

Tito & Max

(During the following, she finds a pen and a piece of paper in her vanity case, then sits on the bed and starts to write her farewell note to TITO.)

TITO. *(relaxing)* Hey, Max. Sing a-me something.

MAX. Huh?

TITO. You sing, I listen. Maybe I help, eh? Make a-pointer.

MAX. Gee, that's awfully - now?

TITO. Sure. Why not? Free lesson.

MAX. Well, I - I - I suppose...

TITO. Come on. Let's hear. Stand up!

MAX. *(standing)* Right. Is there, uh, anything special?

TITO. Pick a-you favorite. Go.

MAX. Right. *(He is nervous and embarrassed. He clears his throat, then gropes for the right pitch.)* Ahem...okay...

(Without much confidence, he starts to sing. He's chosen the tenor line of the duet "Dio, che nell'alma infondere" from Act II, Scene 1 of Verdi's Don Carlo. He sings without accompaniment and not very well.)

DIO, CHE NELL'ALMA INFONDERE
AMOR VOLESTI E SPEME -

TITO. Stop!

(MAX stops.)

Okay. You're a-tight, eh? Tense. Is no good. You gotta relax. Be you.

MAX. I - I - I'm trying. I -

TITO. Okay, now shake a-yousef.

MAX. Huh?

TITO. Shake! Like this. *(Standing by now, he shakes his body, arms flailing in a singer's exercise.)* Come on!

(Tentatively, MAX imitates him.)

Move!

(MAX lets loose. They both move around the room, arms flailing.)

Good. Okay. Now the throat. It's a-tight. It's gotta be loose. Like this.

(He rolls his head in a circle, around his shoulders, simultaneously singing a note.)

Ahhh...

MAX. *(joining)* Ahhh...

(They continue for a few seconds, then stop. MAX holds his forehead to stop the dizziness.)

TITO. Now...together.

(They sing "ah," roll their heads and move around the room, arms flailing. After a few seconds, TITO stops and watches MAX, who eventually notices that he's doing it alone. He straightens up.)

Now-a trick, eh? You gotta hear the music. Before you sing. You gotta hear everything. The orchestra, the chorus -

MAX. *(enthusiastic)* I - I know what you mean!

TITO. Everything! It's in a-you heart!

MAX. Right!

TITO. Okay. Shh! Listen!

(Silence. Then four notes, pizzicato, from the orchestra - which is now in their heads. A fifth note swells and they begin the duet)

MAX & TITO. *(singing, with full orchestra)*

DIO, CHE NELL'ALMA INFONDERE

AMOR VOLESTI E SPEME,

DESIO NEL COR ACCENDERE

TU SEI DI LIBERTA;

DESIO ACCENDERE, ACCENDER NEL COR

TU SEI DI LIBERTA.

GIURIAMO INSIEM DI VIVERE

E DI MORIRE INSIEME.

IN TERRA, IN CIEL

CONGIUNGERE CI PUO,

End

(He looks around the room, confirming in an instant that TITO isn't there.)

MAX. (over the music) Maggie --!

MAGGIE. Shhh!

MAX. Did he call?!

MAGGIE. No. Now will you wait!

(MAX sighs. He looks at his watch. Then he notices MAGGIE's reaction to the music; she's swaying in rapture. The aria ends and MAGGIE falls backward)

RADIO ANNOUNCER. The magnificent voice of Tito Merelli, brought to you in honor of his live appearance this evening with the Cleveland Grand Opera Company-

(MAX turns off the radio.)

MAX. He wasn't on the train.

MAGGIE. Oh my God. He is so wonderful. When he does that last note, I almost can't breathe.

MAX. Maggie, he wasn't there!

(The phone rings. MAX grabs it.)

Hello?!...No, sir, I couldn't find him.

SAUNDERS. (through the phone) God dammit! Where the hell is he?!

MAX. (to MAGGIE) It's your father. (into the phone) I don't know! I looked everywhere. I asked the conductor. I had him paged. I -- I -- I'm sorry, I just --

(the sound of SAUNDERS hanging up) --

Sir?...Sir? (MAX hangs up) He's gonna kill me.

MAGGIE. He will not. He'd have nobody to yell at. At least nobody who takes it the way you do.

MAX. Maggie, the man is two hours late! The rehearsal starts in ten minutes!

MAGGIE. He'll be here, Max. This is Tito Merelli. He's a genius. They just don't think like other people.

MAX. So what are you saying? He's a grown man and he can't tell time?

MAGGIE. I'm just not worried, okay? (pause) Oh, Max, just think of it. Tonight. The curtain rises and he walks onstage. And suddenly there's nothing else in the world but that...that voice.

(pause)

MAX. I can sing too, you know.

MAGGIE. Oh, Max -- (She laughs out loud.)

MAX. I can! What are you -- "Oh, Max."

MAGGIE. You don't sing like Tito Merelli.

MAX. Not yet. Okay?

MAGGIE. You don't.

MAX. In your opinion. It's a matter of taste.

MAGGIE. It is not! I wish you wouldn't fool yourself. He's a star, Max. He sings all over the world. He's in *Life* magazine!

MAX. So is Mussolini.

MAGGIE. And he's very sensitive.

MAX. How do you know that?

(Beat. She realizes she's caught.)

MAGGIE. (casually) Because I met him. Last year.

MAX. You did? You never told me that.

MAGGIE. It was no big thing. When I was in Italy with Daddy, we went to La Scala and he was in *Aida*. Then afterwards we went backstage and...well, there he was, all by himself, behind the curtain. He was wearing a sort of...jaincloth and his whole body was pouring with sweat. Anyway, he looked up and saw us and do you know what he did, Max. He kissed my palms.

MAX. Yeah. So what?

MAGGIE. It was romantic.

MAX. He's Italian! They kiss everything!

MAGGIE. Fine, forget it.

MAX. Meatballs. Cheese. Cold cuts.

MAGGIE. Max --

Max. If it moves, they kiss it.
Maggie. MAX!!

End

SAUNDERS. Julia, for God's sake –

JULIA. Now, don't be cross, Henry. I couldn't bear waiting backstage anymore. Not with those shrimp. I could hardly breathe. Besides, I thought I might cheer him up. The woman's touch. Suddenly before he knows it he'll feel vital again. Totally alive.

SAUNDERS. No, I don't think so.

JULIA. You know what this reminds me of? That opera, the one with the snow falling, and the violins and everybody's hungry all the time.

SAUNDERS. Julia, please! Just listen!

JULIA. I'm listening, Henry.

SAUNDERS. I want you to go to the theatre. Now. All right? As a favor to me.

JULIA. Oh, Henry. You know how I feel about you.

SAUNDERS. (*moving towards the door*) Good. Off you go –

JULIA. But it's just so silly. I'm here already.

SAUNDERS. But you won't be soon. You'll be at the theatre.

JULIA. (*logically*) Not if I'm here. I can't be in two places.

SAUNDERS. You won't be in two places. You won't be here.

JULIA. Why not?

SAUNDERS. Because you'll be there.

JULIA. But why bother? I'm already here –

SAUNDERS. Julia, please –!

(*a knock at the door*)

Saunders

Now what?!

JULIA. (*sitting*) I think it's the door.

(SAUNDERS *stops halfway to the door, returns to just behind JULIA and raises his arm as though he's going to slug her over the head, backhanded. He controls himself and returns to the door.*)

SAUNDERS. (*at the door*) Who is it?!

BELLHOP. (*offstage*) Room service. Coffee for two.

SAUNDERS. We didn't order any coffee.

Julia, Saunders,
Maggie, Bellhop
Start

BELLHOP. (*offstage*) You did so! Ask Max!

SAUNDERS. Well, it's cancelled!

JULIA. (*going to the door*) Oh stop it, Henry. You can't just let him stand there.

SAUNDERS. Don't –!

(*She opens the door. The BELLHOP enters, holding a tray with a coffee service on it. He also has a camera hanging around his neck. He leaves the door open.*)

BELLHOP. Thank you, madam.

JULIA. On the table, please.

SAUNDERS. And then get out.

JULIA. He's only doing his job, Henry.

SAUNDERS. Well, he can do it somewhere else.

BELLHOP. Shall I pour, madam?

JULIA. Thank you, that would be very nice.

SAUNDERS. Julia, I want you out of here!

BELLHOP. He's not very friendly, is he?

SAUNDERS. Julia, please! You promised!

JULIA. I wonder what's keeping Mr. Merelli?

BELLHOP. Is he getting dressed?

JULIA. Apparently.

BELLHOP. (*going to the connecting door*) Perhaps he needs some help with his buttons. You know these opera stars, they're helpless –

SAUNDERS. STOP!

(*The BELLHOP stops, his hand on the doorknob.*)

Take one step into that room and I will *kill* you.

BELLHOP. Fair enough. I'll wait out here.

SAUNDERS. You're not waiting anyplace, you're getting out!

BELLHOP. Fine...As soon as I meet him. (*He sits.*)

SAUNDERS. You're not meeting him.

BELLHOP. Max promised. That's why I brought the coffee.

I'm a bellhop, not a waiter.

SAUNDERS. Listen, you-!!

(In a burst of anger, SAUNDERS grabs the BELLHOP by his shirtfront and hoists him to his feet. Simultaneously MAGGIE appears at the sitting room/corridor door dressed for the evening. She carries a single red rose.)

JULIA. Henry!

BELLHOP. Help!

MAGGIE. *(rushing in)* Daddy!

BELLHOP. Help!

MAGGIE. What are you doing?

SAUNDERS. *(to the BELLHOP)* Are you getting out?

BELLHOP. I'm getting wrinkled.

MAGGIE. Daddy, stop it! What's the matter?

(SAUNDERS drops the BELLHOP.)

BELLHOP. *(smoothing himself out)* We had a slight misunderstanding. Then he went insane.

SAUNDERS. *(to MAGGIE)* What the hell are you doing here?

MAGGIE. I came to see Mr. Merelli. To -- to wish him luck.

SAUNDERS. Well, you're not going to, so get out!

MAGGIE. Daddy, what's the matter with you? Has something happened?

SAUNDERS. *(after a slight pause)* No.

JULIA. He's been under a lot of strain lately. Haven't you, Henry?

SAUNDERS. No!

BELLHOP. Yes, you have, Henry. I can tell.

SAUNDERS. Get him out of here. I'm warning you.

MAGGIE. *(to the BELLHOP)* This isn't like him at all.

BELLHOP. Oh yes it is.

SAUNDERS. Get out!! Now!!

BELLHOP. All right!! *(with dignity)* I will be happy to leave --

JULIA. *(to SAUNDERS)* There.

BELLHOP. As soon as I get one picture.

SAUNDERS. Give me the camera.

BELLHOP. No.

SAUNDERS. *(advancing)* Hand it over, you little twit!

BELLHOP. *(retreating)* Stay away from me!

MAGGIE. Daddy!

JULIA. Henry!

(SAUNDERS chases the BELLHOP around the sofa, with MAGGIE and JULIA chasing SAUNDERS.)

BELLHOP. Hold it!

(The BELLHOP snaps a picture of the other three, who pose momentarily without realizing it. Then immediately the chase resumes.)

End

SAUNDERS. I want the camera!

(As the chase continues in the sitting room, the bathroom door opens and MAX emerges, dressed head to foot as Pagliaccio the Clown in a colorful silk costume with big buttons, and traditional white clown makeup all over his face and neck. He also wears his glasses. He staggers into the bedroom, visibly quaking. He makes it to the connecting door and puts his ear against it. The action in the sitting room has continued without a break.)

JULIA. Henry!

BELLHOP. Help!

SAUNDERS. *(to MAGGIE)* Get the camera! Maggie!

JULIA. Henry, let him take the picture.

BELLHOP. Henry!

SAUNDERS. Gotcha! *(He grabs him.)*

BELLHOP. All right! Okay! I give up!

SAUNDERS. Little creep!

(MAX raps sharply on the connecting door. The others freeze and turn to the noise.)

JULIA. It's him!

MAGGIE. He must be ready.

JULIA. *(calling)* Mr. Merelli? Is that you?

tails and closing the door behind him] and stares at the bed, dumbfounded. He tears away the covers, looks under the bed and around the room. No Tito!

Oh my God!!

(He hesitates for a split second, then runs out of the bedroom into the corridor, closing the door behind him.)

MISTER SAUNDERS!!

(Pause. Slowly the closet door opens and TITO emerges. He looks around and listens. Not a sound. He sighs heavily, then totters cautiously through the bedroom and into the sitting room. He looks around the room. He feels certain now that he's safe at last and sinks onto the sofa and closes his eyes. At which point, JULIA enters through the sitting room/corridor door and sees TITO from the back, sitting quietly on the sofa. She smiles, then walks silently into the room and covers his eyes with her hands.)

Start

JULIA. Guess who?

TITO. YIY!!

(He bounds to his feet and stares at her.)

JULIA. Now, aren't you ashamed of yourself. Sitting here quietly enjoying yourself, while everyone downstairs is simply dying to meet you.

TITO. Excuse me please, but who are you?

JULIA. You're angry with me, aren't you?

TITO. Angry?

JULIA. Here I am, haranguing you about the reception when I haven't even told you how magnificent you were tonight. Tito. My dear man. *(sitting and leaning back seductively, lowering her voice to the bass range)* How can I ever thank you?

TITO. For what?

JULIA. For what? For what you did this evening!

TITO. I didn't do nothing! It wasn't me!

JULIA. No it wasn't you. You're right. It was Pagliacci. There, onstage, in flesh and blood. It was beauty and it

was life. It was love and it was pain. And as I sat there in the theatre, watching you tonight, hanging on your every note, I thought to myself: Now, at this moment, I am hearing the greatest performance of any opera star that has ever lived!

TITO. ...I was good, eh?

JULIA. Words cannot express it.

TITO. I think I'm a-gonna siddown, okay? *(he does)*

JULIA. You poor thing. You've had a bad day, haven't you?

TITO. Yeah.

JULIA. Of course you have, and you've been very brave. But, Tito, dear Tito. You will come down to the reception, won't you? For just a few minutes?

TITO. No. I done think so.

JULIA. But, Tito, you promised me!

TITO. I did?

JULIA. Tito Merelli. I'm surprised at you. How could you possibly disappoint me like this? Me. Julia.

TITO. I'm sorry, eh?

JULIA. And I'm sorry, too. For I simply will not take no for an answer. Do you understand? I will not budge from this spot until you agree. Not one inch. *(She folds her arms and stands firm.)* There are times, I'm afraid, when one simply has to apply the iron glove in the velvet hand. Especially if one hopes to get the bird.

TITO. *(thinking)* Okay. I give up.

JULIA. You do?

TITO. Yeah.

JULIA. Oh, Tito, you're wonderful! I knew you wouldn't let us down. Let's go!

TITO. No. Hey. *(He turns on the charm and takes her hand.)* Julia. I'm a-tired, eh? I need a few minutes to, uh, get off a-my feet, wash a-my face. Okay, Julia?

JULIA. *(aroused)* Oh my dearest, dearest Tito. You've made me so very happy. I only wish there was something I could do for you. *(lowering her voice and trying again)* Can you think of anything?

End

Can you think of anything?

TITO. Yeah. Go.

JULIA. I understand. Poor baby. You need some time alone.
(*he ushers her to the door*) Every minute shall seem an hour, and every hour a second. And so I fly.

(*She exits, closing the door.*)

TITO. Jesus Christ!

(*He thinks for a moment about what to do – then springs into action. He rushes into the bedroom, grabs his suitcase and puts it on the bed to pack. Then a thought strikes him.*)

Train station.

(*He hurries into the sitting room toward the phone book. He finds it and rifles through it searching for "train station."*)

Train, train, train.

(*At this moment, the sitting room/corridor door opens and DIANA enters, wearing the slinkiest, most inviting dress imaginable. She closes the door quietly. By this time, TITO has found the appropriate page and heads back towards the bedroom, scanning the column.*)

Tractor. Trailers. Trophies.

DIANA. Hi there.

(*TITO stops dead. He looks at DIANA – and drops the phone book to the floor.*)

Surprised to see me?

(*He shakes his head "yes" and wheezes.*)

I told you I might drop in. Didn't you believe me?

(*He shakes his head "no" and wheezes.*)

Are you all right?

TITO. Dry...dry throat.

DIANA. Then perhaps I should order some champagne.

What do you think?

TITO. Sure. Great.

DIANA. May I use the phone?

(*DIANA walks to the telephone. TITO watches her, fascinated. She picks up the phone and clicks for the operator. Into the phone:*)

Room service, please.

(*As she waits, she smiles at TITO. He smiles back. Into the phone:*)

Yes, I'd like to order a bottle of champagne. (to TITO)
Is Mumm all right?

TITO. She's fine, thank you.

DIANA. (*into the phone*) ~~Yes. That'll be fine. (she hangs up)~~
Well. You certainly are a fast operator, I must say. I barely know you, and here we are, alone in your hotel room with a bottle of champagne on the way up.

TITO. I'm just a tricky guy, eh?

DIANA. Come here.

TITO. Huh?

DIANA. Come here.

(*She sits on the sofa and motions him to sit beside her. He does, cautiously. She faces him directly.*)

Tito. Can I ask you a question?

TITO. Sure. Hey.

DIANA. I want you to be totally honest with me. All right?
Do you promise?

TITO. Cross a-my heart.

DIANA. Brutal, if necessary.

TITO. Nooo...

DIANA. Yes. Please.

TITO. Okay.

(*pause*)

DIANA. Was I good tonight?

Diana & Tito

TITO. ...Good?

DIANA. I'm sure it's difficult to make any lasting judgments, after having done it with me only once. But would you say I was...exciting tonight?

TITO. (*trying to work it out*) We spent a-some time together, eh?

DIANA. We certainly did.

TITO. Yeah.

DIANA. Now I want the truth. Just take the big moment at the end. Would you say it was something special?

(*no answer*)

I can take it, believe me, Tito. I'm a professional.

TITO. A pro-? Oh my god. A *professional!*

DIANA. (*hurt*) You don't think so?

TITO. No I do! I promise!

DIANA. Well then? How was I? (*pause*) Tito?

TITO. I'm trying to remember!

DIANA. (*bitterly*) I suppose you're telling me I was no good.

TITO. No! Hey! You-you were great! You were fantastic!

DIANA. You're only saying that-

TITO. No I swear! You - you were unbelievable! It went a-by so fast, I can hardly remember.

DIANA. Oh, Tito. Do you mean it?

TITO. Yeah. Sure.

DIANA. Thank God. I'm so relieved.

TITO. Heh. This, uh, profession. You take it a-pretty serious, eh?

DIANA. It's all I've ever wanted to be since I was a little girl. Isn't that awful?

TITO. It's terrible.

DIANA. Of course my mother was in the business.

TITO. Ah.

DIANA. And my father was too.

TITO. You father?

DIANA. I guess you could say it's in my blood.

TITO. You got something in your blood?!

DIANA. Does it show?

TITO. No! No! You look-a fine.

DIANA. And you thought I was good tonight. I mean really, really good?

TITO. Oh yeah. Great.

DIANA. You have no idea what this means to me, Tito. Coming from you.

TITO. Heh, thanks.

DIANA. I was so afraid you were disappointed. I mean, it's just so hard to tell with all those people there.

TITO. (*after a slight pause*) People?

DIANA. You really are incredible, aren't you. You've so much experience, you don't even notice them. I think that's wonderful.

TITO. People?!

DIANA. Tito.

TITO. Eh?

DIANA. Now, Tito, just supposing that I really am as good as you think. And supposing that I have the confidence and the stamina to make it in the big time, in New York...

TITO. Yeah?

DIANA. I was wondering if, perhaps, you'd like to introduce me to some of your friends. Is that possible, Tito?

TITO. Hey. I'm not so sure, eh?

DIANA. Producers. Directors. The ones that matter. What about your agent?

TITO. My agent, she's a woman.

DIANA. So? That's all right with me.

TITO. It is?

DIANA. Of course! I wouldn't care if she was a kangaroo! The important thing is whether she's good or not. Right?!

End

Saunders & Max

(MAGGIE spots the key to the room on the table next to her. Without them seeing it, she picks up the key and takes it with her, with her handbag.)

MAGGIE. (at the door, ignoring MAX) See you later...Daddy.

(She exits to the corridor, closing the door behind her.
MAX feels like a crumb.)

Start

SAUNDERS. I've got a thousand of Cleveland's so-called cognoscenti arriving at the theatre in six hours in black tie, a thirty-piece orchestra, twenty-four chorus, fifteen stagehands and eight principals. Backstage, I have approximately fifty pounds of rotting shrimp mayonnaise which, if consumed, could turn the Gala Be-A-Sponsor Buffet into a mass murder. All I don't have is a tenor. Time.

MAX. One-fifteen. (pause) I'm - I'm really sorry, sir. I wish there was something I could do to help.

SAUNDERS. It's not your fault, Max. I wish it was. The question now is what to do if that irresponsible Italian jackass doesn't arrive.

MAX. I - I have an idea about that, actually.

SAUNDERS. You do?

MAX. Yeah. I mean, sort of.

SAUNDERS. Well, spit it out, Max.

MAX. The thing is - I mean, I was just - just thinking that - well - I mean - I could do it.

SAUNDERS. Do what?

MAX. Sing it. *Pagliacci*. Sort of...step in. You see, I - I've been to all the rehearsals and I know the part and I - I mean, I could do it. I know I could.

SAUNDERS. *Pagliacci*? The Clown of Tragedy?

MAX. Yes, sir.

SAUNDERS. *Pagliacci*, Max. He's huge. He's larger than life. He loves with a passion that rocks the heavens. His jealousy is so terrible that we tremble with irrational fear for our very lives. His tragedy is the fate of

tortured greatness, facing the black and gaping abyss of insensible nothingness. It isn't you, Max.

MAX. It - it could be. I mean, if I had the chance.

SAUNDERS. (turning directly front, addressing the audience): "Ladies and gentlemen. May I have your attention, please. I regret to inform you that Mr. Tito Merelli, the greatest tenor of our generation, scheduled to make his American debut with the Cleveland Grand Opera Company in honor of our tenth anniversary season, is regrettably indisposed this evening, but...BUT!...I have the privilege to announce that the leading role tonight will be sung by a somewhat gifted amateur making his very first appearance on this, or indeed any other stage, our company's very own factotum, gopher and all-purpose dogsbody...Max!" Do you see the problem?

MAX. I guess so.

SAUNDERS. Old women would be trampled to death in the stampede up the aisles.

MAX. I see what you mean.

SAUNDERS. Time.

MAX. One-twenty.

End

(A depressed silence. SAUNDERS picks up a grape and starts chewing. Then he realizes and spits it out and starts stamping on it in his fury. Meanwhile, the phone rings. MAX picks it up.)

Hello? What? Could you speak more slowly, please.

SAUNDERS. If it's Julia, tell her she can take the shrimp and stuff it up her -

MAX. (to SAUNDERS) Sir! It's him! He's in the lobby!

(SAUNDERS runs to the phone and grabs it.)

SAUNDERS. (into the phone, all charm) Signor Merelli! *Benvvenuto a Cleveland!* I will be down *immediamente. Presto.* (He hangs up.) All right, Max. This is it. You have your instructions. Key word, Max.

MAX. Glue.

Start

(They get intimate. She's kissing his neck.)

MARIA. Close a-door.

TITO. Huh?

MARIA. Close a-door.

TITO. Now?

MARIA. Close.

TITO. Maria. I got a stomach. No joke.

MARIA. I make a-you better. Fix you up.

TITO. No. Hey. Not now, okay? I - I can't do it!

(She stops, angry.)

MARIA. Pig!

TITO. Maria!

MARIA. You got a girl!

TITO. I got nobody.

MARIA. You got a girl! So done lie!

TITO. Maria -

MARIA. Three weeks - nothing! Not once, eh?

TITO. I'm sorry. I get a-tense. I - I got a stomach!

MARIA. I wanna be a nun, I'll join a-the church! At least sometimes I have a-some fun. I sing a-hymns. Pluck a-chickens!

TITO. She's crazy. My wife, she's a-crazy.

MARIA. Oh sure, I'm a-crazy. I hate a-trains, I'm a-crazy. I hate hotels. I'm a-crazy. I got a-empty bed, and I'm a-crazy!

TITO. Maria, I'm a sick a-man!

MARIA. SO TAKE A-YOU PILLS!

TITO. *(angry)* Fine. Okay. I take a-pills! *(He goes to the vanity case and takes out his bottle of pills.)* You wanna pills, I take a-pills. Look! Hey! Two pills. No. Four pills!

MARIA. Two!

TITO. Four!!

MARIA. Oh!

TITO. Okay? Happy?

(He puts the bottle on the bedside table.)

MARIA. Phh!

TITO. I take a-pills, I got a happy wife. Happy marriage!

(He pulls a bottle of Chianti from the vanity case.)

MARIA. Now you gonna be sick.

TITO. So what? My girl in the closet, she's not gonna care.

MARIA. Pig!

TITO. SHUT UP!

MARIA. SHUT UP A-YOUSELF!

End

(MARIA slams into the bathroom. TITO slams into the sitting room.)

TITO. Max!

(He paces, upset. MAX enters from the kitchenette with two glasses.)

MAX. Are you all right?

TITO. I'm a-peachy. Just a-fine. I done relax, I'm gonna blow up! Open!

*(He hands MAX the bottle.)*MAX. *(taking it)* Uh, s-sorry. Corkscrew?

TITO. Eh? Oh yeah. Corkscrew. Sure. I'm a-stupid!

(TITO enters the bedroom, grabs the vanity case and sits on the bed. As he looks for the corkscrew, MAX unscrews the top from the bottle of Phenobarbital and pours several pills into one of the glasses. He thinks for a moment, then pours more pills. Beat. Then adds a few more for good measure. By this time, TITO has found the corkscrew. He slams back into the sitting room as MAX pockets the bottle of pills. TITO grabs the Chianti and starts opening it.)

TITO. Jealousy, eh? That's all I get is a-jealousy. Back a-stage. Girls, they come a-see me. Nice girls. They wanna my autograph. That's it. They say, "Hello, Tito. We love a-you, Tito." Maria, she goes a-nuts.

MAX. I'll pour.

DIANA. It's locked!

(MAGGIE grabs the doorknob and rattles it violently)

MAGGIE. Come out of there, you - you - rat!

DIANA. It's no use.

MAGGIE. Coward!!

DIANA. Save your breath. I know his type.

(Pause. MAGGIE sighs in frustration.)

MAGGIE. Now what do we do?

DIANA. I don't know about you, but I'm getting dressed.

MAGGIE. Good idea.

(MAGGIE glares at the bathroom door, then walks into the sitting room to retrieve her dress. Meanwhile, DIANA looks around the room for her dress, then remembers she left it in the bathroom. She walks to the bathroom door.)

DIANA. Tito. My dress is in there.

(No response. DIANA knocks on the door.)

Tito. I need my dress. I promise I won't hurt you.

(no response)

GIVE ME THE GODDAMN DRESS OR I'LL KILL YOU!!!

(In a single action, the bathroom door opens, the dress flies out, the door slams shut and is locked again from the inside.)

Thank you, Tito.

(The women get dressed in silence, both in the bedroom.)

MAGGIE. I wouldn't have believed it was possible. He seemed so nice.

DIANA. He is nice. He's just a little tricky, that's all.

MAGGIE. Does this sort of thing happen very often?

DIANA. Yes and no. I've been two-timed before, but never with quite so much flair. I mean, you've got to hand it to him.

MAGGIE. I did. That's the problem.

DIANA. Hook?

(DIANA turns and MAGGIE hooks up the back.)

Thank you.

MAGGIE. My pleasure.

(At this moment, the sitting room/corridor door opens and MARIA enters, carrying her vanity case. She leaves the door ajar.)

MARIA. One a-more chance, eh? One a-more chance and that's it!

(MAGGIE and DIANA both hear MARIA and look at each other, puzzled. DIANA enters the sitting room.)

DIANA. Oh my God, he's got another one!

(MARIA is startled, then glares suspiciously at DIANA.)

MARIA. Who are you?!

DIANA. A friend of the family. Who are you?

MARIA. The family.

DIANA. ...Tito's wife?

MARIA. That's a-right.

DIANA. (calling) Maggie, dear. Guess who's here.

MARIA. I'm gonna keel 'im.

DIANA. We know just how you feel.

MAGGIE. (as she enters the sitting room) Hi.

MARIA. You again.

DIANA. You've met before?

MAGGIE. Just once. In the closet.

DIANA. You realize of course that she's Tito's wife.

MAGGIE. Yeah. Only she isn't really his wife. Tito told me. She likes to pretend she is, and he plays along because he doesn't want to hurt her feelings.

MARIA. Tito tell you this?

MAGGIE. Of course.

Maria, Diana, Maggie

Start

MARIA. I'm gonna keel 'im. I swear before God, on everything that's a-holy, I'm gonna strangle him!

DIANA. She sounds like his wife.

MARIA. With my bare hands!!

DIANA. She's his wife.

MAGGIE. But he said... *(she realizes)* Oh my God.

MARIA. Where is he?

(MAGGIE and DIANA look at each other.)

Where is he?!!

MAGGIE & DIANA. *(together)* The bathroom.

(MARIA stalks into the bedroom, towards the bathroom door. DIANA and MAGGIE follow her.)

DIANA. He locked himself in.

MAGGIE. He won't come out.

DIANA. We tried!

MAGGIE. You're sure you're his wife?!

(MARIA growls in response. Then she tries the door, without success.)

MARIA. Tito. It's Maria.

~~MARIA. *(offstage)* Oh no!~~

MARIA. *(banging on the door with her fist)* Open the door right now cause I'm gonna keel you!! You hear me, you big a-pig! Open the door!!

(As MARIA bangs and hollers, there's an eruption of overlapping voices as TITO runs in through the sitting room/corridor door pursued by SAUNDERS, JULIA, and the BELLHOP.)

TITO. Help!

SAUNDERS. Stop!

JULIA. Tito! Please!

TITO. Help!

BELLHOP. Leave him alone!

TITO. Help!

End

SAUNDERS. I just want to talk to you!

JULIA. Tito, you promised!

BELLHOP. Leave that man alone!

(MARIA, DIANA, and MAGGIE have by now entered the sitting room to see what's going on.)

MARIA. Tito!

TITO. Maria! *(He runs to her.)* Oh, Maria! Get me outa here! Please!

MARIA. *(wheeling on DIANA and MAGGIE)* So! You make a-fun of me, eh?! You tell a-me lies!

SAUNDERS. What are you two doing here?

MAGGIE. Well -

DIANA. We were passing by, so we stopped in.

MAGGIE. To get his autograph.

BELLHOP. Did you get it?

MAGGIE. We sure did.

MARIA. *(to TITO)* They told a-me you were locked in the bathroom.

JULIA. The bathroom?

MARIA. They make a-me think you were fooling around!

TITO. Maria? Me?!

DIANA. We didn't say that.

MAGGIE. Of course not.

DIANA. We were standing here, waiting for Tito -

MAGGIE. And - and - and somebody ran in there -

DIANA. Who sort of...looked like Tito.

MAGGIE. Right.

JULIA. Oh my God. It's the lunatic! It must be!

MAGGIE. Ahhhh-h-h-h!

MARIA. Luna-what?

JULIA. Lunatic. A madman. He's running around the city pretending he's your husband. And apparently he's violent. He actually hit a policeman!

TITO. No!