

# Goddess Of The Hunt

by Doug DeVita

# GODDESS OF THE HUNT

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## GODDESS OF THE HUNT

*For Gay Men everywhere who truly loved  
and / or survived their mothers,  
as well as for anyone who's waited patiently  
for unrequited love to be requited.*

## GODDESS OF THE HUNT

GODDESS OF THE HUNT was first presented in a workshop at The Fresh Fruit Festival in New York, NY in April 2024. It was directed by Rosie Corr, and the cast was as follows:

Charlie Windsor..... Kevin Ligon  
Diana Black-White..... Mary Powelson  
Percy Shelley Tanenbaum... Benjamin Cardona  
Ed McGrath and All The Men  
Who Look Like Ed..... Robert Maisonette  
Jordan and All the Js..... David Carson

It was subsequently revised, and this version received its World Premiere at Lab Theater Project in Tampa, Florida in September 2025. It was directed by Owen Robertson, and the cast was as follows:

Charlie Windsor..... Larry Corwin  
Diana Black-White..... Samantha Parisi  
Percy Shelley Tanenbaum... Hippiie Griswold  
Ed McGrath and All The Men  
Who Look Like Ed..... David Warner  
Jordan and All the Js..... Charles Byrd

SPECIAL THANKS to the following for their invaluable help in the development of this play:  
Rick Anthony; Mark Bly/Kennedy Center Playwrights Intensive; Corrine Bottleson; Ray Boucher;  
Larry Box; Todd Butera; Kevin Calhoun; Frank Calo, Jeff Goodman, & Louis Lopardi / The Fresh Fruit  
Festival; Patrick Caughill; James Cichocki; Caitlyn Coleman; Dennis Corsi; Ken Davenport; Brian  
Dumbreski; Lindsay Ellis; Todd Fuller; Kaen Freeman; Vince Gatton; Anne Griswald; Graydon Gund;  
Steven Hauk; Anthony Hayes; Caroline Jett; Gene Kato; Kristen Tripp Kelley; Teresa Kelsey; Rob  
Maitner; Michael Vincent Mangano; Rogelio Martinez; Jay Michaels; Joe Moe; Carole Monferdini;  
Patrick Obando; Marie Eléna O'Brien; Maria Payares; Owen Robertson; Beth Tepe Robertson; Luis  
Angel Rodriguez; Em Stripling; Danny Suarez; The 9<sup>th</sup> Floor; Angelo Torres; Eric Webb; Jack Utrata

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*Projections: Pre-show: a constantly shifting barrage of social media posts, i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Threads, X (formerly Twitter), Blue Sky, Slack... Christ, even Ello if that still exists. Food. Babies. Puppies. Jokes. Political Rants. Fan Pages. Be creative. Be daring. Be merciless. And be sure to include personal information with precise check-ins. And make it a constant babble of voices.*

*(The houselights dim and we see three posts leading us into the world of this play; from now on we also hear the comments distinctly as we see them being typed. Projection: Sunday March 17, 9:11 PM EST / Charlie Windsor's Facebook. No check-in. The image is a photo of Charlie with a handsome, late middle-aged man sitting at a sidewalk café in Paris. His comment is:)*

**CHARLIE.** (V.O.) My beloved Mark. 20 years. I can't believe you left me today – so suddenly and without reason. *(Sad face and tear emojis.*

*Projection: Saturday April 7, 4:55 PM AST / Tonia Lee Rathburn's Facebook. She has checked in to The Titanic Wreck Site. The image is a rather mannish, 40-ish woman, holding up a broken, rusty porthole and smiling. Her comment is:)*

**TONIA LEE.** (V.O.) Another scary but successful dive to Titanic finding stuff for "Wreck Site Flea Markets" on Lovely Living TV. Thank you, Diana, for suggesting me for this job! You ARE a Goddess! *(She's tagged Lovely Living TV, "Wreck Site Flea Markets," and "Diana Black-White: Goddess Of The Hunt."* Projection: Friday April 13, 11:05 PM EST / Diana Black-White's Facebook. She has checked in to Joe Allen, New York City. A red pin indicates the location on a map of the West 40s in Manhattan. Her comment is:)

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**DIANA.** (*V.O.*) Looking forward to a nice, relaxing Kir Royale after seeing “Crazy For Abe” again tonight. Always exciting watching Mary Todd Lincoln go nuts singing Sondheim. (*In the soft white and brick-red light of Joe Allen’s, we see Charlie and Ed, both north of 50, at the bar. Ed has a glass of Red Wine; Charlie has a Gibson. Diana, une femme d’un age certain, sits nearby, sipping a Kir Royale, engrossed in her iPad. They’re all attractive and well-heeled.*)

**CHARLIE.** Keith un-friended me.

**ED.** He un-friended you?

**CHARLIE.** He un-friended me.

**ED.** And you’re upset because...

**CHARLIE.** KEITH UN-FRIENDED ME!

**ED.** What are you, thirteen?

**CHARLIE.** Excuse me?

**ED.** It’s not like you really know each other.

**CHARLIE.** I slept with him, Ed.

**ED.** In college, Charlie!

**CHARLIE.** He found me on Facebook, we met for coffee, and... we hooked up. I didn’t mean for it to happen, but... He was very persuasive.

**ED.** Charlie! It’s barely a month since Mark...

**CHARLIE.** I’m lonely, Ed. And horny, okay?

**ED.** You’ve been horny since we were 12.

**CHARLIE.** Don’t you judge me. ... Mark and I hadn’t... it’s nearly a year since we...

**ED.** Oh. ... You never told me that. I’m sorry. ... Okay, I can sort of understand hooking up, Mark *is* gone after all, and Lord knows I’m not a prude, but friending him on Facebook?

**CHARLIE.** I don’t know ... I got sentimental?

**ED.** Keith was a jerk in coll... he dumped you...a woman, he dumped you for a woman!

**CHARLIE.** I know, I know, I know! ... But I thought maybe... It’s been decades... people change...

**ED.** Once a jerk, always a jerk.

**CHARLIE.** Okay, so maybe I rushed into the Facebook-friending thing again.

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**ED.** You do this all the... What's so fascinating about the boring, insignificant details people you barely know share with the world?

**CHARLIE.** It makes me feel better about the boring, insignificant details of my own pathetic life?

**ED.** I know that Mark... his death... it was a shock, Charlie, but spending all your time trolling social media, only leaving that wreck of an apartment for sex with an old flamer...

**CHARLIE.** We were supposed to fix up that wreck together... I don't know if I can go to Paris by myself. Come with me, Ed. Give your stand-by a shot at Lincoln for once.

**ED.** (*Mimicking a rim-shot.*) Ba dum ching.

**CHARLIE.** (*Wheedling.*) April... in Paris...

**ED.** Shut up.

**CHARLIE.** The Eiffel Tower... The smell of the chestnut trees in the rain... The Ritz...

**ED.** You had me up until The Ritz. I don't want to spend that much.

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

**ED.** ... Charlie... look, don't take this the wrong way, but... I really don't want to be part of "The Mark Memorial Tour."

**CHARLIE.** Ouch.

**ED.** That was harsh. I'm sorry. I would love to go to Paris with you someday. Really, I would. But you need to make *this* trip alone.

**CHARLIE.** Alone. What a horrible word. What if I never find someone again? I'm not 30 anymore.

**ED.** You're not even 50 anymore.

**CHARLIE.** How dare you! (*Diana comes over and taps Ed on the shoulder.*)

**DIANA.** I am so sorry for interrupting, but you're Ed McGrath, aren't you?

**ED.** You know who I am?

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

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

**DIANA.** You totally deserved that Tony no matter what those easily outraged Musical Theater Queens keep saying on BroadwayWorld.

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**ED.** Oh, that's so kind of you to say. But Raul was wonderful too.

**DIANA.** Yes, of course he was, but he isn't you. And I wanted to see Donna Murphy one more time before Cardi B takes over next month. (*She chuckles and shakes her head.*) Cardi B as Mary Todd Lincoln singing Stephen Sondheim. I hope she doesn't assassinate it.

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

**DIANA.** (*Extending her hand.*) Diana. Diana Black-White.

**CHARLIE.** Black-White? You're kidding!

**DIANA.** Swear to God.

**CHARLIE.** Have you thought of changing your name to Gray?

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

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

**DIANA.** I do have my own show on Lovely Living TV: "Diana Black-White: Goddess Of The Hunt." I travel around the world collecting stuff for my wealthiest clients.

**CHARLIE.** I don't really watch LLTV that much.

**DIANA.** (*She laughs.*) No worries. They've got me in the death spot: Saturday mornings at 6:30, right after reruns of "Suzanne Somers' Perfect Abs."

**CHARLIE.** Who's gonna watch Lovely Living TV at 6:30 on a Saturday morning?

**ED.** (*To Charlie.*) That was rude.

**CHARLIE.** I just meant who's up that early on the weekend? Neither one of us are.

**DIANA.** Are you two a couple?

**CHARLIE.** Who, Mr. Married-To-His-Career-Here? We're only best friends. Since kindergarten.

**ED.** Sometimes it seems longer.

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

**ED.** I like you too, Charlie.



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**DIANA.** Oh, is that your name? Charlie?

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

**DIANA.** Now you're kidding!

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

**DIANA.** Don't tell me: your father's name was Philip?

**CHARLIE.** No.

**DIANA.** Edward?

**CHARLIE.** No.

**DIANA.** George?

**CHARLIE.** No. Herman.

**DIANA.** Herman?

**CHARLIE.** Herman! (*He sings:*) Gregory James!

**BOTH.** (*Singing:*) Is giving a ball!

**CHARLIE.** My father hated when I sang that at him. My mother loved it.

**DIANA.** My mother wanted to name me Shirley. Shirley Temple.

**CHARLIE.** Shirley Temple Black!?!

**DIANA.** Shirley Temple Black.

**CHARLIE.** No!

**DIANA.** Yes!

**CHARLIE.** No!

**ED.** Stop!

**DIANA.** Thank God my father insisted on naming me after his favorite aunt. I liked him. My mother was... awful. And after my father died, she... well.. never mind.

**CHARLIE.** Parents don't reali... I mean, I'm sure they don't mean... what they do to their kids...

**DIANA.** That's why I didn't have any kids with any of my husbands, so... At least I'm not paying for any Ivy League educations, right?

**BOTH.** (*Simultaneously*) Of course right! (*They both laugh. Ed rolls his eyes.*)

**DIANA.** Can I buy you both a drink?

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**CHARLIE.** Sure!

**ED.** One is my limit these days.

**CHARLIE.** Since when?

**ED.** Since I have two shows tomorrow and two on Sunday. As you so kindly stated: I'm old.

**DIANA.** Just one more? (*Signaling the bartender.*) Jordan? Another round. (*To Charlie.*) So what do you do, Charlie?

**ED.** Nothing. He does nothing. (*To Charlie.*) I keep telling you! Take a class. Join a gym. Volunteer!

**CHARLIE.** I used to write advertising copy, but my 40-something supervisor had the hots for a 6-foot-4 20-something Gaysian. I don't really need to work anymore, but it would have been someplace to go now that Mark's passed away.

**DIANA.** Oh, your husband died. I'm so sorry. (*Whispering.*) Cancer?

**CHARLIE.** Bullet in Bloomingdale's. The White Sale.

**DIANA.** Oh, my God! The Bloomingdale's Silk Sheet Shooting? That made the news in Boston!

**CHARLIE.** I tell Mark it's not worth fighting over those sheets, but he just doesn't listen. Then that shot... I'll never stop hearing it... And Mark... he... he falls... and the bitch runs off with the King-Sized Calvin Kleins before anyone can stop her.

**DIANA.** They still haven't found out who she is, have they?

**CHARLIE.** No one is telling me anything except they'll call when they have any leads.

**DIANA.** So *tragique*. I've lost a husband or two myself, so I understand the pain. Ed's right, you know; you really should shake up your routine a bit. (*Scrolling through her iPad.*) The other day I read this, hold on, let me find it, I've got it somewhere... Here it is: "If you think adventure is dangerous, try routine. It is lethal."

**CHARLIE.** Paulo Coelho.

**DIANA.** Yes! I saw it as a meme on Instagram.

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

**CHARLIE.** You're not the boss of me, Ed.

**ED.** (*As he exits.*) Whatever. I'm leaving after I pee.

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

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

**CHARLIE.** No way! I'm from Deer Park!

**DIANA.** No way!

**CHARLIE.** Diana. From Huntington.

**DIANA.** Charlie. From Deer Park.

**CHARLIE.** There's something almost mythic about this, like we were destined to meet.

**DIANA.** Serendipity works its magic again!

**CHARLIE.** But you live in Boston, now?

**DIANA.** A little over 4 years.

**CHARLIE.** "Cheers."

**DIANA.** *(Toasting Charlie.)* Cheers.

**CHARLIE.** I mean the show. "Cheers." I watch the reruns every morning. 4:00 – 6:00. See? Pathetic.

**DIANA.** You're going to Paris and staying at the Ritz. There's *nothing* pathetic about that. *(Diana's phone rings. She looks at it.)*

**CHARLIE.** Do you need to take that?

**DIANA.** No, it's just my husband.

**CHARLIE.** I'd give anything to ignore a phone call from my husband again. *(Ed comes back.)*

**ED.** Split a cab, Charlie?

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

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

**ED.** I'm at the Booth Theatre eight times a week for the foreseeable future. Goodnight, Charlie. Have a safe trip. See you next Friday. *(There's an awkward moment between Charlie and Ed – will they kiss goodbye? Ed gives Charlie a quick hug, then slaps a 20 on the bar and exits, rolling his eyes at Charlie and indicating "Call me!" Jordan enters with a new round of drinks.)*

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

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

**CHARLIE.** That's not necessary, Diana.

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**DIANA.** (*Giving Charlie Ed's 20.*) But I insist. (*Jordan exits. She waits until he's gone, then takes a small bottle of Cassis from her bag and mixes herself a Kir Royale.*)

**CHARLIE.** Thank y... What are you doing?

**DIANA.** I like a good Kir Royale, but they don't carry my favorite brand of Cassis; it's cheaper to buy a glass of Champagne and make my own, anyway. So, how long were you and... Mark, was it?

**CHARLIE.** Yes. Mark.

**DIANA.** How long were you and Mark together, Charlie?

**CHARLIE.** Over 20 years. That's over 200 in gay time.

**DIANA.** Jeff and I have been married almost 4 years. That's almost 400 in Jeff time. We don't have as much in common as I initially thought. He has his needs, and they don't often intersect with mine.

**CHARLIE.** Oh. OH! You mean he cheats on you?

**DIANA.** It isn't cheating when your husband is bisexual, Charlie.

**CHARLIE.** How did you two meet?

**DIANA.** Christian Mingle.com. We both joined as a goof. I thought "This guy is FUN!" He's not. Jeff is rich. But he's not fun. I like surrounding myself with fun people. Like you!

**CHARLIE.** But I'm sad, Diana.

**DIANA.** Not to sound insensitive, but you'll grieve, you'll move on, and you'll be happy again. I have a sixth sense about these things.

**CHARLIE.** (*Starting to cry.*) Shit. This is so embarrassing. A middle-aged gay man sobbing in a theater bar.

**DIANA.** Oh, please! Have you been in here whenever Patti LuPone lost a Tony? ... Charlie, do you know who Adriana Ivancich\* was?

(*\*Pronounced Ah-DREE-ahna Ee-VON-chitch.*)

**CHARLIE.** Who?

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

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

**DIANA.** No, you haven't.

**CHARLIE.** No, I haven't.

**DIANA.** It's a piece of crap. But I've never forgotten a People Magazine article I read where she talked about the last time she and Hemingway

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spoke. He began to cry and said “Look – now you’ve seen Papa cry.” So you see, even Ernest Hemingway cried over a lost love. *(Jordan comes with the receipt, eyeing the Kir Royale.)*

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

**DIANA.** Jordan, you’re adorable. Too bad you’re not single.

**JORDAN.** Or rich.

**CHARLIE.** You two know each other?

**JORDAN.** She knows everybody, Charlie. *(Taking the signed receipt, Jordan exits.)*

**DIANA.** Here’s to new friends and a new life with a new man for you. Soon.

**CHARLIE.** I don’t know about that.

**DIANA.** I do. And now I must go. I have to be at the studio early. I’m shooting next season’s intros all day tomorrow.

**CHARLIE.** I’ve enjoyed talking with you, Diana. Thank you.

**DIANA.** Same here. Maybe I’ll send you a friend request.

**CHARLIE.** Maybe I’ll accept it.

**DIANA.** Have a wonderful time, Charlie. Go to Le Bar Hemingway for a drink or two. Tell Jean-Louis to put it on my account. And remember what I told you about Papa. *(Kissing Charlie on both cheeks, she exits. We become aware of a man in a rumpled trench coat (The Detective Who Looks Like Ed But Isn’t) in the shadows outside the bar. Charlie finishes his drink, looks at Ed’s glass of wine, downs it in one gulp, and exits. Passing the man, he stops.)*

**CHARLIE.** Ed? What are you still doing here?

**DETECTIVE WHO LOOKS LIKE ED BUT ISN'T.** Nope. Sorry, buddy. Not him. *(The Detective Who Looks Like Ed But Isn’t pulls up his collar and heads off. Charlie shrugs and continues off in the opposite direction. Projection: Saturday April 14, 1:15 AM EST / Charlie’s Facebook Messenger. We hear a ding, and see a message from Diana:)*

**DIANA.** *(V.O.)* Hi, Charlie! It’s me, Diana Black-White. We met at Joe Allen tonight. I’ve just sent you a friend request; there are so many hackers out there, I wanted to let you know this really is a legitimate request from me. One can never be too careful. Anyway, au revoir, darling. Have a

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wonderful time in Paris. (*A “Kiss” emoji. Projection: Saturday April 14, 11:40 PM EST / Lovely Living TV’s Facebook. The image is a photo of Tonia Lee holding a bust of Ernest Hemingway. The caption reads:*)

**LLTV SPOKESMAN.** (*V.O.*) Lovely Living TV mourns the sudden loss earlier this evening of one of our best and brightest Production Assistants, Tonia Lee Rathburn. Her work for “Wreck Site Flea Market,” “Flipping Your AirBNB,” and “Goddess Of The Hunt” was extraordinary, and she will be sorely missed. From all of us at LLTV, Rest In Peace, Tonia Lee.” (*We hear Diana as she leaves a reply:*)

**DIANA.** (*V.O.*) Thank you, Tonia Lee Rathburn, for all the work you did on my show. Rest in peace, darling. (*Projection: Sunday April 15, 10:15 AM EST / Percy Shelley Tanenbaum’s Facebook. He’s checked in to a Starbucks on Park Avenue and 29th St., New York City. A red pin indicates the location on a map of Murray Hill. His comment is:*)

**PERCY.** (*V.O.*) Enjoying my Iced Hazelnut Mocha before church. (*In the bright morning light pouring through the huge windows, we see Percy Shelley Tanenbaum, 35-ish, at a table, staring at a phone in a red leather case. A white bike helmet and backpack are on a chair next to him. Jeff White, somewhat north of 60, enters with coffees and pastries.*)

**JEFF.** I waited in my hotel room for you last night.

**PERCY.** Sorry, I had an unexpected gig come up downtown.

**JEFF.** You could’ve texted. I was worried, the way you race around on that bike of yours. (*Percy shrugs. Jeff moves the helmet and backpack to the table and sits.*)

**PERCY.** Oh, Jeff, you do care. I’m a fast, but agile cyclist. I need to be, because of self-involved jaywalkers like you.

**JEFF.** I know you’re careful, but a lot of other cyclists aren’t.

**PERCY.** You should know. You’re going to get decimated one of these days. (*A Scruff alert beeps. Percy looks at the phone.*)

**JEFF.** Scruff, Percy? I’m buying your breakfast and you’re looking at a gay hookup app?

**PERCY.** It’s your phone. Why would I have Scruff? (*Showing him the screen.*) He’s right over there. Look.

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

FORTY-FIVE!?! Ten years ago. Maybe.

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**PERCY.** I'll never understand why any man thinks wearing underwear embroidered with ram horns around his junk is even remotely attractive. It's just so desperately gay.

**JEFF.** Speaking of desperately gay – here's your Iced Venti Skim No Whip Mocha With Three Pumps Fat Free Hazelnut Syrup.

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

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

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

**JEFF.** Or London. Or Helsinki. Or even fucking Pago Pago. I'm never quite sure where she is.

**PERCY.** Do you really care where she is? *(The Scruff alert beeps again.)*

**JEFF.** It's the ram horns.

**PERCY.** Persistent old bugger, isn't he?

**JEFF.** *(Shouting across the store.)* Sorry, not interested. *(To Percy.)* Happy?

**PERCY.** As long as my rent's paid, daddy.

**JEFF.** I am not your daddy, Percy. Call me Jeff, or Sir, but never daddy. That's just too...

**PERCY.** Icky? *(Slurping the rest of his drink.)* I've got to go. I'm late for church.

**JEFF.** Why don't you skip this week and play *my* organ?

**PERCY.** Ha. Ha. Ha. You're very funny. For a lawyer. My rent, Sir Jeff? *(Jeff takes out his phone and taps.)*

**JEFF.** Check your Venmo, make sure it's there.

**PERCY.** *(Looking at his phone.)* Thanks. Will you be staying in New York tonight, or are you leaving on the next train?

**JEFF.** I think I'll fly back tomorrow morning, if that's alright with you?

**PERCY.** Suit yourself.

**JEFF.** Am I ever going to see this apartment I'm paying for? *(Percy kisses Jeff's neck and whispers in his ear.)*

**PERCY.** Hotel sex is hotter.

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**JEFF.** Uh huh. Cancel any plans you have for this afternoon. Plan to spend the night. There's a particularly complicated hymn I'd like you to play. Every verse. *(The Scruff alert beeps yet again.)*

**PERCY.** You're awfully popular this morning. Must be a refreshing change, huh?

**JEFF.** It's a good thing you're such a good fuck.

**PERCY.** Thank you. You too. *(Taking his pastry and picking up his helmet, he leaves. Projection: Sunday April 15, 7:00 PM EST / Charlie's Facebook. He has checked in to the Delta Sky Lounge, John F. Kennedy International Airport. The image is of a dotted line going from NYC to Paris, France. His comment is:)*

**CHARLIE.** *(V.O.)* Off to Paris for the first time without Mark. *(Sad Face and Broken Heart Emojis. Projection: Tuesday April 17, 7:45 PM CET / Diana's Facebook. She has checked in to "Le Bar Hemingway, Hotel Ritz, Paris France." The location is indicated by a red pin on a map of Paris. Her comment is:)*

**DIANA.** *(V.O.)* At Le Bar Hemingway in Paris, taking a break from finding new treasures to meet for drinks with a new friend. *(Looking particularly chic in the flattering pink-white light of Le Bar Hemingway, Diana is seated in a plush chair, phone in one hand and Kir Royale in the other. There is a bust of Ernest Hemingway on the bar.)*

**DIANA.** ... Don't start, Jeff. I decided at the last minute to take the late flight Saturday night; I had to fly coach – from Newark! I couldn't sleep, and I was jet-lagged on Sunday. ... Oh, for Christ's sake, so you found out I'm in Paris from a BlueSky-post! It's not the first time and it won't be the last. ... You know our deal, and so far I'm keeping up my end... *(Charlie enters. Diana waves at him.)*

**CHARLIE.** Diana?

**DIANA.** I've got to go. I'm meeting a new friend for drinks at the Ritz. ... Yes, he's gay. Can't this wait until I get back? ... I don't know! Check my Instagram, that's when! *(Disconnecting. To Charlie.)* Surprise!

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



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

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

**DIANA.** Flying home to what? Watch old sit-coms? You know that isn't the answer, Charlie.

**CHARLIE.** Yesterday morning, as the plane is descending, I see the Eiffel Tower in the distance. I've never been to the top. Mark had vertigo, so we never went. I'd never even been to Paris before meeting him. I almost cry, but I don't. When I check into the hotel and the concierge asks why I'm here without Mark, I almost cry as I tell her what happened, but I don't. I go for a walk along the Seine as I wait for my room to be ready, like Mark and I always do – did – on our first morning here. I stop for a café au lait at Deux Magots – Mark's favorite café – and I don't cry once. And this afternoon, I finally go to the top of the Eiffel Tower. It's breathtaking. And I have no one to share it with. I throw a few rose petals over the railing. Most of them get caught in the suicide netting. ... But one or two flutter down, slowly, gently drifting in the breeze... I say goodbye. ... And it's not healing. It's worse than I imagined. Everywhere I go I'm reminded of him. We shared Paris, it was ours, and it will never be the same for me again. Perhaps it will hurt going back to that apartment alone, but it hurts so much more being here without Mark I can't even let myself cry. I want to go home. And cry.

**DIANA.** Charlie, I am so sorry. I want to make it up to you.

**CHARLIE.** Why? You hardly know me.

**DIANA.** You've touched me. I want you to have a little fun.

**CHARLIE.** That's so... unexpectedly kind. *(Jean-Louis enters with two cocktails on a tray.)*

**JEAN-LOUIS.** We would like to celebrate the return of Madame Noir-Blanc to Le Bar Hemingway with our signature cocktail: Le Serendipity.

**DIANA.** Oh, comme c'est gentil. Merci, Jean-Louis.

**JEAN-LOUIS.** De rien. A votre santé, Madame Noir-Blanc. M'sieur.  
*(Jean-Louis exits.)*

**DIANA.** A votre santé, Jean-Louis. See, Charlie? Like I said at Joe Allen: Serendipity. *(She raises her glass, and they toast.)*

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**CHARLIE.** Serendipity.

**DIANA.** Charlie? What would you think about me fixing up that wreck of an apartment? We can hunt for interesting stuff here in Paris, and film it for my show!

**CHARLIE.** I don't / know

**DIANA.** / We can do some personal shopping, too! A new très chic look for a new très chic you! Will you excuse me a moment? *(Diana goes over to Jean-Louis.)*

**JEAN-LOUIS.** Oui, Madame?

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

**JEAN-LOUIS.** *(Coolly, quietly.)* 600 Euro.

**DIANA.** 100.

**JEAN-LOUIS.** 400.

**DIANA.** 200.

**JEAN-LOUIS.** Deal. *(Jean-Louis hands the bust to Diana as she hands him the Euros. He exits. She gives the bust to Charlie.)*

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

**CHARLIE.** Is that the bust from the bar?

**DIANA.** They have hundreds of these in storage. The Americans love them and it's a lucrative side business for the waiters.

**CHARLIE.** Oh. Cool. Thank you! *(Taking his phone and tapping it.)*

Friend Request accepted. *(They toast again, perhaps they hug. Projection: Thursday April 19, 11:15 PM CET. Diana's TikTok. She has created a video of her successfully sabering a row of Champagne bottles, much to the astonishment of Charlie and applause from an appreciative crowd.)*

**DIANA.** A little bit of fun at La Coupole earlier this evening, shamelessly showing off my sabering skills for my new friend, the delightful Charlie Windsor.

**JACQUES-HENRI.** Nous ici à La Coupole salue le retour de Madame Noir-Blanc, et elle va désormais nous divertir avec son habileté au sabrage. Un! Deux! Trois! Et aller! *(Diana brandishes a sword. Quick cuts of her successfully sabering multiple champagne bottles. Corks are popping one*

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*after another and the champagne flows freely. Jacques-Henri hold up Diana's arm triumphantly.)*

**CHARLIE.** WOW! And you didn't break anything!

**DIANA.** Of course I didn't!

**JACQUES-HENRI.** Brava, Madame Noir-Blanc!

**DIANA.** Merci, Jacques-Henri. That was so much fun!

**JACQUES-HENRI.** Encore! Encore s'il vous plait!

**DIANA.** Oh, I don't know if I should!

**CHARLIE.** Please, Diana?

**DIANA.** Okay, what the hell! *(Jacques-Henri is seen lining up another row of champagne bottles. The video fades to the sound of five champagne corks popping and applause from the crowd. Projection: Friday April 20, 3:45 PM CET. Charlie's Facebook. He's checked in to "Beaubien, 21 Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth, Paris, France." The image is a selfie of Charlie and Diana, laden with shopping bags. His comment reads:)*

**CHARLIE.** *(V.O.)* Shopping for a new "très chic" look with my new friend Diana Black-White, Lovely Living TV's 'Goddess Of The Hunt.' Now off to get my hair "styled. *(He has tagged both Diana and the show. We see Diana post a heart emoji and then see/hear her respond:)*

**DIANA.** *(V.O.)* And you look FABULOUS, darling! *(Almost immediately Charlie responds with:)*

**CHARLIE.** *(V.O.)* And I feel fabulous for the first time in weeks. Thank you, Diana! *(Heart emoji. Projection: Friday April 20, 11:23 PM EST. We're in Joe Allen again. Ed is showing Jordan his iPhone screen.)*

**ED.** You know her, right?

**JORDAN.** Diana? Yeah. She comes in whenever she's in New York filming or on a buying spree.

**ED.** I've seen Charlie get carried away like this before. He gets all chummy with strangers too fast, I mean, look: he's already Facebook-friended that fucking Auntie Meme!

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

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

**JORDAN.** Uh huh.

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

**JORDAN.** It's his money now, Ed.

**ED.** I know that, Jordan, but... Listen! Listen to this: "Diana likes me to show off my newfound "rizz." What the hell is "rizz!?!"

**JORDAN.** Street talk for "charisma."

**ED.** She'd know street talk.

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

**ED.** Very funny, Jordan.

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

**ED.** That's just it: he can't. He's like this giant puppy, just so eager for any attention thrown his way, loving everyone and everything without thought / to the consequences

**JORDAN.** / He looks happier than he has since Mark... you know. And sexier.

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

**JORDAN.** Aren't you the one who told him to get out of that apartment and shake up his life? *(Perhaps Jordan has hit a nerve? Ed throws a 20 on the bar and gets up.)*

**ED.** One's my limit. Two shows tomorrow.

**JORDAN.** And two on Sunday. Yeah, yeah, yeah. *(As Ed leaves.)* Ed? Forgive me for being so blunt, but... does Charlie know you're in love with him? *(Ed stops.)*

**ED.** Goodnight Jordan. *(Ed storms out. Projection: Saturday April 28, 7:25 PM Mid-Atlantic Time. Charlie's Facebook. He has checked into Delta Airlines, Flight DL267, CDG – JFK, and tagged Ed. A red pin indicates a location over the Atlantic a bit beyond Iceland. His comment reads:)*

**CHARLIE.** *(V.O.)* Hey, Ed, you have a doppelgänger on this plane: our flight attendant! The resemblance is uncanny! Can't wait to get back to New York and see the real you. So much to tell you! *(A low hum of a jet whooshing across the sky. In the soft, low-level light of an evening flight,*

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*Diana and Charlie are comfortably reclining in their Business Elite seats. He's been transformed, sporting a stylish haircut, perhaps with a few highlights, and he's wearing elegant new clothes. They are watching an episode of "Goddess Of The Hunt" on her iPad.)*

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

**DIANA.** Well, clients like Phillie make my job easy.

**CHARLIE.** I see there's a bust of Hemingway in his apartment. Is this a thing of yours?

**DIANA.** I told you; all the Americans want them. Besides, Phillie is a writer. It's a natural.

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

**DIANA.** *(Laughing.)* What do you say? Would you like to be on my show?

**CHARLIE.** I don't know. I've been thinking I might just sell the place and buy something smaller. What does a single man need with a 9-room duplex?

**DIANA.** I have a feeling you're not going to be single for long. And why sell a wreck? You've got to think about resale. Let me fix it up and you'll make more than twice as much money!

**CHARLIE.** I don't need the money. Mark is... I mean, he wa... I inherited... I don't need the money.

**DIANA.** I know that, Charlie. But why sell for five million when you could get fifteen or more? And then I can help you with your new place! A two-episode story arc!

**CHARLIE.** You have a point, I guess... *(A Flight Attendant Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't comes over and leans into Charlie, smiling.)*

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS LIKE ED BUT ISN'T.** May I get either of you anything else? More Champagne, perhaps?

**CHARLIE.** *(To the Flight Attendant. Shyly.)* I'm sorry but I have to tell you: you look just like my best friend, Ed.

**DIANA.** Champagne would be lovely! Thank you, Stefan.

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS LIKE ED BUT ISN'T.** My pleasure, Ms. Black-White. *(The Flight Attendant Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't goes.)*

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**CHARLIE.** Is there anyone, anywhere you don't know?

**DIANA.** Stefan certainly noticed you.

**CHARLIE.** Oh, yeah, I guess. Is it just me, but doesn't he look like Ed?

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

**CHARLIE.** Tonight!?!

**DIANA.** I don't mean toniOH! I just had a marvelous idea! I'm staying at the Marriott Marquis, and a friend of mine entertains in the lobby bar. Why don't you come with me?

**CHARLIE.** I thought I'd text Ed and see if he wants to get a drink at Joe Allen after the show.

**DIANA.** By the time we land, get through immigration and customs, and into Manhattan... Didn't he have two shows today? And doesn't he have two shows tomorrow?

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

**DIANA.** If you go straight home tonight, you're just going to go right back into your old habits and become sad little Charlie again! *(The Flight Attendant Who Looks Like Ed But Isn't comes back with two glasses of Champagne.)*

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS LIKE ED BUT ISN'T.** Your Champagne, Ms. Black-White. *(Leaning into Charlie and smiling.)* Mr. Windsor.

**DIANA.** Thank you, Stefan.

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS LIKE ED BUT ISN'T.** My pleasure, Ms. Black-White. *(Still smiling at Charlie.)* Would you care for anything else, Mr. Windsor?

**CHARLIE.** *(A little flustered by the attention.)* Oh... I... uhm... No, thank you.

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

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT WHO LOOKS LIKE ED BUT ISN'T.** I'll check. *(He goes. A moment, and then Charlie's phone dings.)*

**CHARLIE.** Stefan just sent me a friend request!

**DIANA.** See! I told you he was into you!

**CHARLIE.** *(Blushing, flattered.)* Really? He is kind of cute. Like Ed. But not.

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**DIANA.** You have no idea how sexy you are, do you?

**CHARLIE.** Stop it! You're embarrassing me. Should I accept his friend request? I see you're Facebook Friends with him.

**DIANA.** For in-flight perks and seat upgrades, yes.

**CHARLIE.** I don't know how much travel I'll be doing now that Mark / is

**DIANA.** / Charlie, I keep telling you: you're going to find someone soon, and you'll be traveling again. But for romance... well, you don't want to get involved with a flight attendant.

**CHARLIE.** I don't?

**DIANA.** No, you don't. Some of them may be cute, but they fool around in every city. Trust me, you can't trust them.

**CHARLIE.** Oh. Well... I'll think about it.

**DIANA.** *(Taking her Cassis from her purse.)* Up to you.

**CHARLIE.** How the hell did you get that through security?

**DIANA.** Oh, André-Claude and I are old friends. Whaddya say, Charlie, come to the Marriott Marquis with me?

**CHARLIE.** Uhm... I don't... OK, what the hell! Sure.

**DIANA.** Great! Oh Charlie, you're going to love my friend Percy. He's as wonderful as you are, and a very, very talented musician. He plays the organ beautifully. *(Charlie laughs as she happily mixes her own Kir Royale. Projection: Sunday April 29, 12:36 AM EST / Diana's Facebook. She's checked in to The Marriott Marquis Hotel and tagged both Charlie and Percy. A red pin indicates the location of the hotel on a map of midtown Manhattan. Her comment is:)*

**DIANA.** *(V.O.)* My home away from home in little old New York. Enjoying drinks with two of my favorite handsome men. *(We hear someone playing the piano and belting out a classic show tune – get the rights to use the song first.)*

**PERCY.** *(V.O.)* ... gonna not at all get away from me.” *(In the bright white light of the Marriott Marquis Lobby Lounge, we see Diana and Charlie sitting at a table, a Gibson and a Kir Royale in front of them. Diana is her usual perky self, but Charlie looks exhausted.)*

**DIANA.** Isn't Percy wonderful?

**CHARLIE.** Yeah, sure, I guess. I'm sorry, I'm very tired. *(There's a smattering of applause.)*

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**PERCY.** (*V.O.*) Thank you. My mother loved singing that song to me when I was a wee tot, but you don't really give a shit, do you? You're a pathetically blasé audience and I know you don't care I'm bursting my vocal chords for your benefit so I'm going to take a 15-minute break, and if I come back at all we'll conclude with my oft-requested, somewhat infamous, one-man, 45-minute rendition of *The Mikado*. Be ready to get your "Yum Yum" on.

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

**CHARLIE.** (*Yawning.*) What? (*Percy enters, wearing a Tutti-Frutti colored faux-fur jacket over a white tux.*)

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

**DIANA.** Lovely to see you too. I decided to come to New York with my new friend, Charlie.

**PERCY.** Does Jeff know you're here?

**DIANA.** He's not in New York too, is he?

**PERCY.** How would I know?

**DIANA.** I'll be here for a while. Charlie is a new client. He might even be on my show.

**PERCY.** (*Giving Charlie the "once over."*) Lovely. (*To Charlie.*) A pleasure to meet you, Charlie.

**CHARLIE.** (*Yawning.*) Sorry. Yes, a pleasure to meet you, too. How do you know each other?

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

**DIANA.** Very funny, darling. (*To Charlie.*) Yes, Miriam Estelle Tanenbaum and I were both at Sarah Lawrence, Charlie. I've known this little bastard his entire life.

**PERCY.** I love you too, Diana. (*To Charlie.*) I assume you have a big, old apartment, Charlie? Diana has a thing for big, old apartments.

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

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

**DIANA.** (*Glaring.*) Percy, stop.



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**CHARLIE.** I'm sorry, Diana, I just can't keep my eyes open. It's...  
(*Looking at his watch.*) My God, it's almost 7:00 in Paris. I've been up for 24 hours. I need to go home.

**DIANA.** Just one more drink?

**CHARLIE.** (*To Diana.*) I'm sorry, no, I'm too tired. I'll see you tomorrow?

**DIANA.** (*For Percy's benefit.*) Let me make sure I have the address: 145 Central Park West?

**CHARLIE.** Yes.

**DIANA.** 10:00?

**CHARLIE.** Make it 1:00. Please? (*To Percy.*) Excuse me, Percy, it was lovely meeting you, but I'm going to go home now. Perhaps we'll meet again sometime, when I'm a bit more lucid. (*Charlie offers Percy his hand. Percy pulls him in close.*)

**PERCY.** Oh, you can count on it. (*He kisses Charlie on the lips. A slow, lingering kiss. Charlie is at first surprised but then melts into it.*)

**DIANA.** Au revoir, mon ami. 'til tomorrow at 1:00. (*Charlie, a little dizzy from the kiss, nods at Diana and goes. As he leaves, he turns back to smile at Percy, then exits. Percy waits until he's out of earshot.*)

**PERCY.** Does he have any idea?

**DIANA.** Not a clue. And if we play our cards right, you'll be living rent free in a beautifully decorated duplex overlooking Central Park.

**PERCY.** Until you get tired of him. Like you have with Phillie. And Neil. And that wanna be politician, Van, Vaughn, Vance, whatever the hell his / name was...

**DIANA.** / Speaking of Phillie, have you dumped him yet?

**PERCY.** Not yet.

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

**PERCY.** And just where the hell am I going to live until we snare this Charlie guy?

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

**PERCY.** And I thought Jeff and I were being so discreet meeting at his hotel every time. How did you know?

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**DIANA.** You underestimate me. You always have. Look, darling, I don't care who you sleep with outside of the relationships I set up for you, but really, Percy! Your stepfather?

**PERCY.** Why not? He's not my actual father. And aside from his bank account, you don't give a crap about him. *(Percy's phone dings. He looks at it.)*

**DIANA.** Don't you phub me, Percy! I'm talking to you!

**PERCY.** It's Phillie. He's got a deadline with his publisher and wants me to stop at the deli and pick up a package of Rice-A-Roni on my way home. Beef.

**DIANA.** Him and his late-night cravings. *(Percy texts something.)*

**PERCY.** There.

**DIANA.** What?

**PERCY.** I just dumped Phillie. Happy?

**DIANA.** Yes. Now block him on Facebook and send Charlie a friend request. And come with me to his apartment tomorrow.

**PERCY.** I have church from 11:00 to 1:00.

**DIANA.** *(Bursting out laughing.)* I'm sorry, but the thought of you in a church always kills me.

**PERCY.** Bitch.

**DIANA.** Bastard.

**PERCY.** I like Phillie. And I like Jeff. They both have that elusive BDE.

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

**PERCY.** Yes.

**DIANA.** Don't I work my ass off to find men with "that elusive Big Dick Energy" who suit both our needs?

**PERCY.** Yes.

**DIANA.** And we both know Jeff's D isn't all that B or E.

**PERCY.** How would you know?

**DIANA.** Are you kidding me? You think I'm going to give Jeff grounds for an annulment?

**PERCY.** Ew.

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**DIANA.** Charlie is far more handsome than Jeff. His address is better than Phillie's. He's got more money than both of them. And he's perpetually horny, which makes him ripe for the picking.

**PERCY.** I don't know, Diana, he does have BDE, but... I'm getting a queer feeling about this one. It just doesn't feel right.

**DIANA.** Here's what we'll do: I'll take Charlie to brunch at Nice Matin around 2:00. You show up like it's a chance meeting and then charm the pants off him.

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

**DIANA.** Foist? Moi?

**PERCY.** It was fun when I was 16. It's getting old now.

**DIANA.** You owe me.

**PERCY.** Oh, not this again!

**DIANA.** (*Jewish Mother Dramatic.*) You ruined my life!

**PERCY.** (*Mimicking her.*) You ruined my life! (*To Diana.*) Once and for all, get this through your thick skull: that coked up one night stand in Amityville ruined your life. Not me. I'm just the unfortunate by product. Sometimes I wish you'd have let me live with Bubbe.

**DIANA.** That bitch? Thank God she kicked the bucket before she got a chance to ruin you, too.

**PERCY.** You've done a pretty good job of that yourself.

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

**PERCY.** There's always a first time.

**DIANA.** As if. Now, about Charlie: there's something strangely endearing about him so remember:

**BOTH.** Never fall in love with the target.

**PERCY.** As if.

**DIANA.** There's always a first time. His life is a mess, and he needs to have a good time with someone fun. Besides me, I mean.

**PERCY.** You're too kind.

**DIANA.** I am. It's my one flaw.

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

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**DIANA.** If you hadn't fucked up that Bloomingdale's job / last month

**PERCY.** / I fixed it, didn't I!?!

**DIANA.** Thank God you didn't miss Tonia Lee *that* time. It could have been me who got squashed like a cockroach on my set. And then *you'd* have been an orphan.

**PERCY.** It was a risk I was willing to take.

**DIANA.** Bitch.

**PERCY.** Mother.

**DIANA.** I'll see you tomorrow. Wear something tight. Now send Charlie that friend request and go get your "Yum Yum" on. Oh, and Percy?

**PERCY.** What?

**DIANA.** I don't like you working all these late hours. You need your rest, darling.

**PERCY.** Why, Diana, you're sounding almost maternal.

**DIANA.** You're looking old.

**PERCY.** There it is.

**DIANA.** You don't need the money.

**PERCY.** I like playing and singing. Makes me feel like... I'm a real person.

**DIANA.** I'll get them to switch you to the cocktail hour. Charlie isn't going to like you working nights. And get rid of that awful fur coat.

**PERCY.** But mommy! You gave me this awful fur coat!

**DIANA.** Don't whine, Percy. The Goddess giveth the Tutti-Frutti, the Goddess taketh the Tutti-Frutti. Now get to work. *(He drops the coat in Diana's lap and goes. We hear Percy banging out the opening notes to "The Mikado" overture as Diana smiles and settles back into her chair, happily sipping her Kir Royale. We see the Detective Who Looks Like Ed watching from a far corner of the room. [While it is preferred this play be performed straight through, if you must include an intermission this is where it should be.]*

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