



The Purple Rose Theatre Company

Shoe Man

The Big Finish



by Jeff Daniels



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The Purple Rose Theatre Company
137 Park Street
Chelsea, Michigan 48118
www.purplerosetheatre.org

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Originally produced by The Purple Rose Theatre Company (1991)
Jeff Daniels, Executive Director
Guy Sanville, Artistic Director
Alan Ribant, Managing Director
The production was directed by T. Newell Kring.

Shoe Man premiered at The Purple Rose Theatre Company in Chelsea, Michigan on May 3, 1991. The play was directed by T. Newell Kring; the set design was by Gary Decker; the costume design was by Lynn Durgom-McQuown; the lighting design was by Susan Chute; the sound design was by Ken Beauchamp; the properties design was by Lynn Durgom-McQuown; and the stage manager was Sandra Houde. The cast was as follows:

GINA HOPKINS	Joanne McGee
SALLY SIMPSON.....	Janet Maylie
REVEREND DeSMITHERS	Erik Fredricksen
CHIP ANDREWS	Dana Gamarra
SAM SIMPSON	John Seibert
PATSY HOFFMAN	Patricia Rector
MIKE CONNORS.....	James Cooper
THE WAITRESS.....	Linda Parolini
WILLIAM WILLIAMSON.....	John Seibert
JENNIFER.....	Linda Parolini

CHARACTERS

SALLY SIMPSON

GINA HOPKINS slut, works at the Gas-N-Go

REVEREND DeSMITHERS

a former Methodist minister

CHIP ANDREWS a golf instructor

SAM SIMPSON SALLY's husband

PATSY HOFFMAN SALLY's best friend

MIKE CONNORS a private investigator

THE WAITRESS

WILLIAM WILLIAMSON

attorney-at-law

JENNIFER WILL's secretary

PLACE

The play takes place in SALLY's mind.

TIME

The present

Shoe Man

ACT ONE

The house lights are still up. The last of the "theatre-goers" are still being seated. GINA HOPKINS, who will be introduced later, comes out onstage. Sits down and waits. After a couple minutes, the house lights go to half.

GINA Hold it. Bring 'em back up.

House lights go back up to full.

GINA Before you get fed the whitebread version, let's get somethin' straight. It's ain't my fault. I'm outnumbered when it comes to this line of thinkin', but if you pay attention you'll see that ...

GINA stops. Tries to find the right words.

GINA ... see, there's a difference. The difference is there's a difference between sleepin' with somebody and somebody sleepin' with me. It's graphic, I know. Those of us who do understand the difference lead normal lives, enjoy our weekends and stay the hell outta prison. Simple as that.

GINA stops and looks off in an unexpected direction. She sees SALLY SIMPSON, who seems to have materialized from nowhere. SALLY is dressed in the prison blues of the Huron Valley Correctional Facility. A prison for women. It is the one and only costume SALLY wears for the entire play. The house lights have finally faded completely out.

GINA *(to audience)* Like I was sayin'.

Pause. SALLY just stares at GINA.

SALLY What are you doing out here?

GINA Hey, I was just sittin' there.

REVEREND DeSMITHERS, enters with a Bible and a chair. He sits in the chair and opens the Bible.

REVEREND I'm sorry I'm late, it's just—What are you doing out here?

GINA The same thing you're doing out here.

Long pause. SALLY just stares at GINA, who stares right back at her. The REVEREND speaks to GINA without looking at her.

REVEREND Gina, please, just go.

GINA *(to SALLY)* How's the food on the inside, Sally?

REVEREND Gina.

Pause. GINA walks off the stage at her own pace. SALLY and the REVEREND watch her go.

SALLY *(to audience)* We're not close, it's true ... I don't have a lot of time, so I'll keep it short. Actually, I do have a lot of time—like “twenty-five years to life” kinda time, but that's a prison joke and this isn't about prison. It's about me. And Gina. And my husband. And a few other people in the sleepy, little town where I used to live ... until I was arrested, tried and convicted. It's funny—well, not *funny* funny, but funny.

REVEREND *(mumbling to himself)* When God frowns, Satan smiles.

SALLY *(to audience, an introduction)* Reverend DeSmithers.

The REVEREND turns and acknowledges the audience.

REVEREND “Former.”

SALLY “Former”? What do you mean “former”?

REVEREND “Former” Reverend DeSmithers. As in “Excommunicated” Reverend DeSmithers.

SALLY Oh, no! I'm so sorry, I didn't know!

REVEREND How could you? You're in prison serving a life sentence. It's hard to stay current.

SALLY Yes. But still—I don't believe what I'm hearing. You're kidding!

REVEREND *(shaking head)* I don't kid. I can't. I was born without a sense of humor.

SALLY What happened?

REVEREND *(to audience)* “What happened,” she says.

You know exactly what happened, Sally. I broke down in front of my congregation—

SALLY Oh, I know, I was there for that. *(to audience)*

There are only two—*(to REVEREND)* excuse me—

REVEREND No, please, by all means, go ahead—

SALLY *(over REVEREND, to audience)*—nothing, no, I just, it's just that I wanted to say that there are only two churches in town. The Catholic church and the Protestant church. Reverend DeSmithers is the—

REVEREND —Was the—

SALLY —was the, yes, the pastor at the Protestant—

REVEREND —Methodist.

SALLY —sorry—

REVEREND —It's all right.

SALLY —the Methodist church in town. There. *(pause)* Okay. Go ahead. I'm sorry.

Pause. The REVEREND speaks with great, emotional difficulty.

REVEREND *(to audience)* I broke down in front of my congregation.

SALLY *(to audience)* It was—I'm sorry—I won't, I just, I mean it was very hard to watch. You think of the minister as being the one person in your life who can handle anything, right? No matter how crazy, this guy is the guy you can count on in a pinch. The Town Conscience, Emotional Firefighter—

REVEREND The Lone Ranger With A Cross.

SALLY Exactly, yeah. *(to REVEREND)* I'm sorry, go ahead.

The REVEREND gathers his courage again.

REVEREND *(to audience)* I committed a sin for which, in the eyes of the Lord and all of mankind, I will forever be punished. I'm not from around here. I'm originally from West Virginia. And in West Virginia, we preach differently than they do up here. I've always been at odds with the Methodist doctrine that stresses moderation and shies away from the minister who preaches with great emotion. Letting the glory of God just take you over, riding the words of the gospel like a stallion that won't be tamed, sweat beading up on your forehead, spittle sailing like launched missiles out over the front pews, snot flying out of your nose, all in the name of the Lord Jesus!

SALLY All right, okay, that's enough. That's enough.

REVEREND They should know this.

SALLY They'll see it all later. Besides, this isn't about you.

REVEREND No, I guess not. That's my life, and why would they be interested in my life? My life is meaningless. It may be relevant for your purposes—

SALLY Oh, yes, it is, very—

REVEREND —but in the general sense, it's still meaningless.

SALLY You broke down.

REVEREND I know that.

SALLY No. Get back to the part where you broke down.

REVEREND Oh yes, thank you so much, let's get back to the my nervous breakdown. Some say it's the aftermath of the '80s perfected in the pulpits on television where the preacher confesses to horrible sins until he's down on his knees bawling like a baby at baptism. I think it's because I have the soul of a Baptist trapped in the body of a Methodist. If medical science can invent an operation that turns a man into a woman, why can't they open me up and extract that part of me which is screaming to get out!

SALLY *(to audience)* Whatever. The point is, it was hard to watch. You'll see.

REVEREND *(to audience)* Yes. Lucky you. *(pause)* But! Enough about me.

SALLY Yes.

REVEREND This isn't about me.

SALLY No.

REVEREND It's because of me, but it's not about me.

SALLY It's not because of you! Stop with the guilt trip! Now you sound like a Catholic!

REVEREND I've turned into a religious schizophrenic. I need to start over at the beginning. I think I'll book a flight to Bethlehem.

SALLY I told you, this isn't about you—

The REVEREND falls to his knees in front of SALLY.

REVEREND Sally. Please—

SALLY What are you doing?

REVEREND Why?

SALLY Don't let the guard see you like that.

REVEREND Why?

SALLY She'll think we're having sex or something, I don't know, guards are weird.

REVEREND No! Why did you do it? You didn't have to kill him! If you'd let it alone, I'd still be preaching!

SALLY Look, Reverend—

REVEREND George.

SALLY What?

REVEREND I'm just George now. You have to call me George. I'm just ... a George.

SALLY George. Look—

SALLY turns away from REVEREND "GEORGE" DeSMITHERS, pacing as she continues to speak. At the same time, the lights fade out on the REVEREND who picks up his Bible and leaves. When SALLY turns around, she is speaking to audience.

SALLY —thanks for making the trip out to see me, but I hope you don't think I'm going to beg for forgiveness

because, frankly, I don't have it in me today.

From another unexpected place, CHIP ANDREWS marches across the stage at a diagonal, carrying a golf bag. He is furious at himself.

CHIP Why pull out the driver? If you can't hit the driver, why pull it out of your bag? You know why? I'll tell you why! Because you're a hack, that's why! A hack! Hack! Hack!!

And CHIP is gone, not having acknowledged anyone.

SALLY *(re: CHIP, to audience)* It's relevant, trust me ... I'm in here because I got impatient one day and killed my husband. Cold-blooded, pre-meditated, waited for him to walk through that front door after work, "Honey, I'm home"—powie, ka-boom, goodbye, dead, gone, won't be coming back. I did it, I confessed to it. Book 'er, Dano.

GINA HOPKINS re-enters.

SALLY *(sarcastic)* Oh, good, she's back. I'd like you to meet my husband's girlfriend, from earlier, Gina—

GINA Hopkins.

SALLY —Hopkins, right. She'd have sex with a lamp if she thought she could keep the light bulb.

GINA Depends on the wattage.

SALLY She was attractive—

GINA *(to audience)* Still am.

SALLY *(to GINA)*—in a diseased kind of way. The men around town, they're so sick, they knew she was "oversexed," and they couldn't help but turn and sneak a quick look whenever she walked by. But they know if they ever dove into the deep end of her pool they'd end up payin' the price.

GINA I was worth it. Ask anybody.

SALLY You mean everybody. In high school—she was older than me—

GINA The hell I was.

SALLY Shut up.

GINA Make me.

SALLY All us girls would come to school on Monday morning with hickeys. Gina'd walk in with what she said were "cold sores." We knew different because she only dated guys from Ypsilanti.

GINA They knew how to pull the trigger.

SALLY You were a nympho, Gina.

GINA Yeah, well, God gave me a gift, what can I say?

SALLY You were a freshman in high school dating guys in their thirties!

GINA You know, I don't remember high school.

SALLY *(to audience)* Gina now has a "career" as the cash girl at the Gas-N-Go out by the highway. Everything nowadays is out by the highway.

GINA Hey, highways are the blood vessels of our country.

SALLY Shut up.

GINA Make me.

SALLY *(to audience)* Despite how—what my private investigator called "this fabulous babe"—despite how good she looks all these years later, at least how good she thinks she looks—

GINA God bless this body.

SALLY —if someone were to ask the men in this town that infamous American male question "Would ya?" I would be willing to bet that nine out of ten of 'em would not by any stretch of the imagination, even in their wildest dreams—though lately when it comes to what men are dreaming about, I haven't gotta clue. But that one out of ten, wouldn't ya know it, turned out to be my husband. The one who would when the rest would not.

Lights fade out on GINA.

SALLY When I first found out—one of those drop dead phone calls from my best friend—well, best friends at that time—Patsy Hoffman—she and I were friends because our husbands were friends. Golf buddies, actually—

Lights up on PATSY in a bathrobe and curlers. She is holding a Ninja Turtle lunch pail and talking on a telephone. PATSY cuts SALLY off.

PATSY Hi, it's me. Listen, I don't wanna be the one to tell you this, but there's a rumor goin' around about your husband.

SALLY speaks to PATSY without looking at her, but without a telephone.

SALLY What kind of rumor?

PATSY I don't wanna be the one to tell ya.

SALLY What kind of rumor, Patsy?

PATSY The rumor about your husband and Gina Hopkins out at the Gas-N-Go.

SALLY What?

PATSY I gotta go, I gotta get the kids off, the bus is here—*(a scream to offstage kids)*—THE BUS IS HERE!—*(back to SALLY)*—Remember, I wasn't the one who told ya. Call me.

Lights go out on PATSY. SALLY pauses.

SALLY You know how whenever there's some kind of tragedy in your life, right after it happens, you turn on the radio and the first song you hear makes you feel worse? Well, that didn't happen to me. I heard a commercial that changed my life. How many times does that happen?

A light comes up on a small radio. Out of it we hear the following: a car traveling at a high rate of speed, the screeching of tires and a terrible crash. Death and destruction. A siren begins to wail in the distance, growing louder, the commercial goes on.

WILL *(radio)* What you just heard is not unlike the sound of a marriage breaking up. Hello. My name is William Williamson, Attorney-At-Law. Did you know sixty-two percent of the marriages being performed in America today will end in divorce?

SAM enters, home from work. He goes right to the

dinner table, loosens his tie and digs into a plate of meat loaf, mashed potatoes and peas with a can of Pabst Blue Ribbon. A bottle of Heinz ketchup has been placed on the table.

WILL *(radio)* Young couples, once full of hopes and dreams, soon find themselves careening off the matrimonial highway and smashing through the guard rail of wedded bliss only to roll over and over in the ditch of divorce. If you've decided that breaking up isn't so hard to do after all, call me at 1-800-SUE-THEM. Let me help you slam on the brakes—before it's too late.

The siren peaks. The ambulance screeches to a stop, still wailing. Doors opening and slamming, paramedics barking instructions—"get the jaws of life." It fades down for the VOICE OVER.

SAM *(mouth full)* This is the best meat loaf I have ever put in my mouth.

SAM dives back into his plate. SALLY turns to the audience.

SALLY He'd never complimented my cooking before. Not in thirteen years of marriage. Never.

VOICE OVER 1-800-SUE-THEM. Call today for an appointment.

SALLY crosses to the table. She sits in the chair straight downstage of SAM, her back to the audience.

SALLY Are you having an affair with Gina Hopkins out at the Gas-N-Go?

Pause.

SAM What?

SALLY turns to the audience, over her shoulder.

SALLY All of a sudden he's hard of hearing.

SALLY picks up the ketchup off the table, flips off the lid and squirts it into SAM's face. SAM freezes,

the ketchup dripping off his face; the only thing moving is his mouth, chewing the last bit of meat loaf in his mouth. SALLY calmly sets the ketchup on the table.

SALLY I said, are you having an affair with Gina Hopkins out at the Gas-N-Go, yes or no?

SAM You just squirted ketchup in my face!

SALLY Answer the question.

SAM I can't believe you just squirted me with ketchup!

SALLY Answer the question.

SAM I'm wearing a bottle of Heinz ketchup!

SALLY Answer the question, goddammit!

SAM Whaddaya mean answer the question, what kind of a question is—

SALLY You know exactly what kind of question it is, answer it!

SAM I don't have to answer that question, it's ridiculous.

SALLY So your answer is no?

SAM *(slight beat)* No.

Pause.

SALLY No, you're not having an affair, or no, your answer is no?

SAM Sally. Honey. I am no, I repeat, not having an affair with whoever it is out at wherever you said.

SALLY Gina Hopkins out at the Gas-N-Go.

SAM Right, no. When I go to the Gas-N-Go, the only thing I'm getting is gas.

SALLY Just gas.

SAM Just gas. Sometimes oil.

SALLY turns away from SAM, towards the audience and begins to cry.

SAM Honey, what's gotten into you?

SAM gets up and goes to her, kneeling in front of her.

SAM Look at me.

SALLY You're really not?

SAM No.

SALLY You're really no.

SAM No, I'm not.

SALLY I swear to god, Sam, I swear to god—you're sure you're not because if you are—

SAM I'm not, Sally. Look at me. I am not having an affair with Gina Hopkins. *(pause)* Okay? ... Okay?

SALLY Okay.

SAM Okay ... What's really wrong? Is it your mother?

SALLY No, it's not her. I don't know, it's just everything, y'know, what with the holidays coming, it's just all to much.

SAM What holidays are we talking about? It's the middle of July.

SALLY *(a sigh)* I don't know, I just—I don't know.

SAM Do you wanna talk to Barney again?

SALLY No, I don't want to talk to Barney again. For god's sake, Sam, he's your brother.

SAM He's a psychiatrist who happens to be a relative.

SALLY He's a relative who comes to our house on Thanksgiving and stares at the way I stuff the turkey—no, Sam.

SAM *(a gentle joke)* Alright, fine. You're obviously a perfectly well-adjusted, happy-go-lucky gal.

SALLY I am not. I'm a mess.

SAM You're a mess! Look what you did to my face!

SALLY Oh, Sam, you're—lemme clean you off—

SAM No, no, forget it. I kinda like it. It's like one of these whaddayacallits that you get at that place you go?

SALLY What?

SAM That thing they do with that stuff they use at that wherever it is you go to do it. What am I talkin' about?

SALLY A mud pack?

SAM Yeah. Except it's ketchup. Y'know, the Indians used to use squashed tomatoes to improve the quality

of skin on their squaws before they discovered mud, they used to rub it right into their face—

SAM rubs his face into SALLY's. They laugh.

SALLY Sam!

SAM It's a fact, look it up.

SALLY Stop it, Sam!

They horse around until they fall into a hug. They hold each other, SALLY holding tight.

SALLY Do you know how long it's been since we ate at Big Boy?

SAM What?

SALLY Remember when we first got married? We used to do things. Just the two of us. You'd come home from work and we'd go for long walks at night during the summer. Or sometimes we'd just cuddle up on the couch and watch the news. My favorite thing was when you'd come home and tell me you were taking me out to eat at Big Boy. I would pretend we were goin' someplace real fancy, someplace we couldn't afford, but it didn't matter so long as we were going out to eat, we were out on the town, just you and me. I miss that.

SAM I eat breakfast there every morning. Two eggs, hash browns, toast and coffee, all for \$2.99. Can't beat it.

SALLY Sam, take me to breakfast at Big Boy.

SAM What?

SALLY Order me the \$2.99 special.

SAM Wait a minute. I don't know why I didn't think of this before.

SALLY What?

SAM I know the perfect thing we can do together.

SALLY Oh, Sam! What is it, tell me!

SAM Golf.

SALLY Golf?

SAM We can play golf together. Just the two of us.

SALLY Sam, I hate golf.

SAM How do you know? You've never played it.

SALLY I don't have to. I hate it.

SAM But it's what I do. I can't give up golf, you can't ask me to do that, please, don't ask me to do that, I don't know what I'd do if I couldn't play golf.

SALLY I'm not asking you to give up golf.

SAM Good, I couldn't live without golf—

SALLY Sam—

SAM Will you just try it? Come here!

SALLY gets up and lets SAM stand behind her and put his arms around her as she sets up to swing an imaginary club.

SALLY I don't want to play golf. You need coordination, and I don't have any coordination.

SAM Just try it once for your big lug, huh? I'm still your big lug, aren't I?

SALLY Sam—

SAM Am I still your big lug?

SALLY Yes, you're still my big lug.

SAM This'll be fun. I'll teach you how to play and pretty soon—

SALLY I don't want you to teach me. Whenever you try to teach me things we end up in a fight.

SAM You're right! Better idea!

SALLY What? Bowling?

SAM I'll set up lessons for you with Chip Andrews, out at the club? On, honey, this is perfect! You'll love him!

Lights up on CHIP ANDREWS, the golfer who walked through before, who hands SALLY a golf club. SAM goes to sit back down and dives into his meat loaf.

SAM *(sitting)* He's club pro. All day long all he does is teach golf! Chip'll have ya splittin' fairways in no time!

SALLY Here goes.

SALLY sets up to swing. SAM eats. CHIP paces. SALLY swings. Not pretty.

CHIP You call that a golf swing?

CHIP is beyond tense. He is also a beginning golf student's worst nightmare—a golf instructor right out of Hitler's Germany. He is much like a high school football coach who hasn't gotten a call his way in five years. He communicates through conflict. A screamer.

CHIP Huh?

SALLY No, I guess not—

Pause.

CHIP Have you ever played the game of golf before?

SALLY No.

CHIP In your whole life? Not once?

SALLY No, never.

CHIP Great. Lemme see another swing.

SALLY sets up for another swing, her feet apart, waggles her club, very tense.

CHIP Relax!

SALLY tries to relax. More waggles, still tense. Taking a lot of time. Finally, SALLY swings. Hard. Too hard. An ugly display of golf mechanics. CHIP rips off his visor and slams it into the ground. He paces back and forth, steaming.

SALLY I guess I didn't feel very comfortable on that swing.

CHIP responds by rolling his eyes at her and pacing some more. He snatches his golf visor off the ground and slams it back onto his head. He stands there, his arms crossed, staring at SALLY.

SALLY What am I doing wrong?

CHIP You mind if I ask you somethin'?

SALLY No.

CHIP You sure?

SALLY Yeah.

Pause.

CHIP This wasn't your idea, was it?

SALLY What do you mean?

CHIP Your husband's making you do this. He said "Honey, learn how to play golf so we can be together and live happily ever after," right?

SALLY No. Not at all. I'm here because I want to be.

CHIP First rule. Don't lie to the golf pro.

SALLY I'm not lying! I want to learn.

CHIP If you were smart you'd leave right now and never come back. Look at me, what do you see?

SALLY What?

CHIP What do you see?

SALLY I don't—what do you mean?

CHIP Do I look happy?

SALLY Happy?

CHIP Fun to be around? Someone you'd want to get to know?

SALLY I don't know, I just met you.

CHIP stands there, struggling to keep his composure. He succeeds, barely. He delivers the following speech as if the people at Golfers Anonymous told him this would help him recover. He takes a deep breath before beginning.

CHIP My name's Chip and I'm a golfaholic.

ALL *(offstage)* Hi, Chip!

CHIP I'm going through "denial." I spend a minimum fifteen hours a day at the golf course, lose at least two hundred dollars in bets every time I tee it up, and my wife just left me for a man who plays tennis. Golf kills, I know that now, I just can't—just once I want to wake up in the morning and not feel like I have to hit a bucket of balls before breakfast. There's a saying we use a lot at Golfers Anonymous ... "With experience, strength and hope, I can learn to like myself for who I am, not for what my score is ..."

SALLY Sam.

CHIP " ... Not whether I can drain that four footer to

save par ... ”

SALLY Sam!—

CHIP *(exiting, talking to himself, a fruitcake)* “ ... or keep my driver in the fairway or hit greens in regulation. I wanna be a weekend golfer. That’s all. Just a weekend golfer ... ”

SALLY *(tears, overlapping CHIP)*—Sam, I can’t do it! I can’t! Don’t make me do it, Sam, please!

SAM Sally, c’mon—

SALLY I don’t wanna play golf, Sam, please don’t make me play golf!

SAM Honey—

SALLY falls into his arms, crying like a baby.

SALLY Please, Sam, please—

SAM Calm down, Sal, c’mon—

SALLY I don’t want to play golf with you, Sam, I want you to take me to Big Boy.

SAM I will, I promise.

SALLY I just want the \$2.99 special—

SAM Okay, okay,—c’mon, take a breath, honey. Just take a deep breath.

SALLY does, starts to calm down. SAM is hugging her from behind.

SAM That’s my girl. You okay? All better now?

SALLY Yes.

SAM You sure?

SALLY I’m sorry.

SAM Don’t be sorry, just relax. Here. Take this knife.

SAM hands her the knife from his table setting and starts to mold her hands.

SALLY What are you doing?

SAM Interlock the little finger of your bottom hand with the index finger of your top hand—

SALLY Sam! I can’t!

SAM Yes, you can. Here, just think of it as firing away at the ball. First, we start our backswing low and slow—

SALLY Don’t teach me. I can’t take you teaching me. I can’t take anyone teaching me!

SALLY and SAM take the “club” back.

SAM Honey. Think of the fun we’re gonna have. Weekend tournaments, Couples Best Ball, Ladies Day, I’m in heaven right now—

They reach the top of their backswing.

SAM —now we pause at the top, and down we go as we sweep through the ball and a big finish!

SALLY and SAM are posed awkwardly in a “finished” golf swing position. They hold that position as if frozen.

SAM You did it, honey! Your first swing!

SALLY Go finish your meat loaf before it gets cold.

SAM *(sitting down at the table)* Ooh, good idea—I will, I’ll do that. And ya wanna know somethin’? I’ll tell ya somethin’. Your meat loaf is even better cold.

SALLY That did it.

SALLY crosses out of the kitchen light, which fades out, and is handed a telephone book as she speaks to the audience.

SALLY I went straight to the Bell Yellow Pages and looked up “Private Investigators.” I didn’t have a clue how much one was, but Sam had sold a lot of shoes that week—Sam sold shoes. To shoe stores. Discount shoes, perfectly good shoes, just discounted. He’d pick ‘em up at the warehouse in Clinton and drive all over. Nobody ever bought any.

SALLY leafs through the Yellow Pages as she speaks.

SALLY Well, no, that’s not true. There’s a store over in Jackson called Shoes, Shoes & More Shoes. They can’t seem to get enough of ‘em. Anyway, he’d had a good week that week, so—ah! Here, right here!

SALLY points to a spot in the phone book, reads.

SALLY “M. Connors, P.I. Inexpensive rates, call no later than 9:00 PM.”

SALLY tosses the phone book offstage.

SALLY I made the call and arranged an appointment. I wanted to meet someplace where there wouldn't be anybody around. He suggested the local alpine shop since it was July. Who cares about snow skiing in the middle of the summer?

Lights up on the main showroom of the Schuss Shop, a winter sporting goods store specializing in all types of snow ski equipment. The entire cast enters from every orifice of the theatre, like cattle let out of the corral, as a variety of characters unrelated to the characters they portray in the play.

SALLY Little did I know, it was The Annual Mid-Summer Pre-Snow Ski Swap at the Alpine Shop. In other words, a sale.

Two people both wearing brightly colored ski boots, begin fighting over a trendy snow ski parka.

MAN 1 It's mine! I had it first!

MAN 2 Back off!

SALLY *(to audience)* I didn't even have a clue what “Mr. Connors” looked like. He said that was standard procedure. He also said the code word for our meeting would be “strawberry.” I asked him if he read a lot of cheap detective novels. He said, “Strawberry,” and hung up.

The people “power shop,” selecting, grabbing and clinging to a variety of ski items. SALLY mixes among them, hoping one of them will present themselves as her private detective. Nothing. Some people actually try things on right there in the middle of the store. Amidst the group is a YOUNG MAN (CONNORS) dressed in full snow ski gear—ski

boots, snow pants, parka, ski gloves, wool ski cap and very dark ski goggles—mixing in with the crowd. He walks up to people and makes remarks. He is not always ignored. The actors/customers ad lib their responses. The shop is full of noisy customers all screaming to be heard. CONNORS can be heard above them. He crosses to the two men arguing over the parka.

CONNORS Last one to the bottom of the mountain has to clean the condo!

They ignore him. He crosses to WOMAN.

CONNORS Ever skied in Aspen in August?

WOMAN No. It isn't open in August, is it?

CONNORS I go every year!

He crosses to SALLY.

CONNORS Hello, my little Snow Bunny. And what's your favorite “apres ski” drink?

SALLY What?

CONNORS Your body aches from schussing that last glacier, you're tired, but it's a good kind of tired, you head into the lodge to meet up with your friends around a roaring campfire, when a tall, good-looking ski instructor comes up and asks you, “What's your ‘apres ski’ pleasure?” and you say—?

SALLY Leave me alone, creep.

CONNORS Oh, but, my little Snow Bunny, would your “apres ski” pleasure be, perhaps, a strawberry daiquiri?

SALLY turns and stares at CONNORS.

SALLY Oh, my god.

CONNORS *(screams)* Half price sale on genuine rawhide leather wine flasks in Aisle Five! Rawhide wine flasks on sale, half price, Aisle Five! Mrs. Simpson?

SALLY Oh, my god.

CONNORS Mike Connors, Private Investigator. You called?

SALLY Oh my god.

CONNORS "Strawberry."

SALLY You're "M. Connors, P.I."?

CONNORS Yes, ma'am. "Strawberry."

SALLY The one in the Yellow Pages?

CONNORS Yes, ma'am. Say "strawberry."

Pause.

SALLY Is this some kind of prank? *(pause)* Is it?!

Pause.

CONNORS *(whispers)* "Strawberry"—

SALLY Strawberry! Strawberry, all right? Strawberry!

The entire store full of customers stops their ad libbing and shopping and, in unison, turns to stare at CONNORS and SALLY. CONNORS turns straight upstage and screams at the top of his lungs.

CONNORS *(back to SALLY)* No, ma'am, no prank.

CONNORS eyes cannot be seen behind the dark ski goggles. We will not see his eyes in this scene.

SALLY Do you have some sort of badge you flash or something that tells me you are who you say you are?

CONNORS Yes.

SALLY Could I see it, please?

CONNORS Here? Out in the open?

SALLY Yes.

CONNORS That's bogue.

CONNORS digs for his badge. SALLY can't believe her eyes.

SALLY Why are you dressed like December?

CONNORS I work part-time as the store detective here at the Alpine Shop. I'm just blending in with my surroundings.

SALLY How did you know I was the one who called?

CONNORS It's my job to know.

SALLY How old are you?

CONNORS Old enough to operate a Nikon camera through a bedroom window.

SALLY Excuse me?

CONNORS Look, lady, from the looks of you, I'd say you gotta cheatin' husband but you don't have proof and if you had proof you'd hire some shark divorce lawyer who prides himself on takin' wayward husbands to the financial cleaners and that's where I come in. I get you the proof that'll destroy your marriage, put your husband in the poorhouse and send you back to the single bars for a crash course in dating.

SALLY *(stunned)* Where did you learn to talk like this?

CONNORS Ever see the show "Mannix"?

SALLY The TV series?

CONNORS Yeah. It's in reruns. I've taped every episode. I have the most extensive library of "Mannix" shows in the entire United States.

SALLY Really.

CONNORS Yeah, really. The man's a genius. He makes Jake the Fatman look like a fat man named Jake. You're not impressed?

SALLY No. I'm not.

CONNORS *(an exit line)* Yeah, well. If you need somebody to pick up the pieces and make sense of it all ...

CONNORS turns and starts to walk away in his ski boots.

SALLY Wait!

CONNORS turns back to her, TV acting.

SALLY *(desperate)* All right, here it is. I can't afford a high-priced detective. I don't even have the money for a cheap one. My husband sells shoes for a living.

CONNORS Bummer.

SALLY I can't pay you. But I need you. Help me. Please.

SALLY starts to cry. CONNORS lets her.

CONNORS "Strawberry."

SALLY What?

CONNORS *(a deal)* We'll be in touch.

And CONNORS is gone. The lights go out on the Alpine Shop. SALLY speaks to the audience.

SALLY And then I did one of those things you do in your life that make you wince every time you think about it. I should've kept on goin'. Right out to the highway and gone.

Lights up on GINA at her pay window at the Gas-N-Go. SALLY comes up to the window.

GINA What pump?

SALLY My name is Sally Simpson. We went to high school together, maybe you remember me?

GINA Nah, I don't remember high school.

Long pause. GINA looks at SALLY and then opens a fresh bag of Doritos Nacho Cheese chips.

SALLY Are you having an affair with my husband?

GINA What's his name?

SALLY Sam. Sam Simpson.

GINA Sam Simpson—oh, you mean Shoe Man!

SALLY Yes, he—

GINA Shoe Man the shoe man, sell me some shoes!

SALLY —shoes, yes, he sells shoes—

GINA Hey, shoes are like tires, you gotta have 'em.

A couple other people get in line behind SALLY. They can't help but overhear the following.

SALLY I want what's going on to stop. Now. Because if I ever catch you with my husband again, I swear to god, I'll kill you.

Pause.

GINA With what?

SALLY Excuse me?

GINA With what?

SALLY Just stop it. Just stop.

GINA There's nothin' to stop, I'm not doin' nothin'.

SALLY Like hell you aren't! He buys his gas here, he comes here whenever—

GINA The whole town buys gas here! Does that mean I'm sleepin' with the whole town?!

SALLY —he comes home every Thursday night smellin' like cigarettes and motor oil! I know what's goin' on!

GINA Hey, honey, you know what you know? You wanna know what you know? One thing! You know you gotta husband who's gotta go someplace else to get what he needs. That's what you know! Now, a little free lesson in life! You pay a little more attention to what's important and you won't find yourself coming into town looking for somebody to dump it on! Am I making myself perfectly clear here? Are there any questions?

SALLY is struggling to keep from breaking down. CONNORS, disguised as a mechanic, crosses behind them, wiping his hands on a rag. They don't see him.

SALLY Stay away from Sam.

GINA Jesus, like I need this! I'm not—look at me, honey—I am not doin' your husband, okay? Now go away, leave me alone.

SALLY steps into another area as the lights go down on GINA and her booth.

SALLY *(to audience, hurt)* I can't—it's hard to talk right now ...

Pause. SALLY takes a beat to regain her composure.

SALLY I don't know what I expected, y'know? I thought she'd admit it or something. I spent over an hour drivin' around planning what I was gonna say to her, guessing what she would say and what I would say back and it all just went in this other direction. I pick the fight and I'm the one who ends up gettin' beat up.

Lights up at the SIMPSON dinner table. PATSY is seated. SALLY, very upset, sits down across from her.

PATSY —I know, I know, it's just terrible, I know.
 SALLY Was I supposed to notice something? Was I supposed to look for clues?
 PATSY You can't look for clues in a situation like this, you can only look for someone to blame.
 SALLY I blame me! That's what kills me! I feel like I'm the one who did something wrong!
 PATSY You didn't do anything wrong.
 SALLY I must've, Patsy! My marriage is falling apart, I must've had something to do with it!
 PATSY All right, calm down—you're no help to anybody if you get hysterical. Now calm down.
SALLY wipes tears, tries to calm down.
 SALLY Oh, god. I don't believe this is happening to me, Patsy—
 PATSY I know, I know, it's just—
 SALLY I mean, you see it on the news when it happens to other people, but you never think of it as something that could happen to you.
 PATSY Oh, I know, I know—
 SALLY I just don't know why Sam would do this to me.
 PATSY Is it sex?
 SALLY What?
 PATSY Is it sex? Is sex the problem? Between you and Sam?
 SALLY Sex is fine between me and Sam.
 PATSY So sex isn't the problem?
 SALLY No.
 PATSY So he's still interested.
 SALLY In what?
 PATSY In sex.
 SALLY Yes, he is. He's still interested.
 PATSY How often?
 SALLY What?
 PATSY How many times a week do you and Sam have sex?
 SALLY It varies.
 PATSY How?

SALLY How? You mean, how do we do it?
 PATSY No, how many times a week do you have sex?
Pause.
 SALLY You promise you won't tell a soul?
 PATSY No one.
 SALLY Patsy.
 PATSY No one! I said no one!
 SALLY Because the last time I told you something in confidence, you all but took out an ad in the paper.
 PATSY I was new in town. It was a way to meet friends.
Pause.
 SALLY The sex has slowed down.
 PATSY Has it stopped completely?
 SALLY No, we still do it. When we do it, we do it. It's just that it's not like, y'know, when we did it before.
 PATSY ("I see") Uh-huh ...
Uncomfortable pause for SALLY. PATSY stares at SALLY.
 SALLY What?
 PATSY I'm thinking ... when he comes home from being on the road, does he want sex?
 SALLY Does he—?
 PATSY Does he want to have sex with you when he comes home from being on the road?
 SALLY Yes, I guess so, sometimes, of course ... unless he comes home on a Tuesday.
 PATSY What's wrong with Tuesday?
 SALLY Nothing! Well, not nothing, it's just Sam has golf league on Tuesdays.
 PATSY So? He doesn't play golf at night. What does that have to do with not having sex?
 SALLY He says playing golf tires him out. Something to do with putting, I think, I don't know.
 PATSY Al and I always have sex after Tuesday night golf league. Like clockwork. Not the sex, the sex isn't like clockwork, but having it is. Al and I never miss. We find

it sexually stimulating.

SALLY You find what sexually stimulating?

PATSY Golf.

SALLY Golf! Golf has nothing to do with sex.

PATSY *(pause)* Have you ever done it in a sand trap?

SALLY Patsy!

PATSY Watch out for rakes. Has Sam mentioned to you that Al doesn't go out drinkin' after golf league anymore?

SALLY No.

PATSY Sam still goes to the tavern after playin', right?

SALLY Yeah.

PATSY Not my Al. Not anymore. Ever since we did it in that sand trap, he can't wait to get home, throw me in the car and fly right back out to the golf course. It's very romantic. We pull in. Park the car by the clubhouse. We get the clubs out of the trunk. Make our way over to the first tee.

SALLY You actually play golf?

PATSY In the nude.

SALLY Patsy!

PATSY Just the first two holes. I pretend I'm his caddie. I help him pick his club, check his distance. We think of it as foreplay.

SALLY And nobody's ever caught you?

PATSY We do it at night, we're not sick. Y'know, with fluorescent balls and flashlights? By the time we reach the third green, Al can no longer putt.

SALLY Why not?

PATSY Sally, c'mon. He'd have to swing his putter in a big arc like—

SALLY Oh, right, I see, okay. I didn't—I see.

PATSY That's when I start looking out for rakes.

SALLY Maybe if I took Sam out to the golf course and we did it in a sand trap, I could save my marriage.

PATSY Tuesday's taken.

SALLY I know that. I'm just looking for ideas, Patsy—

PATSY If you promised to play the back nine you could

do it on Tuesday night—just watch out for the water hazard on the sixteen.

SALLY Patsy—

PATSY —it's just that Al and I build our whole week around Tuesday night—

SALLY I'll pick another night! Okay? I'll just—I'll pick another night!

PATSY Okay. All right. *(pause)* Which night?

SALLY What does it matter as long as it's not Tuesday night?

PATSY Well ... Duane and Dolores have Wednesday nights, Bob and Caroline have Thursdays and on the weekend—forget it, you almost have to make a tee time.

SALLY *(to audience)* Does this kind of thing go on where you live?

PATSY *(to audience)* Of course it does, they just won't admit it.

SALLY *(rise, to PATSY)* You're not helping me.

PATSY I'm sorry, it's Tuesday morning, I'm preoccupied.

SALLY crosses away from PATSY. The lights fade out on the SIMPSON dining room. Suddenly, a YOUNG MAN (CHIP ANDREWS) walks through the scene carrying a golf bag full of clubs. He is furious at himself. His head is down as he marches across the stage. SALLY watches him go by.

CHIP Why hit an eight iron when the shot calls for a nine? Why? You know why? I'll tell you why! Because you're a hack, that's why! A hack! Hack! Hack!!

And CHIP is gone, never having acknowledged anyone's presence.

SALLY *(to audience)* I needed to talk to someone who could really help me. I couldn't go to Barney because Barney would go to Sam like he did last Christmas when he psychoanalyzed the way I decorated the Christmas tree ... So anyway, I went to the one person in town I

knew would help me. The one person whose job it was to listen and understand.

Lights up on REVEREND DeSMITHERS' office at the local Methodist church. He motions SALLY in.

REVEREND Come in, Sally. So good to see you.

SALLY Thank you, Reverend. First off, I want to apologize for missing church last Sunday. I had a thing.

REVEREND A thing.

SALLY Yes. Something came up.

REVEREND An occasional absence is forgivable. Abstinence in and of itself, however, is much like playing Russian roulette with the Lord. Speaking of which, I've been pastor at this church for almost nine years now and I have yet to see your husband at a Sunday worship service.

SALLY My husband plays golf on Sunday mornings.

REVEREND Ah, yes. Golf. The devil's favorite pastime.

Out of an unexpected place, CONNORS, disguised as a nun walks through the office, crossing "herself." The two of them watch "her" pass by and exit.

REVEREND Strange.

SALLY What is?

REVEREND There are only two churches in this town. This being the Protestant church, I find it strange that a nun would be walking through my office.

SALLY I see what you mean.

REVEREND Perhaps it's God's way of reminding us that we are all of the same religious faith—that of the Lord God Almighty.

SALLY ("Yes") Uh-huh.

REVEREND Then again, maybe not. You're here for a reason?

SALLY Reverend DeSmithers, I really need your help.

REVEREND No, Sally. You need the help of the Lord.

SALLY Well, I need to talk to somebody, whoever it is. Somebody who can steer me in the righteous and holy path that will lead me to ... righteousness and holiness.

REVEREND You need to talk to God for true guidance and deliverance from evil.

SALLY When will He be back, I have to be home by 2:30.

REVEREND Ah, a little joke at the Lord's expense. Sally, make no mistake. He is here. He is with us. He is in the room as we speak. He listens to you, through me. He speaks to you, through me. Now, please, having said that, don't confuse me with God. I do not pretend to be God. Despite whatever physical manifestations, whatever outward re-creations you see in me, please: I am not God. Think of me merely as one of God's paper boys.

SALLY I really don't know how to say this, Reverend. It's very ... delicate.

REVEREND There's nothing you can say that will shock me, Sally. If I may paraphrase the Old Testament, "The Lord's done seen it all."

SALLY It's just hard to say out loud.

REVEREND Just say it.

SALLY My husband ...

REVEREND Please.

SALLY My husband, Sam, Sam Simpson—

REVEREND The Shoe Man.

SALLY Yes, he sells shoes, Sam is having ... he's been having ...

REVEREND Sally, please.

SALLY (*deep breath*) ... Sam is sleeping with Gina Hopkins, he's having this wild, sex affair with Gina Hopkins.

SALLY leans back, greatly relieved having said it. The REVEREND sits very still, staring at SALLY. A beat.

REVEREND Gina Hopkins out at the Gas-N-Go?

SALLY Yes. I don't know what to do, I can't talk to any of my friends because they'll just blab it all over town, and besides, it's humiliating enough having to come in here and tell you about it—

REVEREND —and the Lord.

SALLY —and the Lord, not to mention Him, I know, I'm sitting here ... humiliated! I'm just plain and simple humiliated, I just am, more than I've ever been, ever. God!

REVEREND What?

SALLY What?

REVEREND Nothing. Gina and your husband, Sam. You're sure.

SALLY Yes. I mean, I haven't caught them in the act, but I'm pretty sure. I'm sure, I'm sure.

REVEREND Hmm. Hmm, hmm, hmm ...

Long pause. The REVEREND thinks, SALLY sits, not quite sure what to do.

SALLY Reverend DeSmithers?

REVEREND Hmm?

SALLY Lately all I ever dream about are big guns and rounds of ammunition.

The telephone on the desk rings.

REVEREND Excuse me.

The REVEREND answers the phone.

REVEREND *(phone)* Hello, REVEREND DeSmithers speaking ... Fine ... Fine ... I said I was—I said I was fine ... why does something have to be wrong? ... It's not a good time ... It's just not—there's someone here who needs help, and I'm helping her, all right? I'll call you back ... yes, in five minutes ... Goodbye.

He hangs up.

REVEREND I'm sorry. That was a red herring.

SALLY A what?

REVEREND Never mind. Go on.

Pause.

SALLY What would God do in a situation like this?

REVEREND God wouldn't get into a situation like this.

SALLY No, I suppose not. Well ...

REVEREND Well.

The REVEREND stands.

REVEREND Thank you for coming, Sally. It was good that you did.

SALLY *(rising)* Oh. Thank you, Reverend DeSmithers. You've been a big help. Real food for thought.

REVEREND God be with you.

SALLY crosses out of the church office light. The lights dim down, but not out. The REVEREND, still visible, picks up the phone, dials and then sits on his desk with his back to the audience. SALLY crosses to another pool of light.

SALLY *(to audience)* And I walked out of his office more screwed up than when I went in. I mean, my mind was spinning in circles. And then I started thinking about that thing he said, about the "red herring" and how Jesus walked into a lake once and caught some fish and baked some bread and fed the hungry people and that maybe the fish he caught were red herring.

Pause.

SALLY Totally confused, I turned around and went back to his office to ask him if I was on the right track.

Lights up on the REVEREND's back as SALLY walks into his office. He doesn't see her.

REVEREND *(phone)* ... Well, Gina, looks like I'm not the only worshipper at your baptismal font ... You know exactly what I'm talking about! I will not tolerate you treating me as if I am but merely one apple on your apple tree!

The REVEREND doesn't see SALLY. SALLY turns to the audience.

SALLY Only Gina would try to sleep her way into heaven.

Blackout on the REVEREND and his office, except for the light on SALLY from directly above her. Suddenly, at a very loud volume, a telephone rings.

SALLY nearly jumps out of her shoes, as should the audience.

SALLY I'm sorry! Because I'm so tense everything gets magnified—

A second ring. Twice as loud. Comparable to having a cannon fired behind you that you didn't know was there.

SALLY *(picks up receiver)* There! Got it! All done, sorry. *(re: phone)* Mr. Connors. He wants a meeting.

Lights up on CONNORS, dressed up as one of those pizza delivery boys, full uniform. He is also on a telephone.

CONNORS I want a meeting.

SALLY I said not the Alpine shop again for fear I might be trampled to death by bargain-happy Norwegians and he said—

CONNORS —Meet me at the pizza place out by the highway. You know the one?

SALLY It's the only one out by the highway.

CONNORS That's the one.

CONNORS is talking on a telephone that must have a cord that is fifty feet long. He paces as he talks, the cord trailing behind him like some long tail.

SALLY *(to audience)* I have trouble calling this kid "Mr.," But he insists. He said something about—

CONNORS *(phone)* A professional courtesy—

SALLY —and cited some Mannix episode as a precedent—

CONNORS —In a 1971 episode called, "If You Open The Door For Your Mother, Make Sure She Ain't Holdin' A Gun," Mannix was referred to as—

SALLY —anyway, I figured I'd just go along, my life was already complicated enough. Besides, he said he had something. He called it-

CONNORS —a compilation of information.

SALLY —which was another way of saying he had

pictures. Now, I gotta tell ya, I wasn't lookin' forward to seein' 8 by 10 glossies of my husband's rear end rollin' around the sheets with this town's version of Miss Buy One, Get One Free. I wanted to see the pictures, the proof, but then, I didn't. I felt like a rubbernecker at my own car wreck.

CONNORS discards his telephone and sits down at a table with two chairs and a large pepperoni pizza.

SALLY makes her way to the other chair during the following speech.

SALLY *(to audience)* I told him about Reverend DeSmithers and how he fit into the picture, but Mr. Connors said—

CONNORS *(to audience)* I already knew about that.

SALLY discards the telephone, sits and begins eating a slice of pizza during the next speech.

SALLY The people in this town—they started spreading stories that were so unbelievable people started believing them. The one that really sent me on a nut was the one about me and "Mr." Connors.

A young WAITRESS stops by their table.

WAITRESS Everything all right here?

SALLY Everything's fine, thank you.

WAITRESS Like 'em young, huh?

The WAITRESS walks away. CONNORS keeps on eating. SALLY is in shock.

SALLY I don't believe what she just—did you, Mr. Connors, excuse me, did you just hear what she said?

CONNORS *(wipes mouth with napkin)* In 82% of the episodes, Mannix became romantically involved with the female guest star.

SALLY What are you saying?

CONNORS I'm saying don't act so surprised. You're in trouble, you come to me, I save the day, you fall in love with me. End of show.

SALLY I fall in love with you?
CONNORS Yeah. But then I drop you like a bad habit because you were only hired for one episode.
SALLY This is—I'm sorry, I have made a terrible mistake. I shouldn't have hired you, I was wrong—
CONNORS No, you were right.
SALLY No! I made a mistake. I want out of this. I don't want you anymore. It's over.

The WAITRESS walks by and overhears that last bit of dialogue. SALLY sees that she heard and hangs her head in despair. More rumors.

CONNORS Don't you at least wanna see the pictures?
This stops SALLY. She realizes she is now between a rock and another rock. She has no choice. CONNORS sets a Nikon camera on the table.

CONNORS I've been tailin' the subject for a few weeks now. He only sees Miss Hopkins on Thursday nights. Usually at her place. Candlelight dinner. She sits on his lap. They watch the news. After the news, they head upstairs. I climbed the tree next to her bedroom window. I set my trusty Nikon on motor drive and go (*mimics sound of a motor drive*) "ksh-ksh-ksh-ksh-ksh." (*taps camera*) Bingo. Pictures of your husband and, I might add, the fabulous babe in question.

SALLY Proof.
CONNORS Rock solid, no doubt about it, guilty as sin.

SALLY hangs her head, gathers courage.

SALLY All right. Okay. Lemme see the pictures.
CONNORS I can't do it. The camera jammed.
SALLY What do ya mean the camera jammed?
CONNORS Cameras jam all the time, and this one's jammed.
SALLY Unjam it!
CONNORS Can't risk exposing the film. Can't do it.
SALLY I don't—so why don't you drive to a photography store and have them unjam it?

CONNORS I don't have my license yet.
SALLY (*to audience*) Is this the worst day of my life, or what?
CONNORS (*to audience*) I can't drive yet, so shoot me.
SALLY (*slams money on table*) Here! I'll pay for the pizza, and then I'll drive you myself! I don't believe—if you don't have your license yet and you can't drive a car, how can you tail my husband?
CONNORS My mom usually takes me.
SALLY Oh, god help me—no, never mind, I tried that already.
CONNORS Mrs. Simpson, time is a luxury you can't afford right now. The situation has worsened considerably.
SALLY What are you talking about?
CONNORS I have been tailing your husband now for almost five weeks. Every day he stops for gas at the Gas-N-Go. (*pause*) I didn't think much of it until two days ago. My mom and I tailed him all the way to Jackson. He sold a lot of shoes at a store by the highway called—I've got it here, just a second—Shoes, Shoes & more Shoes—right. Before he got back on the highway he stopped for gas at Budd's Mini-Mart. Filled his tank right to the top. He got back on the highway and went straight to the Gas-N-Go, a distance of 22.4 miles. He pulled in and pretended to fill his tank all over again. He stood there squeezing the trigger on the gas hose for 3 1/2 minutes when he was, in actual reality, not squeezing at all.
SALLY Not squeezing.
CONNORS Bingo. After he "pretended" to fill up his tank, he went up to Miss Hopkins' pay window, took out his wallet and paid for gas.

CONNORS leans back in his chair.

SALLY Wait a minute. Wait just a minute, Connors, are—
CONNORS "Mr."
SALLY "Mr.," are you saying, what you're saying is—
The WAITRESS walks by again, unfortunately.

SALLY —my husband is paying Gina Hopkins for sex?
CONNORS Your husband has given her a hundred bucks every day for almost five weeks, bringing the grand total so far to three thousand two hundred dollars.

SALLY begins to fall apart.

SALLY Oh god, this is all so—I can't, this can't be happening to me. *(aloud to herself)* What do I do? My god, what am I supposed to do?

CONNORS Get a grip. I want you to do three things, three very important things, okay?

SALLY Three things, okay, three things, what?

CONNORS Hire the most cutthroat divorce lawyer in Southeastern Michigan. Close your savings account. Don't go outside at night. Keep your curtains drawn and your windows locked. Buy a large Doberman pincer for a pet and train him to kill on command. Keep a loaded semi-automatic weapon under your pillow. And switch to decaf.

SALLY Why?

CONNORS I think someone is being paid to kill you.

SALLY takes a beat, then turns for the WAITRESS.

SALLY Check!

CONNORS Listen. I gotta hunch your husband takes the money he gets from that store—Shoes—

SALLY —Shoes, Shoes & More Shoes!

CONNORS —right, and siphens a hundred bucks a day off that to Miss Hopkins, who turns around and hands it to some hit man from Ypsilanti. I did a little digging, and she used to date a lot of guys from Ypsilanti.

SALLY I know.

CONNORS And a couple of her old boyfriends have got some experience in that kinda thing.

The WAITRESS arrives at the table with the check.

WAITRESS Everything okay?

SALLY No, everything is not okay! My husband's having an affair, I have a private detective who isn't old enough

to drive, I gotta minister who's more screwed up than I am, and any minute now I'm gonna be shot!

The WAITRESS drops the check on the table.

WAITRESS This town's the pits, isn't it?

The WAITRESS exits, shaking her head. CONNORS gets up and follows her out, returns to pick up the box of pizza, and exits.

SALLY *(to audience)* I was so scared. I couldn't stop shaking. And it was night. Not just night, but ... night. Every tree seemed like it had a killer behind it.

From out of nowhere, the REVEREND crosses behind SALLY, taking an evening walk. He appears deeply disturbed.

REVEREND Sally.

SALLY Reverend.

REVEREND Nice night for a walk, don't you think?

SALLY Yes. Yes, it is.

REVEREND No, it's not. Not really. There's a storm coming. Can't you feel it in the air?

The REVEREND is looking up.

SALLY Yes, I can.

REVEREND Oh!

The REVEREND scares SALLY to death. He doesn't notice. He points to something in the sky near the moon.

REVEREND Did you see it?

SALLY What? Did I see what? A shooting star? What?

REVEREND No. A witch on a broom.

Pause. The REVEREND looks at SALLY.

REVEREND I was making a joke.

SALLY Oh.

REVEREND You didn't laugh.

SALLY No. I didn't.

Pause.

REVEREND Was it because it wasn't funny?

SALLY What?

REVEREND My joke.

SALLY Maybe I just didn't get it.

REVEREND Maybe it just wasn't funny.

The REVEREND crosses out, even more disturbed. Bright headlights flash in SALLY'S eyes as the sound of a car roars by. SALLY is scared to death again.

SALLY *(to audience)* Every passing pair of headlights carried a hit man. I was terrified to start my car, thinking the engine would trigger the bomb planted under my hood. I panicked. I shouldn't tell you this, but I called Connors up and told him my car wouldn't start.

CONNORS sitting in a car, turns key and revs the engine.

CONNORS *(yelling)* Your battery's not dead, Mrs. Simpson!

SALLY I was about three blocks away doing this.

SALLY covers her head.

SALLY *(re: CONNORS)* He's a good kid, but sometimes you have to do what you have to do, y'know?

CONNORS goes off.

SALLY There was only one place left for me to turn. Only one thing that could save me. One man.

SALLY crosses into the office of WILLIAM WILLIAMSON, Attorney-At-Law and sits down. WILL is on the phone.

WILL *(phone)* Barry, listen to me ... listen to me, Barry, Barry ... Barry ... you're not listening to me ... I said lambada music ... L-a-m-b-a-d-a—hang on.

WILLIAMSON notices SALLY. He covers the phone.

WILL Hello, my name is William Williamson, Attorney-At-Law.

SALLY I'm Sally Simpson. I have a 1:30—

WILL Hang tight—Jennifer! *(phone)* Lambada! ... You're wrong! Everything's exactly the same except for the changes—Jennifer!—whaddaya mean you've gotta problem with the changes?

JENNIFER, WILLIAMSON'S secretary enters.

WILL Hang tight!—*(to JENNIFER)* Where'd you go to lunch, Cleveland?

All in one move, JENNIFER swats WILLIAMSON on the back of the head with some papers, drops the briefs on his desk and quickly turns to SALLY.

JENNIFER Can I get you a cup of coffee?

SALLY Do you have decaf?

WILL What?

JENNIFER and WILLIAMSON both make "crosses" with their fingers at SALLY as if exorcising the devil. These are two people who share a lot of private jokes and a few gallons of coffee daily.

WILL What's the point of coffee if you can't get cranked?!

JENNIFER *(the waitress)* Another round?

WILL You betcha, coffee black with a caffeine chaser!

JENNIFER You got it-

WILL *(phone)* I'm back—listen, it's still the same commercial!—

JENNIFER *(overlap with WILL)* Miss?

SALLY *(overlap with WILL)* Just coffee with mostly milk.

WILL *(phone)* I come outa the ocean. I walk up onto the beach. I go into my "Hello. My name is—" schpiel. And then the camera pulls back so we can see the Carnival Cruise ship in the background with all the divorcees hangin' over the rails, dancin' their brains out, having the times of their lives! I don't see what the problem is.

WILL covers phone. SALLY is looking away, WILL has to get her attention.

WILL Hey! Knock knock.
SALLY *(startled)* ... Who's there?
WILL Sue.
SALLY Sue who?
WILL Anybody you want! *(laughs)* I'm kidding! *(phone)*
Barry! It's one of nature's laws. You don't have music, you can't dance! I wanna see the divorcees dancin'!—*(covers the phone; to SALLY)* This world would be a better place if everybody would just let me do what I want—*(phone)* This whole commercial hinges on making divorce look fun, look like something to shoot for—Barry, listen to me ... Well then, if we're not gonna use lambada music, why are we going all the way to the Rio to film this thing? Let's just shoot it in Toledo! *(covers the phone; to SALLY)* How did you hear about me?
SALLY You were on the radio.
WILL Those charges against me are totally unsubstantiated.
SALLY No, your commercial. I called your hotline number, 1-800-
WILL -SUE-THEM, great idea—*(phone)* Barry, I gotta go, I gotta client ... Yeah, okay, you do that, you think about it, good, right. *(hangs up the phone)* Okay! We're on the clock! Who do you wanna sue, Sally?
SALLY My husband, Sam. For divorce.
WILL Great idea—tell me, Sally, did you like my commercial?
SALLY Like it? It was just a—
WILL Do you know I'm the only attorney in Southeast Michigan who advertises exclusively on radio? Did you know that?
SALLY No, I didn't.
WILL Do you think that's good or bad?
SALLY Radio?
WILL Don't answer that—Objection! Overruled!—I'm kidding. Actually, I just inked a deal to shoot my first

television commercial.

SALLY Really.
WILL —Thank you, thank you very much—
SALLY —That's very exciting—
WILL —We film it the first of next month on location down in Rio de Janeiro which should be a lot of fun, don't ya think?
SALLY Yes. Very much.
WILL You ever shot a television commercial?
SALLY No, I—no. Never.
WILL Well don't, Sally. You end up having to do everything yourself. I've been spending twenty-four hours a day on this thing—I mean, the lead time is incredible. When you go from radio to tv—those are two different kinds of pie, if you know what I mean. *(pause)* Do you?
SALLY Yes. Yes, I do. It's ... two pies.
WILL Take makeup, for instance. You may not know this but I'm wearing makeup right now.
SALLY Really.
WILL I think I'm wearing too much. Jennifer, my secretary, doesn't think so, but then she puts on makeup like she's painting a house.
JENNIFER pops her head back into the office, carrying a tray of coffee, including a coffee pot.
JENNIFER I heard that.
WILL Uh oh, mum's the word!
JENNIFER If we didn't have a guest I'd fling this scalding hot coffee right in your ... you know.
WILL Thanks for coming, Sally!
JENNIFER Here you go.
JENNIFER serves SALLY and WILL.
SALLY Thank you.
WILL Sally, don't you dare tip that waitress. Is this instant coffee?
JENNIFER It sure is!
WILL *(big sip)* God, I love instant coffee! Okay, Sally

Simpson—enough about me in the media—why do you wanna sue your husband for divorce?

SALLY He's cheating on me.

WILL Good reason, good reason.

JENNIFER Very good reason.

WILL Good start, need more, but it's a good reason.

JENNIFER Very good start.

WILL Excuse me just a second, Sally. Can I call you Sally?

SALLY Sure.

WILL Can I call you Ralph? *(pause)* I'm kidding. Jennifer, have you seen my briefs?

JENNIFER Aren't you wearing them, Mr. Williamson?

WILL My other briefs, you ignorant, inefficient—

JENNIFER Aren't they right there on your desk?

WILL Oh, so they are, so they are, I must be blind—

JENNIFER & WILL *(a loud, running, private gag)* SO IS JUSTICE!

WILL Jennifer, get Sally another cup of coffee.

SALLY just gets her hand over her cup as JENNIFER dive bombs the coffee pot towards SALLY's cup.

SALLY No, thank you. I'm fine.

JENNIFER You sure?

WILL Now, Sally, let's level. Tell me all about your present situation.

SALLY Well, for several weeks now, maybe months for all I know, my husband has been having an affair with this ... I don't know what to call her.

WILL Tramp?

JENNIFER Sow?

WILL Jezebel?

JENNIFER Scum Queen?

Pause.

SALLY Sow.

WILL Sow it is. Go on.

JENNIFER makes a note on a note pad.

SALLY He's been giving her money. On a regular basis. Several thousand dollars to be exact.

JENNIFER *(writing)* That's not exact.

SALLY —and I think they might be using the money to pay someone to kill me.

WILL Ouch.

JENNIFER *(writing faster)* This is getting good.

WILL How many thousand are we talkin', total?

SALLY Three thousand two hundred dollars.

WILL That's a very inexpensive hit man.

JENNIFER They probably took the low ball offer.

WILL Probably.

SALLY I think it's someone from Ypsilanti.

JENNIFER Of course, well, Ypsi, right, yeah—

WILL Oh! That explains it, sure—

WILL What's this coward husband of yours do for a living?

SALLY He sells shoes.

WILL Shoes.

SALLY Shoes.

WILL & JENNIFER Shoes.

Pause.

WILL We wouldn't be lucky enough to be going after the Donald Trump of the shoe world, would we?

SALLY He just sells shoes.

WILL You've been married to this creep for how long?

SALLY Thirteen years.

WILL and JENNIFER applaud politely, smile and say "ah."

WILL *(jumping up)* Don't you just hate it when they do that on talk shows?

JENNIFER Somebody says I've been married for, say—

WILL —thirteen years—

JENNIFER —thirteen years—

WILL —and then the audience applauds like a bunch of sheep!

JENNIFER I hate that.

WILL As if being tied—

JENNIFER Or roped—
WILL —or chained to another human being for life is something to be admired. Please!
JENNIFER I hate that.
WILL Sorry, it's just a thing with me, like fingernails on a chalkboard—
JENNIFER Or people who go into a restaurant and say “Could I have some freshly squeezed orange juice?”
WILL Or people who use the word “muffin” in a sentence.
JENNIFER I hate that.
WILL Me too. We're on the same wavelength here ...
JENNIFER nods toward SALLY, WILL looks at her.
WILL So, Sally, what took you so long to cut the cord?
SALLY I just still always loved him, I guess.
WILL Ooh, you just always loved him ... Well forget about love, forget about thirteen years of devotion to this loser, it's time to slam a fresh clip into the chamber and start pullin' the trigger! Now, before we go any further, Sally, I want you to peruse through the William Williamson, Attorney at Law “Divorce, Of Course” Brochure. In it, I outline all the absolutely essential procedures, legal or otherwise, that you need to know to get the ball rolling. For example—
JENNIFER What it means to get an injunction to tie up the coward's funds, why it's important to get a subpoena on this—
WILL —scrimshanker's—
JENNIFER —work records—
WILL —I take it you don't run the household finances?
SALLY No.
WILL Start. You wouldn't happen to know how much this sow-chaser makes a year, selling shoes?
SALLY I think his best year was 1987 when he made a little over \$23,000. Now, before you say it, I know that

isn't a lot of money—
WILL Isn't a lot of money? Are you crazy?
SALLY *(quietly)* Maybe.
WILL “Money is money,” I forget who said that—
JENNIFER You did.
WILL Sally, this beatnik sells shoes, right? I've already got the think tank in high gear on this one. I'm planning on going after Stride Rite, Florschiem, Keds, Converse, Reebok, Nike—if it laces up and ends in a bow, we're gonna be shootin' at 'em with both holsters, okay? And if this sap is smart, he'll settle outa court.
SALLY I don't know, my husband's pretty stubborn.
WILL No, he'll be on his knees, believe me. Where does he sell the shoes, what chain?
SALLY Well, all over, but mostly at a store in Jackson called *Shoes, Shoes, And More Shoes*.
WILL The one out by the highway?
SALLY Yeah.
WILL That's where I bought these shoes. They're great shoes.
JENNIFER You've had those shoes forever.
WILL Now, Sally, what we do here at William Williamson, Attorney at Law—do we have a brochure on this?
JENNIFER Sure do.
JENNIFER produces a brochure and hands it to SALLY.
WILL We send members of our staff. Professional pickets.
JENNIFER Pickets—
WILL Y'know, picketers, people who make a living carrying signs for various causes. We send them out with signs and pre-rehearsed chants and they march up and down in front of the establishment where the party we're suing does business.
JENNIFER Annoying the targeted establishment, in this case ...
JENNIFER checks her notes.

SALLY *Shoes, Shoes, And More Shoes.*
 JENNIFER —*And More Shoes*, right, to the point where it affects their business.
 WILL In the meantime, by including those deep pocket, big shoe manufacturers in the suit for a week or so—
 JENNIFER Until we dismiss it.
 WILL We get written up in the local papers and grab coverage on all the six o'clock newscasts and by this time, your hubba-hubba hubbie will be forced to get down on his knees, call me up and beg to settle out of court. Why? Because everybody he works for will be getting—
WILL and JENNIFER make “finger crosses” at SALLY.
 WILL & JENNIFER BAD PUBLICITY! Booga! Booga!
 WILL And at that point, he'll give you anything you ask for.
 JENNIFER And probably more.
 WILL And when I'm done with him, I'm gonna make sure I leave Mr. Happy Pants by the side of the road, buck naked, holdin' onto a barrel. He'll be lucky to sell another pair of shoes which is a shame because in order to write your monthly alimony check, he's gonna have to sell a helluva lot more than \$23,000 worth of Hush Puppies.
 JENNIFER Ha.
 WILL Thank you, Jennifer. But hey, that's gonna be his problem. Now, Sally, brass tack time. Aside from the \$1000 retainer, I'm gonna need some proof. Such as love letters—
 JENNIFER Pictures—
 WILL Hidden videos—
 JENNIFER Eye witnesses—
 WILL Wire taps—
 SALLY Yes, I have a private investigator who is developing some 8x10s of my husband and ...
 JENNIFER The sow.

SALLY The sow. In the act.
 WILL Ooh, great, when do we get to see these?
 SALLY They're getting developed.
 WILL Well, hey then! If he's runnin' down the road tryin' to loosen his load in somebody else's pants—and you've got Kodak prints of the play-by-play—we're all sittin' down to cheesecake, y'know what I'm sayin'? It's spin-the-wheel time! If you're talkin' some caught-ya-in-the-act, red-handed, honey-this-isn't-what-it-looks-like proof, am I right?
 SALLY Oh, yes, rock solid, no doubt about—
 WILL Sally, you know what this means?
 SALLY No, I don't.
 WILL Jennifer, Sally doesn't know what this means.
 JENNIFER Oh my god—
 WILL This means that William Williamson, Attorney-at-Law, can ask for the moon.
 SALLY Good.
 JENNIFER Oh my god—
 WILL Oh, no, Sally, it's more than good—
WILL winks at JENNIFER. JENNIFER rolls her eyes.
 JENNIFER (to SALLY) I apologize in advance, he thinks it gives divorce a positive image.
WILL turns his back to SALLY, places his hands on his belt buckle and looks over his shoulder at SALLY with a big smile on his face.
 WILL —WHEN I ASK FOR THE MOON, DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU GET? (points at JENNIFER) JENNIFER!
JENNIFER sets down her note pad and stands.
 JENNIFER (aside, to SALLY) It's part of my job description.
 SALLY What?
With one sweeping motion, WILL and JENNIFER both tear off their pants and skirt, respectively, and instantly transform themselves into Broadway dancers.

WILL & JENNIFER Rio de Janeiro!

What they lack in talent, they make up for in energy. They dance as if they are co-starring in a new Brazilian musical.

WILL & JENNIFER Mondo! Mondo!

Calypso music bursts out of nowhere, filling the room as WILL and JENNIFER dance some tropical dance in front of a horrified SALLY, WILLIAMSON in some tropical boxer shorts, JENNIFER in some floral panties with garters.

WILL Mondo! Mondo!

JENNIFER Mondo! Mondo!

SALLY Oh my god.

WILL reaches into a desk drawer and tosses a bunch of bananas to JENNIFER. He grabs a bunch for himself as they continue dancing.

WILL Have you ever been to Rio?

JENNIFER Mondo! Mondo!

SALLY No.

JENNIFER It's beautiful down there!

WILL Mondo! Mondo!

JENNIFER You've just gotta go—

WILL —lotsa sand, lotsa sun, lotsa single men—

JENNIFER Mondo! Mondo! It's the most sexually active city in South America!

WILL Mondo! Mondo!

JENNIFER Which will be perfect because when the divorce comes through—

WILL Mondo! Mondo!

JENNIFER —you'll be loaded, free as a bird—

WILL Mondo! Mondo!

JENNIFER —and available!

WILL Mondo! Mondo!

JENNIFER Mondo! Mondo!

WILL & JENNIFER Mondo! Mondo!

SALLY steps away from the dancing WILL and JENNIFER and speaks to the audience.

SALLY In hindsight, it was the mondo mondo. I don't know why. But I knew I had to hit something. And I mean hit something. Drill it. Crush it. Kill it.

GINA appears.

GINA With what, Sal? Tell 'em. Tell 'em with what?

WILL and JENNIFER take SALLY by the arm and "mondo mondo" her off the stage. SALLY goes off trying to look back at GINA. After SALLY is gone, GINA looks the audience over for a beat. She shakes her head and walks off. The lights fade out.

END OF ACT ONE