The Importance of Eating Earnest

A Play in Two Acts

By

Ben Plopper

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**The Importance of Eating Earnest** had its world premiere at the Obsidian Theater in Houston, TX, by Cone Man Running Productions, featuring the following cast:

(in order of appearance.)

Laura Weathersby Megan Nix

Catherine Klingerman Ruth McCleskey

Earnest (Zombie Houseboy.) Kamran Taherpour

Daniel Weathersby Jonathan Moonen

William Klingerman Eddie Rodriguez

Doctor / Police Officer Bob Galley

Vivian / Voice of Radio News Anchor Cassandra Austen

and

Narrator Bryan Maynard

Tech Josh Tiberius Baker

**The Importance of Eating Earnest** received its 2nd production in Houston, TX, also by Cone Man Running Productions, featuring the following cast:

(in order of appearance.)

Laura Weathersby Analia McEnelly

Catherine Klingerman Nicole Nesson

Earnest (Zombie Houseboy.) Dano Colon

Daniel Weathersby Corey Barron

William Klingerman Ryan Kelly

Doctor / Police Officer John Raley

Vivian / Voice of Radio News Anchor Adina Owen

and

Narrator Bryan Maynard

**Setting**

The apartment living room of DANIEL and LAURA WEATHERSBY is a posh, high-rise type place. There is a couch (that will be flopped down upon a lot, so make sure it’s sturdy) and a chair, stage right. Stage left has a table and six chairs. There’s a liquor cabinet along the back wall with a bottle of brandy and several glasses. On the right side, there is a table with a stereo/radio. There’s a phone and a stack of mail on an end table. Doors lead to the outside hallway, the kitchen, a coat closet, and the bedroom. The coat closet door opens so that people at the dining room table can’t see into the closet. The art is the kind of art that people with money but no sense of taste purchase.

**Date**

Modern day. Or maybe 28 days later than modern day. Afternoon, not night or dawn. Everyone is very British, especially if their British accents are bad. It’s better if those accents are terrible.

**Characters\***

* DANIEL WEATHERSBY, early 30s, male - high-powered lawyer. LAURA’s husband. Kind of a dickhead.
* LAURA WEATHERSBY, late 20s, female – DANIEL’s wife, socialite, and general drain on Daniel’s finances.
* CATHERINE KLINGERMANN, female, late 30s – Neighbor to the WEATHERSBY’s and WILLIAM’s wife, snobbish boor, and could be called a “Machiavellian manipulator,” if Machiavelli was a mentally stunted chimp.
* WILLIAM KLINGERMANN, male, mid-40s - CATHERINE’s husband, banker, and intellectual midget.
* EARNEST, THE REPLACEMENT HOUSEBOY, male, early 30s - A poor sap in the wrong place at the wrong time. Also, a brain-eating ZOMBIE.
* VIVIAN, female, early 20s, busty - DANIEL’s secretary, and the only decent person in this thing, which means she’s the first to be zombie food. Can also be the NEWS ANCHOR.
* A DOCTOR, male, 40s - Serves no purpose but to be a feast for said brain-eating zombie. Can be the same actor as the POLICE OFFICER.
* A POLICE OFFICER, male, 40s - Because these things, apparently need one. Must be able to speak (or fake) an unintelligible Cockney accent. Can be the same actor as the DOCTOR.
* NARRATOR, male or female, British and proper. Like a nature show narrator. Segments can be recorded in advance and played at specific moments.
* NEWS ANCHOR, female, early 20s – Heard on a radio. Can be the same actress as VIVIAN.

**\* NOTE:** The author of this play gives explicit permission to change the sexual orientation/gender/race of characters where feasible, necessary, or desired in the script. These can be same-sex couples, transgendered or non-binary couples, people of color, etc., with appropriate minor adjustments to the script as needed (changing referenced male body parts to female body parts as appropriate, for example). Also, please consider that, when casting male or female characters, male or female performers should be considered as they prefer to present; transgendered or non-binary performers should *never* be prevented from portraying characters in this play for which they identify, or be prevented from playing roles that specify genders.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF**

**EATING ERNEST**

**ACT I**

*The living room apartment is currently empty, but we can hear LAURA in the kitchen, humming a tune. A news broadcast is playing from the stereo. It sounds dreadfully important.*

**NEWS ANNOUNCER**. The constables are asking citizens to stay off the streets and in their homes. Again, reports are coming in from around the city that bands of what appear to be homicidal cannibals are roaming the streets, killing and *eating* the brains of anyone they come across. The government is vehemently denying that the murderous hoards have anything to do with an explosion at a secret government test lab that was reported in the tabloids, or with the unexpected return of the deep space probe Hermes. *(LAURA comes out of the kitchen carrying a tray of snacks, still humming her tune.)* We will continue to report on this developing apoc-

**LAURA***. (Laura turns off the radio.)* Oh the news these days. So depressing. If it’s not one crisis, it’s another. War in some desert land, natural disasters, celebrity divorces-*(There is a knock at the door.)* Catherine, is that you?

**CATHERINE.** *(Offstage.)* Who else would it be darling?

**LAURA**. Oh do come in!

**CATHERINE.** *(CATHERINE enters from the outer hall.)* I heard voices. Were you talking with someone?

**LAURA.** It was just the news announcer on the radio. I turned the blasted thing off. Doom and gloom ‘round the clock, you know?

**CATHERINE.** Yes, it’s a shame, really. The news is almost always about the poor of this country, or the poor of some other country, and who really wants to concern themselves with the self-inflicted plight of *those* dirty people? We have so many more important things to worry ourselves over. *(Noticing the tray.)* Oh, pâté. My favorite! *(Eating some.)* I love it when you host our little “bitch sessions.” You have such an understanding of life’s little luxuries.

**LAURA.** Thank you, dear. Although I had to put it together on my own as our regular houseboy didn’t come in today.

**CATHERINE.** Oh, do you mean that hunky Latin number... what was his name?

**LAURA.** Carlos.

**CATHERINE.** The quality of hired help these days is miserable.

**LAURA.** I agree. I called his agency for a replacement, but no one answered. I had to leave an unhappy message on their machine.

**CATHERINE.** No respectable woman of society should have to prepare her own pâté. *(Eats a biscuit covered in pâté.)* But on to critical matters... how is Daniel?

**LAURA.** *(Looks distracted.)* Oh you know, busy as usual. Long hours at the office, usually quite exhausted when he comes home. He’s often in bed before... you know.

**CATHERINE.** My dear, welcome to the life of a married woman.

**LAURA.** I didn’t know the flame would die out so soon. Before we got married, there was so much passion. Sometimes we’d play games, where I was a lonely rich girl and he an unwashed tramp, and... you don’t want to hear this do you?

**CATHERINE.** *(Fanning herself.)* Please! My William lost that fire a long, long time ago.

**LAURA.** Speaking of your husband, how *is* William?

**CATHERINE.** *(Rolling her eyes.)* Oh, you know, as boring as ever, and still married to that financial institution. I sometimes feel neglected – by Bill at least – but whatever keeps the money rolling in. A lonely woman can purchase a lot to distract herself.

**LAURA.** *(Blurting; upset.)* Daniel’s having an affair!

**CATHERINE.**  *(Concerned.)* What? Darling, are you certain?

**LAURA.** Yes. I mean, well, not exactly, no. A woman can just tell these things. Why has he suddenly stopped finding me attractive? Why the late hours? I’ve seen the shows and the movies, and I know that it can only mean that he’s been rogering someone behind my back. The only person he should be rogering behind her back is me! Well... er... I mean... *(Flustered and embarrassed.)* I don’t mean “behind my back”... that is to say... not that we’re...

**CATHERINE.** Say no more. I shan’t hear it! My dear, I believe you are overreacting.

**LAURA.** I’m sorry, but it’s true! It has to be! Why else would Daniel not be interested in this? *(Gestures to herself.)* I’m quite a piece of work.

**CATHERINE.** Do you have anything substantial? Another woman’s unmentionables in your laundry perhaps? Unexplained expenses? Phone calls in the middle of the night with no one on the other end?

**LAURA.** *(Breaking down.)* No. Oh but Catherine I just *know*.

**CATHERINE.** *(Patting Laura’s back.)* There, there, dear... it’s not as if you’re the first woman to have a husband cheat on her.

**LAURA.** But *(Sob.)* I *(Sob.)* love *(Sob.)* him!

**CATHERINE.** And I’m sure he loves you, but he just needs something a little spicy, that’s all.

**LAURA.** *(Bawls.)* I thought I *was* spicy! Look at these! *(Grabbing her breasts.)* They’re perfect!

**CATHERINE.** The best money can buy. Men are wild beasts, you know, and it’s hard for them to settle down with just one woman. Look at how they eat? Do you ever see a man eat just the main course? No. Always sampling this and that, never satisfied with what’s on his plate. It’s life, you know. *(CATHERINE lets LAURA bawl, and boy does she ever.)* If you’re so sure he’s cheating, why don’t you just get revenge?

**LAURA.** *(Wiping snot from her face.)* What do you mean?

**CATHERINE.** If he’s taken a mistress – and I’m not saying that he has, mind – *you* could take a lover, too. You could put the spice back in your *own* bed, and if you get caught, what will Daniel say? If he’s got a mistress on the side, why he’ll say nothing, that’s what!

**LAURA.** *(Shocked.)* I can’t cheat on Daniel.

**CATHERINE.** And why not?

**LAURA.** I took a vow. To love him and only him. Before God and everything. *(Gasps.)* Oh, and in front of all our friends and family! When they find out that we’re through, everyone will say the most horrid things! *(Louder gasp.)* They’ll want to take back their gifts. Catherine, you *can’t* let them take away all the lovely things they gave us! *(Sobbing.)*

**CATHERINE.** There, there... they won’t take their things back, dear. *(Still, Catherine looks at one of the paintings on the wall, like maybe she’s considering it.)* Tell me, didn’t Daniel take the same vow as you?

**LAURA.** Well... yes.

**CATHERINE.** Before the same God?

**LAURA.** I suppose he did.

**CATHERINE.** And yet he has let his “little” head steer him to adultery.

**LAURA.** It’s not little.

**CATHERINE.** I know.

**LAURA.** You what?

**CATHERINE.** Just sympathizing with you darling. Comforting you.

**LAURA.** I just don’t think I can cheat on him, Catherine. I’m not that kind of woman.

**CATHERINE.** I see. Hmm... Well, you could get a divorce, but those can be unpleasant. My first husband fought for everything. But I got him good in the end. And that’s what I mean -- revenge can be very satisfying. Men understand little else.

**LAURA.** *(Sniffling.)* I would rather confront him and try to make it work. I can be more adventurous, Catherine. I really can. *(Bashful.)* I could... well, I could do different things... in the bedroom. There’s this thing that he wanted to try once, with restraints, and these little clips that... *(Stopping.)* Oh dear, there I go again.

**CATHERINE.** *(Hot and bothered.)* No need to stop on my account.

**LAURA.** No, I shan’t divorce Daniel. I’ll just come right out and say what I need to say. In fact, I’ll call him at work right now. *(Laura heads over to the phone and dials. She listens for a moment, then frowns.)* Well, that’s just wonderful. The lines are busy.

**CATHERINE.** It’s probably for the best. Men don’t react well to confrontation. He would likely deny the accusation and get angry with *you*. Somehow, he’ll try and make it *your* fault. *You* neglected *him*; *you* didn’t attend to *his* needs, et cetera.

**LAURA.** *(Shocked.)* How could he be angry with me? *He* is completely at fault, not me! I’m the vic- vic- *(Laura starts sobbing again; seriously, the girl is nothing but waterworks. She finally plops down on the couch, defeated.)* Oh Catherine, what am I going to do?

**CATHERINE.** *(Has an idea.)* You say you absolutely won’t have an affair?

**LAURA.**

Not even if the world was ending.

**CATHERINE.** Would you *pretend* to have one?

**LAURA.** What?

**CATHERINE.** Pretend. Put on a farce. *(Thinking.)* You’d have to make it obvious, but not too obvious. You’d need to be secretive and suspicious, but if you’re *too* secretive, he’ll pick up on that, and think you’re playing a game.

**LAURA.**

This sounds overly complicated.

**CATHERINE.** Not really. Look, if he’s innocent, he’ll be genuinely upset and you can tell him it was for his benefit that you faked the affair. If he has a mistress, then he won’t say anything about it at all. He’ll probably pretend to be oblivious to your affair completely. If he doesn’t react at all, then you’ll *know* he’s been cheating on you.

**LAURA.** If he *doesn’t* react?

**CATHERINE.** Precisely.

**LAURA.** And then what?

**CATHERINE.** Then I say you go ahead and have a little fun of your own. Many marriages continue with one or both of the partners being unfaithful. It’s not at all unheard of.

**LAURA.** I guess you *would* know about that.

**CATHERINE.** *(Suspicious.)* What do you mean by that?

**LAURA.** Nothing. Listen, I don’t think I can do this.

**CATHERINE.**  *(Shaking off her suspicion.)* It’s simple. All you really need is a man that you can pin it on. A dupe, to pose as your “secret lover.”

**LAURA.** *(Discouraged.)* Where will I find a man to agree to that? *(Pointing at the front door.)* Men just don’t come bursting through the front door, you know. *(And yet, this is just what happens. A gaunt ZOMBIE in tattered clothes bursts through the front door. It is a horror to behold! It has come to eat brains! God save us a-.)*

**LAURA.**

You must be the replacement houseboy. Didn’t your agency teach you to knock before entering a residence?

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans.)*

**LAURA.** *(Dries her eyes and blows her nose.)* And you don’t look well. If you’re sick, you should turn right around and go home. I’ll not have a sick houseboy infecting the rest of us with whatever plague it is you’re carrying.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Groans.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Takes Laura aside.)* Use *him*.

**LAURA**. What? Oh lord, no. Look at him! *(If it’s possible, the Zombie seems to take that as an insult.)*

**CATHERINE.** He’s a little pale, and scrawny, yes, but he’ll do in a pinch. *(The Zombie looks down at himself. He* is *insulted.)* Besides, you can tell him that if he doesn’t comply with your wishes, you shall tell his agency how rude he was. These immigrants are so poor anyway; they can’t *afford* to lose their jobs. It’s perfect!

**NARRATOR.** *(Preceded by a DING.)* Ladies and gentlemen, I am your narrator for this evening. From time-to-time, I will provide helpful commentary. In this case, I will happily inform you that zombie movies have been used as a sort of “social commentary.” Zombies often stand in for rampant consumerism, racism, or – in this case – xenophobia and anti-immigration, though these two women aren’t the kind to realize the irony of their mistaking a zombie for an immigrant, a class of people they likely consider as less than human.

**LAURA.** *(Looking back at the Zombie.)* I don’t know, Catherine. Are you sure there isn’t another way?

**CATHERINE.** Sure I’m sure. It’s believable. I’ve seen you looking at Carlos hungrily. *(The Zombie looks at the women hungrily, too.)*

**LAURA.** *(Stammering.)* I... I did no such thing.

**CATHERINE.** Oh yes you did. You can hide those looks from a man, but never from another woman. *(To Zombie.)* You... houseboy... come here.

**ZOMBIE.** *(The Zombie moans and shuffles towards the two women, arms outstretched, ready to feast. Just as it’s upon them, Catherine points to the couch.)*

**CATHERINE**. Sit. *(The Zombie does.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* To the zombie, who has an insatiable hunger for human brains, this is equivalent to you taking orders from your sandwich.

**CATHERINE**. Your behavior today, young man, is unforgivable.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Hurt groan.)*

**CATHERINE.** Let me finish. You have left my friend in the lurch when she very much needed your help today. *(Speaking of “lurching,” the Zombie tries to stand - to feast - but Catherine pushes him back down.)* You sit there until I say you can stand. You are in big trouble, and if you don’t do what I ask, we’ll tell your agency of your horrid behavior, and your... dare I say, *unprofessional* appearance. We’re very influential people, you know. Quite well respected.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Listens, raptly.)*

**LAURA.** I’m having second thoughts. Can’t we just let him do what he’s come here to do and come up with something else? *(The Zombie is hopeful, and starts to rise, ready again to eat.)*

**CATHERINE**. Nonsense. *(She pushes the Zombie back down on the couch and addresses it.)* Now, here’s what you are going to do. *(The Zombie gets increasingly confused over this next part.)* You are going to be her lover, only you won’t *really* be her lover, but you will *pretend* to be her lover so her husband – who we suspect has a lover – will admit that he has a lover, ditch *his* lover, and take her back as his rightful lover. Got it?

**LAURA.** No.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Confused moan.)*

**CATHERINE.** Not you. Him. *(The Zombie is trying to puzzle this all out. Laura pulls Catherine aside.)*

**LAURA.** I’m dreadfully confused, and this seems awfully risky. Daniel’s got a good set of brains in his head. *(The Zombie looks up at “brains”.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Though commonly associated with zombies, the idea that zombies feast on brains was introduced with Dan O’Bannon’s movie, *The Return of the Living Dead,* in 1985, seventeen years after George Romero’s seminal *Night of the Living Dead*. Additionally, please prepare for the “brains” jokes to be abused to the point that you will regret your purchase of a ticket this evening.

**LAURA.** He’ll see right through this.

**CATHERINE.** Don’t sell yourself short, dear. You’ve got quite a set of brains yourself.

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* I warned you. *(The Zombie hears that Laura’s got a good set of brains, and slowly rises, shambling towards the women.)*

**CATHERINE.** Now, just try to work it out.

**LAURA.** *(Sighs as the Zombie gets closer to her.)* I pretend to have an affair with the houseboy, *(Closer.)* but not so obviously that Daniel suspects that I’m really trying to convince him that I’m having an affair when I’m not. *(Closer.)*

**CATHERINE**. Correct so far.

**LAURA***. (Slowly.)* So I pretend I’m *not* pretending to have an affair subtly enough that Daniel really thinks I’m having an affair. *(Closer.)* And then when he suspects I’m having an affair that I’m not having, *(Braaaaaiiiiinnnnnssss.)* but trying to fool him into thinking I’m having while not tipping him off that I’m fooling him into thinking I’m having the affair, he’ll either yell at me *(The Zombie is in biting range.)* or tip his hat to his own affair, in which case I can confront him about his affair and he’ll have to end his affair and never stray again?

**CATHERINE.** Don’t forget that if he *doesn’t* react at all, then that is all but admitting to his affair.

**LAURA.** Yes... right... so if he doesn’t react to my pretend affair then I know that his affair is a *real* affair and... *(God, it’s right there! Big pause from LAURA. Big dramatic tension.)* Oh, I *haven’t* the brains for this after all! *(The Zombie, about to take a bite, hears that she hasn’t the brains for it and takes it literally, stopping its advance.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Zombies are notorious for their inability to grasp idioms, and tend to take figures of speech quite literally. (*Dejected, the Zombie considers its options.)*

**CATHERINE.** Dear if *I* have the brains for it, *(Big ah-HA! for the Zombie who starts for Catherine’s tasty brains.)* then you do, too. *(Wait! Back to Laura’s brains maybe? No first Catherine’s brains then the other one. Decisions, decisions.)*

**LAURA.** *(Exasperated.)* Oh you don’t have the brains for this either! *(Damn! Foiled again.)* You’re just making things up. *(She slumps down on the couch, crosses her arms and scowls. The Zombie mimics her exactly.)*

**CATHERINE***. (Giving up.)* Well, if you’re going to be that way about it, then I’ve got half a mind to not help you. *(The Zombie holds up one finger, bends it at the knuckle to indicate that half a mind is better than no mind. Catherine, in a huff, storms away from the Zombie – who tries to lunge for her, but only catches empty air – and leaves.)*

**LAURA***. (Shouting.)* Yes, you do that! *(To herself.)* You should mind your own business anyway.

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* The zombie is quite confused by this development. To the predatory zombie, this should be easy. Find brains, catch brains, eat brains. Why all this trouble? Naturally, as happens with most apex predators, confusing situations result in a form of catatonia and susceptibility to suggestion.

**LAURA.** *(Looks over at the Zombie.)* Well, you’re still here, aren’t you? *(The Zombie looks over at her, confused. She sighs.)* Maybe she’s got the right of it. It might be fun to make that bastard sweat a little, eh? Are you game, little houseboy? *(The Zombie sits next to her, still flummoxed.)* So, you’re going to pretend to be my lover, right? *(She looks him over, somewhat disgusted... he is, after all, a walking corpse, but she hasn’t bothered to notice that, else there would be screaming and running and eating of brains.)* Well, I’m not sure it’s believable that *you’d* be my lover, but you’ll have to do. So, how shall we do this? *(The Zombie starts to reach for her, abandoning logic and going for brains. Laura is a little shocked by his movements and pushes against him.)* My, aren’t *we* getting into this whole lover thing. You’re supposed to pretend while my husband is here, not now! *(Suddenly, the front door opens, and in walks DANIEL, briefcase in hand. Laura pushes the Zombie off her and jumps up from the couch. The Zombie falls over, again narrowly missing a snack. Laura tries to look guilty, but not too guilty.)*

**DANIEL.** Hello my dear.

**LAURA.** *(Out of breath.)* Oh... uh... hello my loving husband. You’re home early. *(To Zombie, hushed.)* I don’t know how you knew he was coming, but spot on! *(To Daniel.)* Whatever is the reason for this sudden, and might I add wholly unexpected return where you might have caught me in a terribly *compromising* position?

**DANIEL.** Well, the office was completely devoid of life, today. Wall-to-wall shambling corpses.

**LAURA.** What?

**DANIEL.** Dear, you know how Mondays are. Everyone shuffling about, moaning and groaning until they get their coffee.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans and groans.)*

**DANIEL.** Exactly. *(Puts away his coat.)* Allen wasn’t in today. Would you believe that some fellow bit him last night, and he was feeling rather ill and didn’t--*(Noticing Zombie.)* Who’s that?

**LAURA***. (Feigning guilt.)* Him? Oh, he’s just a replacement houseboy from the service. The other one didn’t come in today? Nothing at all untoward was going on here, I assure you!

**DANIEL**. That’s... great. Raul wasn’t here?

**LAURA.** You mean Carlos.

**DANIEL.** Carlos, Raul, Paco... whatever. It’s a shame, as I rather liked that boy. Well-mannered he was.  *(To Zombie.)* How about you? What kind of experience do you have keeping house? Do you have a résumé?

**ZOMBIE.** *(Groans.)*

**DANIEL.** I see. Not feeling talkative today, I understand. I suppose it’s a Monday for you too, eh? Come to think of it, you do look under the weather. There must be a bug going ‘round.

**LAURA.** *(Disappointed.)* Aren’t you the least bit curious as to what the new houseboy and I were doing on the couch?

**DANIEL***. (Smiling.)*

Telling him how you’d like him to service you no doubt.

**LAURA.** *(Mock anger.)* How dare you suggest-

**DANIEL.** *(Oblivious.)* I know you’re very picky about how you like your eggs in the mornings, and what silver you prefer the table set with. *(Laura pouts; this doesn’t look like it’s working. The Zombie is sizing up Daniel. Seems like a smart guy, must have some tasty brains in there.)* Be sure and tell our new help to serve dinner for two extra. I ran into Bill in the lobby and told him that he and Catherine should join us for dinner. *(Pausing.)* He said the bank was closed, too. This must be one hell of a bug, don’t you think, to shut down the bank?

**LAURA.** *(Pouty, and not at all interested.)* I’m sure.

**DANIEL.** Anyway, the new boy will need to know the very intimate details of all of your female places.

**LAURA.** *(Appalled.)* My what? How dare- *(The Zombie is moving back to Laura for a snack.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Daniel talks slowly, treating her like a child.)*

The kitchen, the washroom... honestly, woman, you’ve not got a brain in your head. *(The Zombie is getting tired of this. Okay, so no brains on her, back to Daniel.)*

**LAURA.** *(Muttered.)* Well, at least *my* brain isn’t in my pants. *(Okay, this really confuses the Zombie, who looks at Daniel’s crotch.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Imagine being the zombie who, again, does not handle figures of speech well, and certainly doesn’t grasp concepts from his pre-necrotic life like “wit” or “sarcasm” at all. Still, however, to the zombie, a brain is a brain no matter where it is housed. *(The Zombie makes to lunge for Daniel’s groin.)*

**DANIEL.** What dear?

**LAURA.** *(Loudly.)* Nothing, sweetheart. *(She grabs the Zombie’s arm just as he is about to go for wherever the hell Daniel stores his brains and drags it into the kitchen.)* Come on, we need to go into the kitchen, *alone*, to talk about what you’d like to eat. *(She walks into the kitchen. Then sticks her head back out.)* Alone. *(Daniel is putting on slippers, though, and not paying any attention.)* Into the *hot* kitchen. *(Still not paying attention.)* I think we’ll cook stark naked.

**DANIEL.** *(Absently.)* Capital idea, dear. *(Laura looks very cross and exits into the kitchen. Daniel sits down on the couch and reads through the day’s mail.)* Bills, bills, bills... Does that woman do anything but spend money. *(There is a KNOCK at the door.)* Come in! *(WILLIAM enters the apartment.)*

**WILLIAM.** Daniel!

**DANIEL.** Bills! I mean Bill! Come in, come in! *(He walks to William and gives him a good clout on the back.)* Where’s Catherine?

**WILLIAM.** Coming along. You know women... got to get ready. Heaven forbid they should have to be somewhere in a rush, because as you and I both know, women don’t go anywhere on short notice.

**DANIEL.** Too true. Can I get you a drink? It looks like Laura put out some pâté, so help yourself.

**WILLIAM.** Good man, good man. I’ll have a brandy, and I think I *will* have some of this pâté. It looks lovely. *(From offstage, in the kitchen, the Zombie moans. Pots clatter to the floor.)*

**LAURA.** *(Loudly.)* Oh my! It’s so... large!

**WILLIAM.** What’s that, then?

**DANIEL.** *(Shrugging.)* New houseboy. The old one was sick, so the agency sent a replacement.

**WILLIAM.** Ah.

**DANIEL.** *(More crashing from the kitchen.)* Must be having trouble with the pots. *(He walks to the door.)* Darling, do you need any help?

**LAURA.** *(Offstage.)* Oh... no! No, I don’t need *anything* from you right now. I’ve got everything I could ever need in here with me! I may never need you again!

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** Alright, dear. If you say so.

**WILLIAM.** She’s acting rather strange.

**DANIEL.** *(Still looking towards the kitchen.)* Yes... strange. *(Beat.)* Say Bill?

**WILLIAM.** Yes?

**DANIEL.** Do you think... no, it’s really rather silly of me.

**WILLIAM.** What’s silly?

**DANIEL.** *(Coming back with the drinks.)* Well it’s just that... things haven’t been terribly... *exciting* between Laura and myself lately.

**WILLIAM.** *(Serious.)* I see, I see. *(Daniel takes a drink.)* You ought to try those little blue pills. They worked wonders for me. *(Daniel almost chokes.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Gagging.)* Good god, man! Not that type of problem. I assure you, I don’t need any help in *that* department!

**WILLIAM.** Ah... well, um, neither do I. I just... didn’t want you to feel bad, is all. No, no, I’m all man where it counts. *(Takes a big swig of his drink, downing it all.)* So then, what did you mean?

**DANIEL.** It’s Laura. I don’t think things have been sparking between us lately. I think she might be getting bored of me already.

**WILLIAM.** But you’ve been married a scant year. Most couples take at least two years for the cold, impersonal abyss of a sexless marriage to set in. *(Looks away wistfully.)* Er... I seem to have finished my drink. Can’t I have another?

**DANIEL.** *(Getting up.)* Of course. *(Pouring another.)* Well, what I’m getting at is... do you think she might be... with someone else?

**WILLIAM.** *(Scoffs.)* Who Laura? Never!

**DANIEL.** It’s just that, well, the other houseboy was a pretty strapping young man, and I know I caught her looking at him lustfully from time to time. With me being gone for long days, and the two of them together all day, it only seems natural that she might want to have her needs fulfilled.

**WILLIAM.** Do you mean her *sexual* needs?

**DANIEL.** No, William, her need for inexpensive office solutions. *Of course* her sexual needs.

**WILLIAM.** Oh. I don’t know Daniel. It seems like a bit of a stretch. Laura? She’s a good girl.

**DANIEL.** I thought so, too, but now she’s acting strange with this new houseboy.

**WILLIAM.** Some women do have a thing for hired help.

**DANIEL.** What?

**WILLIAM.** Well, some men like the thought of buggering the maids, so why not the other way ‘round? If I was a virile young woman, and my husband was gone all day, then I might... *(Daniel is looking more and more worried as William goes on. He finishes his drink in one swig, then drinks the one he poured for William.)* Oh dear. Sorry, I think I got a little carried away.

**DANIEL.** Do you need another drink? You do, I can see that. I sure need another drink. I’ll pour another drink. *(Pouring.)*

**WILLIAM.** Yes, thank you. You know, if you think she’s in there right now being serviced by the new houseboy- *(There’s a crash from the kitchen.)*

**DANIEL.** Oh... oh God. *(Downs his new drink.)*

**WILLIAM.** Well, why don’t you just barge in there and confront them. Kick the young scamp out of your house, and give Laura a good what for. It’s all women understand sometimes, when a man is stern. Say, sometimes that’s enough to get the old bedroom blood pumping.

**DANIEL.** I don’t think I can.

**WILLIAM.** Sure you can. You are a man, aren’t you? You march right in there and say, “my God, woman! How dare you do this to me in my home! And you... er...” *(Pausing.)* What’s the houseboy’s name? *(Daniel shrugs.)* “You, houseboy, get out, or I shall beat you quite soundly!”

**DANIEL.** No, it’s not that. It’s just... well, I’m not sure I’m in any position to be indignant. *(Looks suddenly guilty. The two men don’t notice Catherine open the front door. She stops and listens, keeping to the shadows.)*

**WILLIAM.** What? What are you getting at? *(Getting it.)* Why, you sly dog. *(Catherine seems intrigued. Perhaps worried. For her friend, certainly.)*

**DANIEL.** Now Bill.

**WILLIAM.** So who is she? That fiery secretary from work, with the uh...? *(Gestures to his chest. Catherine shakes her head... men.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Evasive.)* Vivian? No. Erm... I mean, yes. She’s the one.

**WILLIAM.** God, I knew she was a pistol when I came by your firm last month. She was in that low-cut blouse and you could see all the way down to her navel. *(Catherine looks appalled.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Looking nervously towards the kitchen.)* Yes, well, maybe we should just drop it, right? *(Catherine takes this moment to slip back out into the hallway.)*

**WILLIAM.** I don’t know. I don’t see why you can’t fool around with your secretary, what with Laura having her nether-regions serviced like a bored housewife in a pornographic motion picture. *Who the Butler Buggered*, or something like that.

**DANIEL.** *(Flustered.)* Did I finish my last drink already? My god, look at that; I did. Ha-ha. Guess I need another. *(Pours another and shoots it down.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Offstage.)* William?

**DANIEL.** William, please... not a word to your wife. This has to stay between you and me.

**WILLIAM.** *(Winking.)* Not a word. You have my honor as a fellow virile male. *(Catherine enters from the hallway door.)* There you are, my dear! So good to see you.

**CATHERINE.** I’m sure you are. Why are you back from work this early?

**WILLIAM.** Bank’s closed. Everyone’s sick.

**CATHERINE.** Yes, it seems like some kind of bug is going around. I’d say that you look ill, dear husband, but I know that this is your “everyday” look.

**WILLIAM.** *(Mock laughter.)* Ha-ha... terribly witty, as always. *(To Daniel.)* Say, old boy, come across to my place. I just got a new home theater system, and I’m itching to show it off to someone who appreciates it. (Sideways look at Catherine.)

**DANIEL.** I’ll be right over. I’ve just got to take care of something here.

**WILLIAM.** Alright, then, but don’t take too long. I’ve got a great movie queued up and ready to go! *(William exits to the hallway. Once he’s gone, Catherine runs up to Daniel and wraps her arms around him.)*

**DANIEL.** Not now, Catherine! *(He pulls her off of him.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Pouty.)* Oh, why not?

**DANIEL.** Because your husband is just across the hall, and my wife is in the kitchen, that’s why not! *(More groans and noise from the kitchen.)*

**CATHERINE.** She sounds *awfully* busy. I suspect she’s enjoying the houseboy, anyway, so she’s not coming out anytime soon. *(Beat.)* Speaking of the houseboy, did you see him? He just didn’t look right.

**DANIEL.** *(Stunned.)* How did you know?

**CATHERINE.** Well, he looks very pale, kind of gaunt. Deep circles under his eyes.

**DANIEL.** No, about Laura. She’s not... you know. Is she? With him?

**CATHERINE.** Yes, she probably is. Which means that our little fling is okay, now, isn’t it? No more angst-fueled, guilt-ridden sex? *(She presses against him, and he moves away, uncomfortable.)* “Oh Catherine, I don’t know if I should. What about Laura,” blah, blah, blah. And then the incessant crying, afterward.

**DANIEL.** Catherine, I’m having second thoughts about us. Bill knows too much.

**CATHERINE.** Pish-posh. Bill doesn’t know about you and me.

**DANIEL.** No, but he thinks I’m having an affair with my secretary.

**CATHERINE.** Vivian? That trollop with the enormous- *(She does the chest thing.)*

**DANIEL.** Vivian is a very kind person.

**CATHERINE.** I’m sure.

**DANIEL.** And now there’s Laura and this houseboy.

**CATHERINE.** But you were always moping about with guilt.

*(She moves closer, and he moves away.)* Just let Laura have her fun and we can have ours. Infidelity is perfectly normal in most relationships.

**DANIEL.** I guess *you* would know that.

**CATHERINE.** What? Why do people keep saying that?

**DANIEL.** Listen, Catherine, it doesn’t mean that we should start shagging right here on the couch when my wife or your husband can just come waltzing right in on us.

**CATHERINE.** *(Intrigued.)* Ohhh, I think I like the sound of that.

**DANIEL.** Well I don’t. *(He runs his hand through his hair.)*

Did you know about this? Laura and... and... *(A crash and another Zombie moan from the kitchen.)* Him!?

**CATHERINE.** I did have my suspicions. But earlier today, she admitted the whole, shameful thing to me. Terrible, terrible news for you, I know.

**DANIEL.** This is awful.

**CATHERINE.** *(Sprawling out on the couch.)* You know what would really teach her a lesson? *(Sultry.)* If she actually *did* catch us right here.

**DANIEL.** Oh god, woman, you’re insatiable.

**CATHERINE.** I’m just having a little fun with you Daniel. Seriously, though, you cannot let your wife know about us.

**DANIEL.** Are you mad? Of course not!

**CATHERINE.** So you *aren’t* going to get all weepy and tell her about your shameful affair with her best friend, are you?

**DANIEL.** No, but I have to call this off so I can demand that she cease *her* affair at once. *(Purposeful.)* In fact, I’m going to march in there and tell her that I know right this minute! You and I are done, Catherine. I’m sorry.

**CATHERINE.** Wait! You can’t tell her!

**DANIEL.** And why not?

**CATHERINE.** Because she already suspects you’re having an affair.

**DANIEL.** *(Stopping.)* She does?

**CATHERINE.** Yes, and if you so much as let her know that you know about her, she’ll make you talk.

**DANIEL.** She will?

**CATHERINE.** I’m afraid so. She’ll learn about us, she’ll tell Bill, and then it will be over for *all* of us.

**WILLIAM.** *(Offstage.)* Are you coming, Daniel, m’boy?

**DANIEL.** Yes! Anything to get out of this madhouse. *(He exits into the hallway. Catherine looks disappointed as Laura and the Zombie come onstage from the kitchen. Laura has purposefully mussed up her hair, and left her blouse buttoned way down. The Zombie looks as perplexed – and hungry – as ever, only now he’s in a kitchen apron.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* It is fortunate, perhaps, that zombies do not possess human traits such as “dignity.” *(The zombie reacts to the Narrator with a “wait... what?” look.)*

**LAURA.** Why Daniel, I hope you didn’t hear anything suspicious coming from the... *(Looks around.)*

**CATHERINE.** He’s not here, dear.

**LAURA.** Damn it! *(She buttons up her blouse.)*

**CATHERINE.** I told you to keep it subtle, and here you come looking like a streetwalker. *(To the Zombie.)* The moaning was a nice touch, though, although do you have to moan like you’re hungry or in pain? Can’t you moan lustfully?

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans, like a zombie, which is to say not at all lustfully.)*

**CATHERINE.** No, no, like this. *(Moans sensually.)*

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans, still like a zombie.)*

**LAURA.** *(Moans, but sounds like someone trying too hard.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Moans sensually, this time with more vigor for Laura.)*

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans, still zombie.)*

**LAURA.** *(Moans better.)*

**CATHERINE.** That’s good dear, now you. *(Moans again.)*

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans.)*

**LAURA.** *(Moans.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Moans.)*

**ZOMBIE.** *(Finally MOANS like Meg Ryan in when Harry Met Sally, really throwing himself into it. It’s over the top zombie lust. Everyone stops what they’re doing, and looks at the Zombie. It looks embarrassed.)*

**CATHERINE.** You might want to work on that. *(Beat.)* On your *own*.

**LAURA.** So where is Daniel?

**CATHERINE.** Across the hall. William got a new home theater system. He spent all day yesterday putting it together. Takes a good head to do that- *(The Zombie immediately starts for the door.)*

**LAURA.** Where are you going? *(The Zombie looks torn... tasty brains are surely across the hall, why won’t this crazy woman let it go eat them? Why, for that matter, is it letting this crazy woman tell it what to do.)*

**CATHERINE.** Well, as I was saying before we were so rudely interrupted, *(The Zombie is scolded.)* it takes a good head to put those things together, and Bill just doesn’t have one. *(Now the Zombie throws his hands up into the air, frustrated. Are there any brains in this place.)* I’m surprised it works at all.

**LAURA.** Oh.

**CATHERINE.** Dear, I... I have some bad news for you.

**LAURA.** Oh no. How can anything get any worse?

**CATHERINE.** Well, it’s just that... I overheard Daniel and William talking, and it seems that your suspicions were correct. Daniel *is* seeing another woman.

**LAURA.** *(Lamenting.)* Oh, I knew it! I was right. This is terrible. I mean, I knew I was probably right, but I was hoping that maybe I was wrong! Now I know, and it’s just awful! *(Laura starts sobbing. Catherine comforts her.)* Who?

**CATHERINE.** His secretary.

**LAURA.** Vivian?! *(Catherine just nods sympathetically.)*

With the big... *(She gestures.)*

**CATHERINE.** I’m afraid so.

**LAURA.** *(Words running together.)* Aren’t mine big enough he bought them for me and I didn’t want them but I got them just for him... *(Her voice gets steadily higher until nearby dogs start howling. She weeps uncontrollably.)*

**CATHERINE.** There, there, you poor, poor girl. It’s all right. These things happen with men. They can’t control themselves. *(The Zombie nods in agreement.)* They’re just slathering, drooling beasts *(More agreement from the Zombie.)* who figure out what they want, and go for it. *(More nods, and a “hey yeah... I’m a man, or at least, was a man, and I should be ‘going for it!’” look from the ZOMBIE who decides to move in for another attempt at the kill.)*

**LAURA.** Why? Why are men that way? *(The Zombie is close.)*

**CATHERINE.** Because they don’t know any better. The entire human race would be best served if men's penises just... fell off. *(The Zombie stops. Wait, that’s something it never thought of. Surreptitiously, it checks in its pants.)*

**ZOMBIE.** *(Distressed groan! Apparently, it did fall off! The Zombie looks like he’s about to cry. Its colorless, slightly rotted lower lip starts to tremble.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Oh my.

**CATHERINE.** *(Looking at the Zombie.)* See? Even that one is more concerned with his own privates than the plight of a young lady. *(Catherine helps Laura to her feet.)* Now come on, let’s get you in the kitchen and make sure everything’s going well. We’ll get back at that no-good husband of yours this evening, just you wait and see. *(They exit into the kitchen, leaving the Zombie alone in the living room, still dealing with his missing naughty bits. Daniel and William enter.)*

**DANIEL.** Zombies! *(The Zombie jumps, then starts looking around in terror. Zombies? Aaa! Where!? Oh right... that would be him.)*

**WILLIAM.** I know! Everywhere!

**DANIEL.** It’s unbelievable. With the sound system you’ve got, it’s like there’s a zombie right in your living room. I wonder if I could get a system like that.

**WILLIAM.** You most certainly can! We’ll get you set up, and- *(Noticing the Zombie.)* Gah! Dear God, who’s this?

**DANIEL.** *(Remembers his predicament with his wife.)* Oh, that’s the new houseboy.

**WILLIAM.** The one that she’s been...

**DANIEL.** That’s him. *(They both glare at the zombie. The Zombie looks away, nervous.)*

**WILLIAM.** Are you sure? He’s... well, he’s not much of a man, is he?

**DANIEL.** I don’t think so, no. *(The Zombie takes umbrage to that.)* I’m not sure why she’s... say, what do you think you’re doing? Eavesdropping, are you? *(The Zombie looks at the ceiling, pretending like it wasn’t listening. Daniel takes William off to the side.)* Unbelievable! I still can’t understand why she would take a lover!

**WILLIAM.** *(Hushed.)* Quiet, old bean. *(He gestures to the Zombie.)* You don’t want you-know-who to know that you-know-what about you-know-what? To be fair, you don’t know for certain that she and he are... well, together. You could be wrong.

**DANIEL.** *(More quietly.)* Oh, I’m not wrong. Cath... er... look, I *know*, all right? It’s plainly obvious to me that I’m not enough for her. Oh, but what right do I have to complain? *(He slumps down on the couch.)* I’m no better than she is.

**WILLIAM.** Now that’s not true, old boy. We’re men here. *(Looks at the Zombie.)* Well, mostly, anyway.

**ZOMBIE.** *(The Zombie remembers his missing manly bits, and emits a moan that sounds like a sob.)*

**WILLIAM.** We can be excused for our actions. Do you know what a biological indicative is?

**DANIEL.** A what? *(At the moment, Laura comes out of the kitchen. Seeing the two men, and the Zombie, she immediately begins to ham up the sexy, come-hitherness to the Zombie.)*

**LAURA.** Gentlemen. Houseboy, I *need* you in the *kitchen*. I need you badly, and I need you right now. It’s almost time to *eat*. *(The Zombie likes the idea of eating, so he shambles off with her.)*

**DANIEL.** Do you see?

**WILLIAM.** Hm... seems pretty obvious, yes. *(Getting back on track.)* Anyway, back to what I was getting at. A biological expletive...

**DANIEL.** “Imperative.”

**WILLIAM.** Yes, it is quite imperative that you listen to me. You see, the males of most species have an innate desire to spread their seed to as many viable females as possible. While a woman can only be pregnant every nine months, at best, the male can impregnate an almost infinite number of females in that same time.

**DANIEL.** I don’t know.

**WILLIAM.** My boy, it’s all about propaganda...

**DANIEL.** “Propagation?”

**WILLIAM.** No thank you, brandy’s fine. Anyway, you simply want your genes to pass to as many viable offspring as possible, thus ensuring the continuation of positive traits. It’s biology, man, and hardly your fault.

**DANIEL.** Where the hell did you come up with all this?

**WILLIAM.** The world-wide internets, of course.

**DANIEL.** I don’t know... I don’t think it makes sense.

**WILLIAM.** It’s an excuse, Daniel; it doesn’t *have* to make sense. It just has to make you *feel* better. Alright, look, let’s try this. *(Thinking.)* If you want to come out of this smelling like roses, and keep your marriage intact, all the while getting her to stop experimenting with houseboys, try this. Let her find out about you and the secretary.

**DANIEL.** What?!

**WILLIAM.** Hear me out, and have a seat while you’re at it. *(They both sit on the couch.)* Let her find out, but make sure she thinks that you started this affair after you found out about her affair. Then she’ll feel so terrible about what she’s driven you to that she’ll call hers off. Then, you can either keep with the secretary – which, were our positions reversed, is what I would do – or end that if the guilt is too much.

**DANIEL.** What if she doesn’t call hers off?

**WILLIAM.** Then, my dear boy, you have unspoken permission to do as you please. And if you can stomach the fact that she’ll be doing the same, I’d say it all works out fine in the end.

**DANIEL.** It’s... it’s not that easy.

**WILLIAM.** Why not? It’s just your secretary. It’s not like your sleeping around with her best friend.

**DANIEL.** *(Jumps up.)* I’m most assuredly *not* sleeping with her best friend! *(Immediately regrets the outburst.)*

**WILLIAM.** *(Laughs.)* No, dear boy, of course not. That would be Catherine anyway, and I can assure you that – while my wife may be a cold, unfeeling bitch – she is as faithful as I am. *(He places his hand over his heart and seems very innocent.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Laughs.)* Oh, come off it, William. Everyone knew about you and that cashier.

**WILLIAM.** *(Surprised.)* Me and the who? Now, you’ve got that all wrong!

**DANIEL.** Do I? What happened to all your biological impet- import- *(Stumbles over the word.)*

**WILLIAM.** You just don’t understand the intricacies of that particular situation.

**DANIEL.** Yes, well, what happened to all your talk, eh William?

**WILLIAM.** Catherine and I... we were... well, we were having a spat.

**DANIEL.** She undercooked a roast!

**WILLIAM.** *(Indignant.)* At least I had the good sense to call the affair off when things were looking better.

**DANIEL.** You *still* fight about that damned roast! You had a terrific row about it just last weekend! “Catherine, remember that roast you almost killed me with?”

**WILLIAM.** I called it off!

**DANIEL.** Did you?

**WILLIAM.** Yes... at least... listen, we’re not here to talk about my problems. We’re here to talk about yours.

**DANIEL.** *(Resigned.)* Fine. I’ll *think* about it, but I don’t think it’s a good idea.

**WILLIAM.** Good enough, m’boy. Now, if you don’t mind, may I use your facilities?

**DANIEL.** Of course.

**WILLIAM.** Fantastic. *(Grabs a magazine and exits through the bedroom door. Daniel sits on the couch, clearly depressed. As he does, the Zombie shambles out of the kitchen. It looks around, exasperated - undoubtedly, the two women are driving it nuts - and Daniel looks at it. They make eye contact.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Alpha male.)* Oh, it’s you. *(The Zombie tries to look menacing. Daniel tries, too. Frankly, they’re both kind of lanky – one because he doesn’t work out much, and the other because, well, he’s a FREAKING WALKING CORPSE.)* Don’t think I don’t know what you’re up to. *(Points to his temple.)* I’ve got a brain, you know. *(While the Zombie is beginning to doubt that anyone has any brains here, that’s what he’s living... er... unliving for. The Zombie shrugs and starts for Daniel.)* Oh, I see! Is that how it is! Shall we fight, then? Eh? *(Daniel puts on a really pathetic show of it. Just then, William comes out of the bedroom.)*

**WILLIAM.** Sorry old chap! False alarm. You know how these things go! *(He fans the air. Daniel holds his nose.)*

**DANIEL.** Dear god man! *(The Zombie, not having a functioning nose, still tries to sniff the air anyway.)*

**WILLIAM.** *(Sees the Zombie.)* Yes, er... sorry. Now then, what’s this?

**DANIEL.** We were going to have a go at each other. He wanted to fight me.

**WILLIAM.** Did he, then? Well, mighty big mistake you would be making there, houseboy. Mighty big. *(The Zombie is getting sick of this. Time for some brain eating.)* Ah, you want to take both of us on, eh? Well, I should warn you, I was the boxing champion at Oxford!

**DANIEL.** You never went to Oxford. *(Catherine enters from the kitchen.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(To Zombie.)* There you are! We wondered where you wandered off to. *(Smells.)* Did something die in here? *(William smiles sheepishly. The Zombie points to himself, but no one notices.)*

**DANIEL.** What are you doing out here, Catherine?

**CATHERINE.** I’ve come to get our errant houseboy, and to pass along a message from Laura. Once the houseboy is back in the kitchen, she has to have his *complete* and *undivided* attention, so do not disturb her at any cost.

**DANIEL.** Oh really?

**CATHERINE.** Yes. She doesn’t want to ruin the dinner surprise.

**WILLIAM.** Ah, a dinner surprise. I absolutely love dinner surprises.

**CATHERINE.** *(Quietly.)* Well, you love dinner at least. And dessert. And mid-day snacks.

**WILLIAM.** What was that dear?

**DANIEL.** *(Hastily.)* Well, I have a surprise, too.

**CATHERINE.** You do?

**DANIEL.** I have invited my secretary, Vivian, to have dinner with us.

**CATHERINE.** (At the same time as William.) You have?

**WILLIAM.** You have?

**DANIEL.** Er... yes. She was alone tonight, and I felt sorry for her.

**CATHERINE.** *(Suspicious.)* Oh?

**WILLIAM.** *(Mischief, to Daniel.)* Good idea.

**CATHERINE.** William, be a love and go across the hall to fetch a bottle of wine. We have to be proper dinner guests.

**WILLIAM.** Right on it! I know just the bottle. *(Smiles.)* This should turn out to be an interesting evening after all. *(William exits to the hallway.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(To Zombie.)* And you, get in that kitchen at once! *(The Zombie looks at Daniel, then at Catherine, then back at Daniel again, throws up its arms, and exits into the kitchen with Catherine.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Wringing hands.)* This is getting out of hand. *(He goes to the phone.)* Well, Bill, I hope you’re right about this. *(He dials and waits.)* Hullo? Vivian? Yes, this is Daniel. From work. Your boss? Yes, I know I never call you at home but- Really? Huh? Well, that’s terrible, I suppose. Anyway, I called because- *(Catherine enters from the kitchen. Daniel looks at her and cringes. He turns his back to her.)* I see. Well, I wanted to see if you would like to come over for dinner, and since your aunt left for the evening, it sounds like you’re free. Yes, well, I’m sure she’ll turn up tomorrow. Listen, can you do this as a favor for me? Uh-huh. Fantastic! *(Catherine walks over to him.)* Right then, see you in an hour Vivian. Great. *(He hangs up.)*

**CATHERINE.** So, Vivian, eh? *(Suspicious.)* Why would you ask her to come over?

**DANIEL.** Because she’s alone tonight. Her aunt seems to have “mysteriously vanished,” and she was supposed to play cribbage with her. Now she’s got nothing to do.

**CATHERINE.** Do you have some sort of plan?

**DANIEL.** Yes... well... no. Not yet. Oh, it’s all just so difficult. Catherine, I don’t think I can keep this up, not now. *(Sighs.)* Oh, I just wish that I didn’t know about her and that... that.... houseboy. *(He buries his head in his hands. Catherine thinks.)*

**CATHERINE.** If I told you she wasn’t *really* having an affair, would you change your mind? *(Daniel looks up.)*

**DANIEL.** What? *(Stands.)* She’s not?

**CATHERINE.** No, she’s not. She’s just having a bit of fun at your expense, I’m afraid. *(Hopefully, she presses close to him.)* So now we can go back to how things were before, yes?

**DANIEL.** *(Excited.)* Yes! I mean, no... no, *not* like before. Catherine, now that I know the truth, I think I’ve – *we’ve* - been given a second chance.

**CATHERINE.** *(Unhappy.)* We have?

**DANIEL.** Yes. Catherine, this was a sign.

**CATHERINE.** *(Increasingly unhappy.)* It was?

**DANIEL.** If we stop now, then maybe, just maybe we can save both of our marriages.

**CATHERINE.** *(Making a face.)* We can?

**DANIEL.** Well, since you were just with me to get back at Bill for the thing with the cashier, and-

**CATHERINE.** *(Alarmed.)* The who?!

**DANIEL.** You know, the cashier he had the... you know, last year. *(He looks at her face. The shock says it all.)* You didn’t know?

**CATHERINE.** *(Gritted teeth.)* What cashier?

**DANIEL.** I didn’t know you didn’t know. I thought-

**CATHERINE.** *(Furious.)* You thought what, Daniel?

**DANIEL.** I need a drink. Do you need a drink, because I sure as Hell need a bloody drink. *(Heads to the liquor cabinet.)* I should by stock in the bloody liquor industry, I really should. *(Catherine cuts around the couch and heads him off.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Threatening... like, scary psycho threatening.)* You’re going to need a doctor if you don’t tell me what’s going on.

**DANIEL.** *(Meekly.)* Nothing.

**CATHERINE.** Don’t “nothing” me. Daniel, what did Bill do with the cashier?

**DANIEL.** He... he broke it off already. A long time ago.

**CATHERINE.** You’ve known about this for “a long time”?!

**DANIEL.** Yes... no... Catherine, does it really matter? I mean, since we’re-

**CATHERINE.** *(Scheming.)* Oh, it matters... it matters, all right. I’m going to have to get back at that man.

**DANIEL.** Get back at him? Oh, I don’t like how this is going.

**CATHERINE.** I’ll show *him* who’s having an affair.

**DANIEL.** Yes, see, that’s the thing. You *are*... or, you *were* having an affair. With me. But not anymore, right? Everything is even? *(Smiles weakly.)*

**CATHERINE.** That was different.

**DANIEL.** How was that different?

**CATHERINE.** Because I was having the affair with you for fun. Now I have to have an affair for *revenge*.

**DANIEL.** Well, thank God we broke ours off because I’m not sure I could take much more of this.

**CATHERINE.** Daniel, we need to start up our affair again.

**DANIEL.** *(Collapsing on the couch.)* Will this never end?

**CATHERINE.** You knew about Bill’s affair and you didn’t tell me. You *owe* me, Daniel.

**DANIEL.** I thought you *knew*. And now that I know that Laura isn’t having an affair, I *can’t* start ours up again. I just *can’t*!

**CATHERINE.** And what if I told you that what I just told you was a lie?

**DANIEL.** What?

**CATHERINE.** When I told you that she wasn’t really having an affair, that she was just having some fun at your expense, it was true at the time. However, while I was in the kitchen, she said she was having a hard time keeping herself away from the houseboy. She wants him *badly*.

**DANIEL.** You’re just making that up to manipulate me. I’ve got a brain, you know. *(From offstage, the Zombie moans. It bursts into the living room looking for Daniel and brains.)*

**DANIEL.** (At the same time as Catherine.) Get back in there!

**CATHERINE.** Get back in there! *(Total zombie frustration, but it complies.)*

**CATHERINE.** I’m not making it up. It’s the truth.

**DANIEL.** You’re lying, and I know how to make this entire thing stop.

**CATHERINE.** *(Suspicious.)* How?

**DANIEL.** I’m going to tell William about us.

**CATHERINE.** You wouldn’t dare.

**DANIEL.** I would. I’m going to do it right this minute. *(Daniel exits to the hall. Catherine follows close behind.)*

**CATHERINE.** Fine! Do it! I don’t care. *(Laura exits from the kitchen.)*

**LAURA.** God, that houseboy isn’t quite right in the head. I really think this game is over.

**CATHERINE.** *(Distracted.)* It’s over.

**LAURA.** That’s what I said. Over.

**CATHERINE.** *(Determined.)* No. Not over. The game has to go to the next level.

**LAURA.** What?

**CATHERINE.** *(Thinking quickly.)* Listen, I decided – on your behalf – to confront your husband about his dalliance. I told him that I knew, and I offered to tell you that if he broke off his affair, I’d tell you it was a mistake, and that he was never with me...Mi. Mimi.

**LAURA.** Mimi! Oh no, not *another* woman!

**CATHERINE.** Yes. I mean, no. Vivian. “Mimi” is his pet name for her.

**LAURA.** *(Anguished.)* They have pet names? *(Really about to lose it.)* We don’t have pet names!

**CATHERINE.** He said, under no circumstances, would he let a woman tell him what to do. He said, and I quote “I shall not stop making sweet, sweaty love with you... y-youthful Vivian.”

**LAURA.** *(Sobs.)* He thinks I’m old?!

**CATHERINE.** What that man needs a taste of his own medicine.

**LAURA.** I don’t know what you mean. I thought that was what we were doing? Oh Catherine, my marriage is finished!

**CATHERINE.** Maybe it is, and maybe it isn’t. Look... *(She looks towards the hall door.)* The only way he’ll understand is if you *really* cheat on him.

**LAURA.** But I can’t.

**CATHERINE.** You can. If he doesn’t change his mind, then at least he’ll feel the sting. The same hurt he caused you. It’s the only way.

**LAURA.** But... *(The Zombie comes out of the kitchen. That’s it... no more of this madness. It goes for the women.)*

**CATHERINE.** Look at him... he’s a virile young man. And you, so neglected by your husband for some trollop. *(The Zombie stops. This is creepy. Now they’re looking at him the same way he was looking at them back when he wanted to eat their brains.)* Now go on... *(Catherine takes the Zombie’s hand, puts it in Laura’s, and pushes them to the bedroom.)*

**LAURA.** *(Resigned.)* I suppose she’s right. Come on, little houseboy. *(The exit together into the bedroom. The Zombie is perplexed, but follows. William and Daniel enter from the hallway. William has a bottle of Champaign.)*

**WILLIAM.** Now, now, dear boy, whatever it is you have to say can be said over a glass of bubbly. *(To Catherine.)* Ah, there you are dear. I couldn’t find the wine I was thinking of, but what do you think about this? *(Holds up the Champaign. She just smiles acidly at Daniel and William. Daniel looks back. William pours a few glasses.)* Where’s Laura? She doesn’t want to miss this, does she?

**CATHERINE.** She’s in the bedroom.

**WILLIAM.** Taking a nap?

**CATHERINE.** There’s no napping going on in there, I assure you.

**DANIEL.** *(Quietly, to Catherine.)* What did you do?

**CATHERINE.** Me? Nothing. I told you what happened.

**DANIEL.** She’s in there with... with him?

**CATHERINE.** Mm-hm. I tried to stop her, despite what you were going to do. But she wouldn’t listen.

**DANIEL.** Well, I’m still telling William. And I should tell Laura the truth, too.

**CATHERINE.** *(Aghast.)* You can’t do that! She’s my best friend! She’ll hate me!

**DANIEL.** Serves you right. *(The Zombie moans, and in the sexual way it did earlier, from the bedroom.)*

**WILLIAM.** Say, what was that?

**CATHERINE.** I have *no* idea.

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* “Necrophilia. Noun. Sexual intercourse with or attraction to corpses. Use in a sentence, ‘if you are into necrophilia, there is something *seriously* wrong with you.’”

**DANIEL.** William, that thing I have to tell you.

**CATHERINE.** *(Grabs his arm.)* Don’t!

**WILLIAM.** Yes, dear boy? *(Looks down to pour another glass.)*

**CATHERINE.** William, you should know something. Daniel hit his head earlier, and he’s... he’s been saying the strangest, most untrue things.

**DANIEL.** That’s not true. Listen, Bill, it’s about Cath-*(Catherine hits him in the head with the telephone and quickly sets it down.)*

Ow! *(He grabs his head as William looks up.)*

**WILLIAM.** It must be bad to still be hurting you like that.

**DANIEL.** Ow!

**CATHERINE.** See?

**DANIEL.** No... it’s just that Catherine- *(Laura and the Zombie exit from the bedroom. Laura’s shirt is unbuttoned and her hair’s messed up. The Zombie looks confused.* Still *confused... that’s really never changed but also, sickeningly, somewhat pleased. The Zombie also has a cigarette in its mouth, although it’s not lit and the filter end is sticking out.)*

**LAURA.** Oh, Daniel. You’re back.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans very casually, like it’s trying to be cool.)*

**DANIEL.** I am.

**LAURA.** *(She sees him holding his head.)* You look hurt! Are you alright? *(She rushes to his side.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Angrily.)* I’m fine.

**LAURA.** You should get that looked at by a Doctor.

**DANIEL.** *(Short.)* As if you care. And where are we going to find a doctor at this hour? Doctors are never available when you need them. *(Just at that moment, a DOCTOR barges into the apartment. There’s blood all over his scrubs. He* *looks crazed.)*

**DOCTOR.** Dear god! The dead are walking! They’re everywhere! Do you hear me? The bodies of the recently departed are *getting up and walking, killing everyone in their paths! (Everyone just stares dumbfounded at the Doctor, like he just walked in and said wiggle snort! Groovy gravy! Bork bork bork!” Everyone,* except *for the Zombie, who grabs the Doctor and drags him back out into the hall, the door slamming shut behind them. There are screams that end in gurgles. Everyone in the room looks confused by this development.)*

**CATHERINE.** It’s not like the Prime Minister is just going to walk through that door! *(They all look expectantly at the door, but the Prime Minister doesn’t walk in the door.)*

**LAURA.** It was worth a try, dear.

**CATHERINE.** Been working all day.

**LAURA.** I know. Strange, that. Who was that anyway?

**DANIEL.** Beats me. Door-to-door evangelist?

**CATHERINE.** That looked like a doctor. Maybe the houseboy needed to talk to him about his condition.

**LAURA.** He has been looking rather ill all day.

**WILLIAM.** Too true. *(Beat. To Daniel.)* What was it you were going to tell me?

**CATHERINE.** Don’t...

**LAURA.** What’s going on here, Daniel? What are you going to tell Bill?

**DANIEL.** William, I’ve got to tell you something very important.

**END OF ACT I**

**ACT II**

*Laura is directing the Zombie to set the table. Really, it’s pretty pathetic to see a brain eating, cannibal corpse as a castrated – literally and figuratively - manservant. The Zombie is clearly messing things up, getting the desert fork swapped with the dinner fork, to say nothing of the salad fork and the appetizer fork or the...*

**LAURA.** *(Frustrated.)* Oh, you’d think you’ve never set a table before. Give me those.

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Zombies are *quite* uncultured. *(Beat.)* What doctor? Do you recall a doctor? I sure don’t.

**LAURA.** *(Laura moves to take the silver from the Zombie, but as she reaches, she brushes his hand. They share an awkward moment. They may well have slept together, after all, or did your subconscious mind block that little bit of necrophilia? Laura gives up.)* Just... put them anywhere. It doesn’t matter.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Groans sadly.)*

**LAURA.** Don’t you start. Thank God you weren’t up to the task... (*The Zombie looks quite ashamed.)* or we might have made a terrible, awful... (*Daniel walks in from the kitchen with William. LAURA changes her tune.) lusty*, mistake. *(She presses closer to the ZOMBIE, then quickly jumps away, making sure to over-exaggerate for her husband.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Looks suspiciously at Laura and responds coldly.)* Darling.

**LAURA.** *(Equally cold.)* Dear.

**WILLIAM.** Now, what was this matter of titanic importance that you were going to share with me?

**DANIEL.** It was... nothing.

**WILLIAM.** Ah, I see. It has to do with- *(Whispers so Laura can’t hear.)* -your little problem.

**DANIEL.** In a way.

**WILLIAM.** No matter. It can wait. *(He winks.)* Everything looks lovely, Laura.

**LAURA.** *(Distracted.)* Thank you, William. *(To Daniel.)* Explain to me why you’ve invited your secretary to dinner. *(You can taste the bile when Laura says “secretary”.)*

**DANIEL.** *(He cringes. Ah well, he’ll have to go with it now.)* Why do you ask? Is there something you’d like to say about it?

**LAURA.** No, no. I was just curious. *(Catherine enters from the kitchen.)*

**CATHERINE.** So, Daniel, I’ve got a question for you.

**DANIEL.** Oh God, not another one.

**CATHERINE.** Why did you decide to invite-

**DANIEL.** My secretary? Yes, well, believe you me, I’m wondering that myself.

**CATHERINE.** Aren’t *you* snippy.

**LAURA.** It’s almost like he’s hiding something.

**CATHERINE.** *(Suspicious.)* Yes. What are you hiding, Daniel? *(He is saved from answering by a knock at the door.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Glad to get out of it.)* Ah, that must be Vivian now.

**WILLIAM.** *(To Daniel, quietly.)* Smart move, my boy. She’s sweating already. *(Daniel is not sure who he’s referring to, as both women seem overly interested in the new dinner guest.)*

**DANIEL.** *(To William.)* You’d better be right about this. *(He opens the door. VIVIAN stands there, awkwardly. She does indeed have a large chest.)* Vivian! How good of you to join us for dinner.

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* My, those bosoms *are* apocalyptic! *(Everyone on stage looks around for the disembodied voice.)* What?!

**VIVIAN.** (Shaking it off.) I’m surprised I could make it this fast. You only gave me an hour, and the trains weren’t-

**LAURA.** An hour?

**DANIEL.** Er... you must mean, it only *seemed* like an hour ago that I asked you to join us, but it was really much, *much* earlier in the day. Back at the office. You probably forgot.

**VIVIAN.** *(Looking at her watch.)* No, it was an hou-

**DANIEL.** *(Over the top enthusiasm.)* Anyway, everyone this is my secretary Vivian. I think it’s safe to say she’s the brazier... er... the *brains* of our firm.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Looks knowingly at the audience. Take that fourth wall.)*

**LAURA.** It’s a pleasure. *(It is* not *a pleasure.)*

**CATHERINE.** Indeed. *(Nope, not here either.)*

**WILLIAM.** *(Takes her hand and kisses it.)* Charmed, my dear. Though you may not remember it, we met at the Christmas party this past year. I’m Daniel’s friend William Klingermann.

**VIVIAN.** Oh right, you were the fellow that was interested in showing me your-

**WILLIAM.** *(Quickly.)* Yes, well, good to see you again, too.

**VIVIAN.** I guess I’d better get used to being interr-

**LAURA.** Maybe we should all sit down and get to know each other over drinks.

**DANIEL.** Capital idea. *(Everyone sits down. Even the Zombie. They sit there for a while, in awkward silence.)* So... Vivian. How was *your* day?

**VIVIAN.** Oh, well, you know. The office was mostly deserted, and the phones didn’t ring that much, so it was an uneventful day, I sup-

**LAURA.** “Uneventful,” you say? So did you and Daniel here work on any special projects?

**VIVIAN.** *(Confused.)* No... no special proj-

DANIEL. *(Puts a hand on Vivian’s leg. Both Catherine and Laura notice.)* Now don’t be modest, Vivian. Tell Laura about how much fun we had at the *nearly deserted* office today.

**CATHERINE.** Yes, do tell. Tell us all.

VIVIAN. *(Noticing that something’s off here.)* Well, uh, I guess putting files away-

**DANIEL.** In a musty storeroom, together.

**VIVIAN.** Well, I’m pretty sure it was just-

**DANIEL.** The two of us.

**VIVIAN.** Maybe I should just stop talk-

**WILLIAM.** The two of you, alone? *(Vivian throws up her hands.)* My, my, it sounds like something out of one of those movies you can get on that internets thing.

**DANIEL.** No, not like that... *(To William.)* Not too much, chap.

**WILLIAM.** Sorry, but this is fun. And look at those... those great big... wow.

**LAURA.** *(To Catherine.)* It’s true. It has to be true. Look at how he’s carrying on with her.

**CATHERINE.** You might be right.

**LAURA.** What do you mean? You said you knew for certain.

**CATHERINE.** I thought I did.

**VIVIAN.** *(To Zombie.)* Are they always like this?

**ZOMBIE.** *(Nods, then rolls his eyes. Yeah, they’ll all nuts here.)*

**VIVIAN.** *(Takes a good look at the Zombie.)* Are you okay? You don’t look well.

**LAURA.** *(To Catherine.)* I’ve got to step things up. *(She moves next to the Zombie, bumping Vivian over. She places her own hand on the Zombie’s leg.)*

**CATHERINE.** Yes, I agree. *(Now Catherine moves to the Zombie’s other side, causing another shift in the seating arrangement.)*

**LAURA.** *(Through clenched teeth to Catherine.)* What are you doing?

**CATHERINE.** *(Innocent.)* Nothing, darling. *(She puts her hand on the Zombie’s other leg. The Zombie is as perplexed as ever.)* I’m just protecting what’s mine.

**LAURA.** What?

**DANIEL.** *(Looks over at Catherine with a forced smile.)* Catherine? What are you doing over there?

**WILLIAM.** *(Noticing.)* Yes dear... what *are* you doing?

**CATHERINE.** Oh, I just thought I’d get a little change of scenery. You know. Don’t want anything getting stale, do we?

**DANIEL.** (Worried, and at the same time as William.) Of course not.

**WILLIAM.** (*Also worried.)* I suppose not.

**VIVIAN.** *(Aside.)* These people are insane.

**DANIEL.** So, this is how it’s going to be, is it?

**LAURA.** *(Feigning innocence again.)* Whatever do you mean?

**CATHERINE.** Who can tell with men?

**DANIEL.** *(Continues the seating dance and moves over to Vivian. He throws his arm around her.)* Why, nothing. Nothing at all. *(The awkward moment hangs way too long, and is broken up by a DING from the kitchen. Everyone looks up at the ceiling expectantly.)*

**NARRATOR.** Sorry, not me. Perhaps dinner is ready?

**ZOMBIE.** *(The Zombie grunts and stands. He’s happy for an excuse to get out of this room.)*

**VIVIAN.** *(Also stands.)* Do you... do you need help with that?

**ZOMBIE.** *(Nods. They both exit to the kitchen.)*

**LAURA.** Well, you’re getting along nicely with Vivian, don’t you think?

**DANIEL.** Why the sudden interest in me and my secretary? Is there some reason that you might be bothered by how close she and I are? Working together can do that to people, you know. Make them... close.

**CATHERINE.** I think I can see why she’d be bothered.

**LAURA.** *(Sarcastically.)* Bothered? No, not at all. I think it’s perfectly fine for a man and his secretary to be so very chummy.

**WILLIAM.** He might ask why you are so close to the houseboy.

**LAURA.** Oh? Why? Tell us all, Daniel, why you might want to know such a thing.

**DANIEL.** Er... I really couldn’t care less.

**LAURA.** Fine.

**CATHERINE.** Fine.

**DANIEL.** Fine. *(The Zombie comes out of the kitchen with the first course of dinner. Vivian comes out carrying a tray herself. The Zombie and Vivian place dinner on the table while everyone just glares at each other. As Vivian passes between Daniel and William she yelps and looks at her backside. Both men look sheepishly away. Both Catherine and Laura glare at their husbands.)*

**WILLIAM.** *(Smiles impishly as he stuffs his napkin in his shirt collar.)* So... let’s see if we can’t chat like civilized human beings, eh? *(Begins to stuff his face.)*

**CATHERINE.** Okay, William. *(Takes a bite of food.)* So, how’s that cashier at the bank... what was her name now?

**WILLIAM.** *(Freezes mid forkful.)* Elise? *(Only it sounds like “umeefe?” with all the food.)*

**CATHERINE.** Yes, Elise; that’s her name. How is she?

**WILLIAM.** *(Swallows, fidgety.)* Oh... you know... she’s fine, I think. I don’t really talk to her much lately, you know.

**CATHERINE.** *(Cold.)* I see. Not much for talking, are you?

**WILLIAM.** *(Laughs, nervous.)* No... not me.

**LAURA.** Houseboy, why don’t you sit and enjoy dinner with us. *(There’s an empty seat between Laura and Vivian.)*

**VIVIAN.** *(Smiles sincerely.)* Yes, you can sit here. *(The Zombie sits obediently.)*

**LAURA.** *(Biting.)* Quiet, “Mimi.”

**VIVIAN.** Mimi? No, I’m Viv-

**LAURA.** Have a taste of this... it’s quite good finger food. *(She tries to feed the Zombie, who looks at the food disgustedly. He snaps at her fingers, but she thinks he’s going for the food, and laughs.)* My, aren’t you anxious for a bite.

**NARRATOR.** *(Ding.)* My, isn’t that an understatement. *(The Zombie nods in exasperated agreement.)*

**DANIEL.** Vivian, how’s your wine? Could I freshen up your glass?

**VIVIAN.** *(Her glass is pretty full.)* No, I’m- *(He fills her glass up to the top anyway.)*

**DANIEL.** Drink up. The evening is young, and who knows what direction it might go, eh?

**CATHERINE.** Right. This is an evening that’s been full of surprises. *(To the Zombie.)* Houseboy, perhaps you could come with me into the kitchen.

**LAURA.** No, I think he wants to stay out here.

**CATHERINE.** He wants to come into the kitchen with me.

**DANIEL.** Actually, uh, I’ll come into the kitchen with you, Catherine.

**LAURA.** *(Suggestive to Zombie.)* Well, I think I’m going to go into the *bedroom* and slip into something a little more comfortable.

**WILLIAM.** Wait for me.

**DANIEL, LAURA, and CATHERINE.** What?!

**WILLIAM.** I have to use your facilities.

**DANIEL, LAURA, and CATHERINE.** Oh. *(William and Laura exit to the bedroom, while Daniel and Catherine go to the kitchen, leaving the Zombie and Vivian alone.)*

**VIVIAN.** So... *(Awkward silence.)* You’ve been here all day, I take it. They’re probably driving you batty. *(The Zombie nods.)* Well, I don’t know what’s going on here, but I’m beginning to wish I hadn’t come over. *(The Zombie nods emphatically. Vivian smiles.)* Say, you’re nice. You’re the only person that hasn’t interrupted me, stared at my chest, or looked wickedly at me like those two women. *(She puts her hand on his. The Zombie notices.)* Are you in a band? *(The Zombie shakes his head.)* Oh, because you kind of have that heroin chic look. All thin and pale. Not that that’s bad. I think it’s kind of... sexy. *(She leans closer to him.)* Look, I’m not usually this direct, but... I’m not seeing anyone at the moment, so maybe sometime we should go out for a bite. *(That’s the magic word for the Zombie, who bites Vivian on the arm.)* Ow! *(She looks shocked at first, but then she smiles.)* So, you’re into that kind of stuff, eh? Well, I- Uh, oh, here come the permanent residents of the nuthouse.

**CATHERINE.** *(Enters with Daniel from the kitchen.)* I demand to know what’s going on, Daniel. Are you really screwing your secretary behind my back?

**DANIEL.** Listen, Catherine, it’s complicated. I can’t get into it now.

**CATHERINE.** Complicated? Complicated? You men are all alike!

**LAURA.** *(Entering from the bedroom, now in a more comfortable and revealing evening dress.)* Good lord, Bill. I didn’t know that one man was capable of *that*! *(She waves her hand in front of her face. William looks embarrassed. Everyone else reacts to the smell, except the Zombie who – again – can’t smell anything.)*

**WILLIAM.** Yes, well, sorry about that. I think it may have been the pâté.

**CATHERINE.** Trust, me, it’s not *just* the pâté.

**LAURA.** Alright, then, let’s all sit down and eat, shall we? *(They sit down, but aside from William, who immediately starts shoveling it in, mostly everyone just picks at their food. Vivian takes her napkin and dabs at her forehead. She looks like she doesn’t feel well.)*

**DANIEL.** Vivian, are you feeling all right? You’re not coming down with that bug that’s going ‘round, are you?

**VIVIAN.** I don’t think so. I just feel a little-

**LAURA.** Oh, concerned about *her* are you?

**VIVIAN.** Here we go again. Really, I’m all-

**DANIEL.** And why not? She’s a guest in our home. If she’s feeling ill, then it is my obligation to see to her needs.

**LAURA.** Well, you’ve got at least *part* of that right.

**WILLIAM.** Come now, let’s all try to get along. Be nice to the poor girl, she looks kind of pale.

**CATHERINE.** Really, William? Did you notice that when you were staring at her chest the whole evening? *(Vivian takes another dab at her forehead as the argument continues. She doesn’t look well at all.)*

**VIVIAN.** Come to think of it, maybe I do feel a little bit-

**WILLIAM.** Come now, dear. There’s no call for that.

**CATHERINE.** Isn’t there? Don’t deny it William. I’ve seen the way you’ve been looking at her. Would you like a go at her, too?

**WILLIAM.** Now just a minute! What do you mean by “too?”

**CATHERINE.** You know damn well what I mean!

**LAURA.** What’s this, then?

**VIVIAN.** I feel... naus- *(No one’s paying attention to her.)*

**WILLIAM.** I don’t think I do.

**CATHERINE.** Oh yes you do. Maybe you want to add her to your list of conquests. Don’t think I don’t know about Elise?

**WILLIAM.** *(Glares at Daniel.)* Where on *Earth* did you get an idea like that?

**VIVIAN.** I think I’m... I’m... *(She tries to stand, but cannot.)*

**CATHERINE.** Does it matter? It only matters that I know. And you’d probably like to roger her until one of you passes out, and given your lack of stamina, I doubt it would be her! *(Points to Vivial, whose head drops to the table at that moment, unnoticed by everyone else. Sadly, she’s not unconscious... she’s dead.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Mark this moment, dear audience, as this is the point in the story where it all starts to go straight to Hell.

**WILLIAM.** Now see here!

**LAURA.** *(Exaggerated surprise.)* Catherine! I had no idea *your* husband was an adulterer, too.

**DANIEL.** Wait just a minute. I don’t like the implication in your tone. And don’t act so surprised; you’re the one that told me about William and Elise in the first place! *(Vivian picks her head up. Her eyes have glazed over and she’s staring out at nothing in particular. Zombie Vivian looks at the Zombie conspiratorially.)*

**LAURA and CATHERINE.** What?

WILLIAM. *(Caught.)* Now... I... that was over a year ago and it was nothing. It’s been over for a long time.

**CATHERINE.** How do I know that? Hm?

**DANIEL.** Well, now... isn’t this awkward.

**CATHERINE.** Yes, well, I’ve got something to tell you. Oh, and aren’t you going to love this. *I’ve* been cheating on *you*!

**WILLIAM.** *(Stands angrily.)* What? Who is he! I’ll... I’ll tear his heart out! *(The Zombie stands up. Finally, carnage.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Smugly.)* None other than- *(Daniel intentionally drops a plate.)*

**DANIEL.** Oh dear, would you look at that mess! I guess I need to clean it up. William, do you think you could help me.

**WILLIAM.** Why not have the houseboy do it? It’s what you pay him for. Besides, she was going to say that name of the poor sod I’m going to murder. None other than *who*, wife?

**DANIEL.** I’m sure she’s going to say that it’s none other than someone you don’t know. *(Through gritted teeth.)* Right Catherine?

**CATHERINE.** Um... right. *(Quietly to Daniel.)* What’s the problem here? I thought you were going to tell him anyway.

**DANIEL.** *(To Catherine.)* Are you mad? He’ll kill me!

**CATHERINE.** *(To Daniel.)* Maybe you deserve it.

**DANIEL.** What?

**WILLIAM.** “None other than someone I don’t know?” That doesn’t make a lick of sense, Daniel. It *is* someone I know! This makes it so much worse. A betrayer of my trust!

**DANIEL.** I’m sure she wasn’t serious. She was just trying to get you riled up, and by God, it looks like she succeeded in that respect, doesn’t it?

**CATHERINE.** Oh, this is terribly irritating. I don’t think I can be here anymore. *(She stands and exits to the Hallway.)*

**LAURA.** I’m coming with you. *(She follows.)*

**WILLIAM.** What’s going on here, Daniel? You’re acting funny about all this. *(Suspicious.)* What do you know?

**DANIEL.** It’s nothing, really. Er... houseboy?

**ZOMBIE.** *(Looks up.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Sighs.)* Not that I want *your* help, but we are paying you for this, so help me clean this mess up.

**ZOMBIE.** *(Rolls eyes. The Zombie and Daniel gather up the fragments of the plate and the food, and exit into the kitchen.)*

**WILLIAM.** What a terrible mess all this is.

**ZOMBIE VIVIAN.** *(Just stares.)*

**WILLIAM.** A man makes one or two little slips, and his wife can’t handle it. *(Sighs. Zombie Vivian just stares.)* All I wanted to do was have a nice bite for dinner. *(Zombie Vivian complies, and bites him.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Much like the “brains” joke, I imagine the “bite” joke is already stale. It’s going to *gnaw* at you all day, now. *Chew* on it for a while.

**WILLIAM.** Ow! My god, woman! I mean, I understand why you couldn’t help yourself, me being the man that I am, but some restraint is in order! *(Considers.)* Still, though, if you’re interested, I have a feeling I’ll be on my own tonight. Do you live near here? *(Daniel and the Zombie exit from the kitchen.)*

**DANIEL.** Piss and moan about it all you want. I’m not happy with you, little houseboy. Not at all. And I think you know why. *(Catherine and Laura enter from the hallway.)*

**LAURA.** But honestly, I thought you knew? Everyone knew- *(Everyone stops their conversation and looks at each other. There is an awkward silence until William wipes at his forehead. You know what that means.)*

**WILLIAM.** Oh dear. Dinner isn’t sitting too well with me tonight. If you’ll all excuse me. *(He stands and exits to the bedroom.)* We’ll finish this discussion when I return. *(While he’s in there, he dies. Just so we’re clear.)*

**LAURA.** *(To Catherine.)* Catherine, is it true? Are you... are you seeing someone else?

**CATHERINE.** *(Looks over at Daniel. He looks worried.)* It’s complicated. I’d rather not get into it right now.

**LAURA.** But who is it? Is it someone I know?

**DANIEL.** Of course it’s not someone you know!

**LAURA.** What?

**DANIEL.** I-I-I mean, I’m *sure* it’s no one you know. Why does everyone assume that everyone’s lover is someone they know? Billions of people in the world, and they all want to know if they know who it is! *(Walks to liquor.)*

**LAURA.** Where are you going?

**DANIEL.** Hell, I suspect, but I really want to be rather drunk on the way down. *(He pours a drink for himself.)*

**CATHERINE.** Well, it’s only fair, with what Bill did to me. I hope he’s terribly upset.

**LAURA.** He looked ready to kill someone.

**DANIEL.** You don’t... you don’t think he would actually *kill* someone, do you? I mean, he didn’t mean literally end someone’s life over this, right? People say “I’m going to kill so-and-so,” all the time, but they never really mean “kill” kill. They mean hurt people in perfectly recoverable ways, preferably not about the face. *(Laughs nervously.)*

**LAURA.** He looked pretty mad to me. If I were that bloke, I’d surely fear for my life.

**DANIEL.** *(Aside.)* Oh dear.

**LAURA.** Or at least my testicles.

**DANIEL.** *(Squeaks.)* Oh dear...

**LAURA.** What?

**DANIEL.** I mean, I’m sure the fellow deserves whatever William is going to do to him.

**CATHERINE.** Yes, he probably does. *(Daniel looks at her, not wanting to hear this from her.)*

**LAURA.** *(Looking at Daniel.)* And *you*.

**DANIEL.** Me? What about me?

**LAURA.** Don’t think I don’t know what’s going on here. You’ve been paying an awful lot of attention to Vivian tonight, don’t you think?

**DANIEL.** What are you trying to say?

**LAURA.** What I’m trying to say is- *(She makes a face.)* What the Hell is that stench? *(Everyone else reacts the same way, except for the zombies. William comes out of the bedroom, now thoroughly zombified and, apparently, smelling to high hell. Being dead’ll do that.)*

**CATHERINE.** Dear Christ, William! It smells like something died in there!

**WILLIAM.** *(Moans, and shuffles towards the table.)*

**LAURA.** Oh God, I’m going to go into the kitchen. We’re not done with our discussion, Daniel. Not by a long shot. Houseboy! *(She exits, and the Zombie obediently follows.)*

**DANIEL.** *(To Catherine.)* Dear god, she’s going to find out. *(William plops down at his seat and stares blankly.)*

**CATHERINE.** It doesn’t matter anymore if she does, and *I’m* beginning to think that you’re not being completely honest with me about your relationship with *her*. *(She points to Vivian.)*

**DANIEL.** What?! No, Catherine that’s not what’s going on. Vivian and I aren’t having an affair! *(Vivian, sitting next to Daniel, puts an arm on his shoulder, not in the “yes we are” kind of way but more a “hold still while I take a bite out of you” way. She goes to tear a chunk out of his jugular. Daniel jumps up.)*

**CATHERINE.** I knew it!

**DANIEL.** It’s not what it looks like!

**CATHERINE.** Why is it when someone says “it’s not what it looks like,” it almost always is *exactly* what it looks like?

**DANIEL.** I don’t know what’s gotten into her! *(To Vivian.)* What *has* gotten into you?

**VIVIAN.** *(Moans and rises, moving towards Daniel.)*

**CATHERINE.** Well, that settles it. *(To William.)* William? I’m going to tell you who I’ve been with, and you’re really going to want to tear someone apart for it.

**WILLIAM.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** Catherine, please!

**CATHERINE.** It’s him! Your good friend Daniel! What do you think about that, you pompous, adulterous, small-penised windbag! *(She’s very smug.)*

**WILLIAM.** *(Groans, looking at Daniel. But really, he doesn’t seem to care.)*

**DANIEL.** She’s lying! She’s... she’s making it up to, to, to... she’s a liar! A dirty liar!

**CATHERINE.** *(She moves to Daniel and puts an arm around him, pressing against him and raising her leg to put her knee against his groin.)* We’ve been screwing like crazy for the past six months, dear husband. Sometimes on our marital bed when you’re on business.

**DANIEL.** Stop it! Look at him! He’s going to kill me! *(Well, he’d like to, but not for the reasons Daniel thinks. William rises.)*

**CATHERINE.** He *ought* to.

**DANIEL.** What?! You’ve gone mad! *(William moves closer to the two, while Vivian comes up from the other side.)*

**CATHERINE.** For half a year, we’ve been sneaking around under your very nose.

**DANIEL.** *(Pulls away from everyone, just as Vivian is about to grab him.)* Bill, listen... it was a moment of weakness. I- I- I didn’t *want* to have sex with her, but she... *(Thinking.)* She *made* me do it!

**CATHERINE.** Oh, come off it. You know you wanted me from the day you two moved in.

**DANIEL.** I did not! *(William is now very close to Catherine. They’re nearly face-to-face.)*

**CATHERINE.** Oh, I see. You’re going to take it out on me, are you? Well, have at it, then. Do your worst, but I warn you, you are on rocky moral ground mister “sleep with your cashier.” I’m going to divorce you and take you for *everything*. *(They’re close now. Really close.)* When my lawyers are through with you, you’ll be a scrap of meat that no one will ever want to have anything to do with again. A lifeless corpse. *(Still closer. William moans.)* God, William, I want you like I’ve never wanted you before! *(She throws her arms around William and kisses him. William’s taken by surprise. You should be too, given that she’s making out with a dead guy.)*

**DANIEL.** She *has* gone mad!

**CATHERINE.** Take me now, you right bastard! Take me like you’ve never taken me before. *(He does. He grabs her and pulls her to the door to the hallway. Catherine looks back at Daniel, mischievous.)* Don’t go *too* far away. *(They exit, leaving Daniel and Vivian alone.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Bewildered.)* What the bloody hell just happened?

**VIVIAN.** *(Moans, also confused.)*

**DANIEL.** Oh lord, Vivian, I’m so terribly sorry I brought you into all this. I wanted... well, I don’t really know what I’d hoped to accomplish by trying to convince Laura that you and I were having an affair, but it was terribly wrong of me to take advantage of your kindness and my authority over you. *(He takes her hand.)* I am dreadfully sorry. Please don’t hold this against me. *(Vivian looks at his hand.)* My, you’re hands sure are cold. *(Nervous laugh.)* You are very pretty, though. *(She pulls his hand close to her mouth, intending to snack. He pulls his hand away.)* Now, now, young, *naïve* Vivian, surely you’ve seen just how much of a problem this kind of thing is? Really, I’ve had enough of *that* sort of trouble, if you understand my meaning. *(Vivian moves close to him. He stands.)* Now really, a pretty girl like you does indeed awaken a bit of a beast in me, an insatiable monster that will not rest until it tastes of your sweet, supple flesh, and I think I can see the same urges in you. *(You think so, do you? Vivian closes in.)* But there’s been enough lust and sex and physicality that I... my, is it getting hot in here? *(He backs away from her advances until he’s against the coat closet door.)* Vivian I... I can’t do this. *(He hears Laura coming back from the kitchen.)* Jesus! If she sees this, she’ll get the wrong idea. *(He pauses.)* Well, the *right* idea, but with the wrong person, and I can’t stomach it if this gets any worse. *(He quickly opens the closet door and shoves Vivian in, closing the door behind him as Laura and the Zombie enter.)*

**LAURA.** Is it getting worse in here?

**DANIEL.** What? No! Not worse! Not that it was bad to begin with, you see, but if it was bad, it’s certainly not getting worse.

**LAURA.** You don’t think the smell was bad before?

**DANIEL.** *(Pause.)* Oh, the smell? Worse? Um... no, I think it’s getting much better. *(The closet thumps as Vivian tries to get out.)*

**LAURA.** What’s that?

**DANIEL.** Nothing, really. *(The door to the hallway opens, and William and a now zombified Catherine enter.)* Or, it was William and Catherine, back from making up and not planning on any more big announcements right? *(He glares at them. They don’t respond.)* Good. Shall we get back to dinner then?

**LAURA.** I suppose. *(Everyone returns to the table. Daniel tries to slide the chair in front of the closet door to keep Vivian inside.)* Where did *Vivian* go? *(Again with the venom when she says her name.)*

**DANIEL.** Oh, uh, she said she was going to go home. Not feeling well, I think.

**LAURA.** Oh.

**WILLIAM.** *(Moans.)*

**CATHERINE.** *(Groans.)*

**ZOMBIE.** *(Moans.)*

**VIVIAN.** *(Groans* *from closet.)*

LAURA. Sounds like a bunch of zombies at the table. *(Knowing pause, maybe a “look” from all the cast members at the audience. There is a KNOCK at the door.)*

**DANIEL.** Oh Jesus, what now?

**POLICE OFFICER.** *(Offstage.)* Police.

**LAURA.** Police?

**POLICE OFFICER.** *(Offstage.)* That’s wha’ the badge says.

**DANIEL.** Did... did someone point at the door and say something like, “the police never come knocking when you need them?”

**LAURA.** No, not me.

**WILLIAM.** *(Shrugs and shakes his head.)*

**DANIEL.** Huh... What are the police doing here? *(He gets up, goes to the door, and opens it. The POLICE OFFICER is on the other side.)*

**POLICE OFFICER.** Good evening, gov’na. *(To everyone else.)* Ladies. Gentlemen.

**DANIEL.** What’s going on, officer?

**POLICE OFFICER.** I wa’ in the buildin’ and ‘eard lots a shou’in’. I wanted to make sure everyone was alright.

**DANIEL.** No, no... we’re all fine here, Officer.

**POLICE OFFICER.** *(Sniffs the air.)* Smell good in here, eh? Suppa’?

**LAURA.** Um... yes.

**POLICE OFFICER.** I see, I see. You know, it’s a pretty wild night out there.

**DANIEL.** Really? I hadn’t noticed.

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Retract my last comment about understatements, because *that* one is the winner in this play.

**POLICE OFFICER.** Yeah, yeah... been getting calls all day ‘bout hordes of chav’s loit’rin’ about, and boferin’ folk’. Lots o’ panicked people, I ‘ear, but I fink it’s much ado about nuffink, you know? Chav’s is just kids an’ all.

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* This narrator would like to take a moment to apologize to all speakers of the proper, Queen’s English. The writer of this play is from Texas, and learned everything he knows about British accents from Dick Van Dyke.

**DANIEL.** Do you mind, Officer? We’re in the middle of dinner.

**POLICE OFFICER.** Not at all, and fanks for off’rin’! *(Officer makes himself at home at the table.)*

**DANIEL.** No, I meant-

**POLICE OFFICER.** Lots of the food places is closed, and I wa’n’t able to get me fish and chips from the Pakistani fellah wha’ sets up on the corner o’ Porter and Main. I am a might bit hungry. *(The Officer takes of his jacket as he’s talking.)* Ain’t all that often that folks invite me into they ‘omes to ‘ave dinner, but it’s right kind when they do. *(He pushes the chair away from the coat closet and opens the door. Vivian holds her arms out menacingly. The Officer drapes his coat over her arms and closes the door, replacing the chair as if nothing happened.)* Good folk, you lot are. Good folk. *(He sits. Daniel and Laura exchange a look, then sit. The Officer starts taking food and filling up a plate. The zombies look at him. Daniel and Laura spend a few minutes in awkward silence.)*

**DANIEL.** So... er... officer. Are folks in your precinct sick, too?

**POLICE OFFICER.** *(Mouthful of food.)* Oh marg. Mereome rom mown miv ma mug.

**LAURA.** I’m sorry?

**POLICE OFFICER.** *(Swallows.)* I said, everyone’s come down wif da bug. I go’ in a li’l late dis morn, an’ no’ne was in.

**DANIEL.** I understood him better with his mouth full.

**POLICE OFFICER.** Anyway, so everyone’s got sick, right, an’ they left it up to ol’ me ta’ take care of th’ sitch, yeah? So I tries to call me cap’n, and he wan’t answerin’ his mobile. So I says to m’self, “m’self, wha’ would cause the whole constabulary ta take tha day off, eh?”

**LAURA.** Yes, I’m sure that would make a man wonder.

**POLICE OFFICER.** So me bein’ the fella’ wif da brai’ in the old station... *(The zombies look at each other a little confused... did he say “brains” or not.)* ...I finks to m’self dat I come in on Sunday, and ain’t no one working on Sunday as usual.

**DANIEL.** Um, but don’t the police work on- *(Zombie Catherine edges closer to the Police Officer.)*

**POLICE OFFICER.** But I checks and it ain’t Sunday, right? *(Zombie William also moves closer.)* So I checks me the calendar, and lo an’ behold, I see it’s Monday, which is wha’ day I fought it was ta begin wif. *(The Zombie gets up and slips behind the Officer.)*

**LAURA.** Dear lord, will this man never shut up?

**POLICE OFFICER.** An’ then I- *(He is interrupted by zombie Vivian banging at the closet door.)* -‘ey. Wha’ was that?

**LAURA.** Yes, what *was* that?

**DANIEL.** Nothing! It’s nothing.

**POLICE OFFICER.** I fink there’s someone in the closet, there.

**DANIEL.** No... no there’s not. Why would there be someone in the closet. *(Zombie Vivian bangs again.)*

**POLICE OFFICER.** *(Stands.)* I fink there is, eh? I better check this out. *(He draws his gun.)*

**NARRATOR.** *(DING.)* Uh... excuse me. Can we... can we fix that? *(One of the stage crew quickly rushes on stage, takes the gun, and replaces it with a Billy club.)* Yes, much better. Gun laws in the UK are quite different than the United States. *(Throughout the next “screed,” the paused cast gets increasingly annoyed and uncomfortable, until Zombie Vivian walks out of the closet, looks around, then quickly wanders offstage to “deal” with the Narrator.)* America’s cavalier “cowboy culture” mentality is quit a blight on the civilized world, if you don’t mind me editorializing a bit. Did you know that in other countries that do not permit gun ownership, the actual rate of gun-related deaths is exponentially lower, per capita, than in the United States? While there is still crime in the UK, the notion that “the only thing standing between a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun” is such poppycock that-

**ZOMBIE VIVIAN.** *(Offstage, groans.)*

**NARRATOR.** Oh my! Now see here- *(Sound of a zombie attack. The Narrator screams once, gurgles, and is quiet. Zombie Vivian, now with more blood on her mouth, walks back onstage to the closet, opens the door, walks in, and closes it.)*

**DANIEL.** *(To Police Officer.)* Is that weapon truly necessary?

**POLICE OFFICER.** Going into a dangerous situation, govna’. Gots a chance ta get unpleasant. *(The Zombies give the Police Officer room. The Police Office gets to the closet.)* ‘oo’s in there. I am an officer o’ da’ la’. *(Zombie Vivian bangs again.)* Right. I’m going in.

**DANIEL.** Wait! *(The Officer raises his nightstick above his head, moves the chair, and pulls open the door. Zombie Vivian reaches out for him.)*

**POLICE OFFICER.** What the ‘ell? Did you know you’ve got a young woman in ‘ere? (*Zombie Vivian grabs him and drags him in. The door closes behind them.)*

**LAURA.** Vivian’s in there?

**DANIEL.** It, uh... it looks like it.

**LAURA.** What kind of sick game are you playing at!? You put that poor girl in the closet and-

**DANIEL.** Poor girl? Poor girl!? *(Banging and some screams from the Police Officer come from the closet.)* Not ten minutes ago, you couldn’t stand her. Now she’s a “poor girl?”

**LAURA.** I didn’t know you were playing at being a sick, sexual deviant!

**DANIEL.** Me?! Me a sexual deviant?! Are you mad? *(More bangs and screams.)*

**LAURA.** Come off it Daniel! The game is up. I know that you’ve been having an affair with her, but I didn’t know the depths you’ve sunk to. She looked like such an innocent girl, and you’ve probably corrupted her and turned her into a monster! *(One last bang and a gurgling scream.)*

**DANIEL.** Oh, *I’ve* been having an affair, have I? Have I? Well, what about you and your little Latin loverboy, there, huh? Who’s the one that been unfaithful, eh?

**LAURA.** Only because you were unfaithful first!

**DANIEL.** I saw you looking at the other houseboy, Poncho, or whatever his name was!

**LAURA.** I never... well, I never acted on it. *(The Police Oficer comes out of the closet, now a zombie.)* And I’ve got some news for YOU, you git! All this *(She gestures at the Zombie... the original one.)* is just a game. To make you confess to what you’ve done, and did you *ever*! Hah!

**DANIEL.** I- *(Pauses.)* Wait... nothing happened between you two?

**LAURA.** *(Things are calming.)* No, Daniel. I would *never* cheat on you. *(Pause.)* Well, he did bite me in the kitchen, but that was an innocent little nip. *(Big dramatic pause. Laura wipes her brow. Uh-oh.)*

**DANIEL.** He BIT you? Jesus, look at you. Just the thought of that has got you sweating. And to think for a moment I believed that you didn’t do anything with him.

**LAURA.** Oh Daniel! You’re such a man. I wish you were dead! *(She pushes past him and flops down on the couch. She puts an arm over her forehead and closes her eyes.)*

**DANIEL.** You wish I was dead?

**LAURA.** I don’t know. Maybe I wish *I* were dead. *(Wish granted.)*

**DANIEL.** Do you? Well, how about this. Since we’re sharing here, let me tell *you* the truth, darling. You think I was having an affair with Vivian, but I wasn’t. *(Laura opens her eyes wide... she’s a zombie, too. The other Zombies start to gather around him.)* In fact, it wasn’t with Vivian at all. *(He points to Zombie Catherine.)* It was her! Your best friend!

**ZOMBIE LAURA.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** Hurts, doesn’t it? So now you know. Your husband betrayed you.

**ZOMBIE LAURA.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** Your best friend betrayed you.

**ZOMBIE CATHERINE.** *(Groans.)*

**DANIEL.** Well, Catherine, it’s about time this all was laid out on the table. I’m sorry to do this, but there can be no more lies.

**ZOMBIE WILLIAM.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** William, if you want to tear me apart, do it later. I will understand and take my punishment like a man.

**ZOMBIE LAURA.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** There, dear... it’s all out there. And I... *(He flops down on the couch.)* Oh, I feel awful!

**ZOMBIE LAURA.** *(Sits down next to him.)*

**DANIEL.** Oh darling, I was such a fool. *(The other Zombies encircle the couch.) I* can’t believe I’d ever hurt you. *(He takes her hands.)*

**ZOMBIE LAURA.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** Yes, you’re right to be hurt. I was a horrid husband. *(Everyone gets closer.)* I want to say to you, in front of everyone, that I was wrong. I’m so, so sorry darling. I can only hope that you’ll forgive me.

**ZOMBIE LAURA.** *(Groans.)*

**DANIEL.** And Catherine, I’m sorry I put you in this position. What we did was a mistake.

**ZOMBIE CATHERINE.** *(Groans.)*

**DANIEL.** No, no, no... it was wonderful and you are a beautiful woman, but I should have restrained myself. I am sorry to you, as well. *(To zombie Vivian.)* And you... I had no business bringing you into this. I fear I may have given you the wrong idea, and I hope that our working relationship will not suffer.

**ZOMBIE VIVIAN.** *(Moans.)*

**DANIEL.** *(Smiles.)* Thank you for that. Bill?

**ZOMBIE WILLIAM.** *(Groans loudly.)*

**DANIEL.** Yes, I know. You’re right to be angry with me. I understand if you want to hurt me. I understand if everyone here wants to hurt me. And to be honest, I should let you. *(The zombies are all closer.)* In fact, go ahead. Anyone here who wants to take a piece of me, I submit myself to you. *(He closes his eyes.)* I will take it like a man. I’m glad I finally had the brains to accept my fate. *(Well, that was pretty much it. The zombies pounce. Daniel takes it like a man... shrieking. The house lights go down as he continues to scream.)*

**NARRATOR.** (*DING! Zombie-like.)* Braaaaaaains!

**THE END**