens. Shows close. I got almost three years out of it. That's longer than most shows I've been in. Except *Mamma Mia*.
ED

No, I mean I'm sorry. About... everything.
CHARLIE

Yeah, okay.
ED

You're gonna fuck this up, Ed. He's trying.
JORDAN

Mind your own business, Jordan.
ED

Ed...
CHARLIE

ED

I have to go. Two shows tomorrow.

ED, CHARLIE, AND JORDAN

And two on Sunday.

ED

I haven't missed one yet, no sense starting now. Look, Charlie... I've been asked to play Lincoln in the London production. Emma Thompson is going to play Mary, and she asked for me. No one says no to Emma.

CHARLIE

You're going to London?

ED

There's nothing to keep me in New York now.

CHARLIE

Ed, please? Can't we talk?

ED

I really don't see the point.

JORDAN

Jesus, Ed, don't be an ass.

ED

Goodnight, Charlie. Goodnight, Jordan.

Slapping his customary 20 on the bar, Ed turns to leave.

JORDAN

(Leaning over the bar and pushing Charlie.)

Say something, you idiot!

CHARLIE

I deleted my Facebook account!

Ed stops, then slowly walks toward him.

ED

Oh. I thought you unfriended me.

CHARLIE

You thought I unfriended you?

I thought you unfriended me.

ED

Because...

CHARLIE

You were acting like a jerk?

ED

We both acted like jerks, Ed.

CHARLIE

Fair enough.

ED

I put my apartment on the market today. I'm looking for a new place.

CHARLIE

Yeah. So?

ED

There's a Joe Allen in London, Ed.

CHARLIE

Yes. There is.

ED

(Sitting, he smiles awkwardly at Charlie.)

So...

CHARLIE

So...

ED

Did she really... watch?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

ED

Icky. Really icky.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

ED

(With a slight, embarrassed smile.)

Interesting.

CHARLIE

I don't suppose you want to watch any of it? That weird detective gave me the files...

ED

GOD NO! I'd rather... experience it for myself.

He leans in to kiss Charlie.

CHARLIE

It's about time.

ED

Shut up and let me kiss you.

They kiss. Tenderly. Passionately.

JORDAN

(To himself.)

Thank heaven.

(Serving up *two* Martinis.)

Fuck your two shows tomorrow, Ed. Concentrate on tonight.

Charlie and Ed reach for their drinks with one hand, and take each other's other hand under the bar counter, a la *South Pacific*, as the lights fade.

The Information Bar reads: Saturday May 11, 7:00 AM. A projection of HGTV's Facebook page. The image is of Diana holding one of those busts of Hemingway. The comment is "We here at HGTV mourn the unexpected passing of our own "Goddess Of The Hunt," Diana Black-White. Rest in peace, wherever you are, as you search for treasures through time and space for all eternity."

EPILOGUE:

The Information Bar reads: Saturday August 25, 5:15 PM EST. We hear the sound of surf, and perhaps a gull or two. A Facebook page for a "Lucina Modenhauer" is projected.

She has checked-in to Sarasota, Florida, and tagged a “Janus Vesta.” The image is a map of the Sarasota waterfront. Her comment is: “Hello from Sarasota, my delightful new darlings. Thank you for supporting my fabulously successful antique store and gift shop, “Treasures From The Hunt.” Barely a month old, and we’re packed all day, every day! Just remember, that sea glass you see in a necklace tomorrow may have washed up on the beach today.” The store is tagged.

The pinkish-orange glow of late afternoon peeks through palm-fronds and washes over a woman with jet-black Edna Mode-style hair sitting on a chic-black beach towel. She is wearing huge Carrie Donovan sunglasses and a vivid Diana Vreeland-red caftan, one foot is in a boot-casing, and she has a cane by her side. Sitting next to her is a young-ish man, also wearing sunglasses. He has platinum hair, and is wearing black jeans with rolled up cuffs, black loafers without socks, and most noticeably: a black turtleneck. He is looking over her shoulder as she is typing her Facebook post into her phone.

PERCY

Fabulously successful antique store? It’s a junk shop in a South Florida strip mall, Diana, and we’ve been bleeding money since you opened the place.

DIANA

Most of my new friends don’t know that. Write it, and they’ll believe it. And we’re Lucina and Janus now. Remember that.

PERCY

Of all the Godforsaken places we could have fled, you had to pick Sarasota in August? I’m dying. For real this time! This humidity is stickier than that damned detective.

DIANA

Yeah, well, thank God we got to him before they got us to the morgue.

PERCY

Yeah. And for the record: Benny Briscoe is one lousy lay.

DIANA

One lousy lay with a cop in New York has bought us a passport to lots of older, rich, good-looking gay men in Sarasota.

PERCY

In August!

He starts to remove his turtleneck.

DIANA

Don't you dare take that off! You know we have to keep your wound hidden until the plastic surgeon finishes hiding the scar.

PERCY

Yeah, what the hell were you thinking using the real knife on me? That fucking hurt!

DIANA

I barely scratched you.

PERCY

I bled for an hour.

DIANA

You fucked up that whole Charlie thing. You nearly wrecked the family firm.

PERCY

Oh please, your guilt about that Mark mess nearly wrecked the family firm.

DIANA

You caused that Mark mess!

PERCY

Might I remind you I rectified that situation? It was my expertise that caused that light to fall on that nosy bull-dyke assistant when they were filming those intros for your show.

DIANA

Poor Tonia Lee. I told her so many times: "Never touch the Hemingways!" But she just couldn't keep her hands off a bust. So much unpleasantness could have been avoided if you and your sister / had only

PERCY

/ Step-sister /

DIANA

/ STEP-SISTER had only listened to your mother.

PERCY

And if you had only listened to me and not gotten HGTV to hire her after we executed Plan B on *her* father...

DIANA

I felt bad leaving her an orphan like that. Poor kid.

PERCY

You're too kind.

DIANA

I am. It's my one flaw. Thank God you didn't miss that time too. It could have been me who got squashed like a cockroach. And then *you'd* have been an orphan.

PERCY

I'm 35. It was a risk I was willing to take.

DIANA

Ass.

PERCY

Mother.

Diana suddenly zooms in on something (or someone).

DIANA

Shhh. What do you think of that one?

PERCY

He's cute enough, I guess. But... wait... nope. He's got a boyfriend and a couple of kids. See?

DIANA

Dammit. Keep your eyes peeled. We're on the hunt again, darling.

The lights fade on the two of them sitting there like vultures, searching intently for their next meal ticket.

END OF PLAY