

Wormwood Sunflowers

A full-length play

By

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ACT 1

SCENE 1

Mo, in his early forties dressed in tight blue denim shirt and dad jeans, paces in an art gallery room containing a large Mondrian painting.

He shakes his head a bit and laughs to himself.

Mo's pants pocket jams out the opening guitar riff to the Rolling Stones Paint It Black.

A museum guard walks by with a slow glare as Mo yanks out his phone.

MO

(in the guards direction)

I could be Rick rolling the whole museum.

The guard flexes a bicep as he leaves the room.

MO

(phone to his ear)

No not you... Nevermind.

(listens)

Yes I'm here.

(listens)

Relax it's going to work, no that's not what we agreed.

(listens)

I'll call you when I'm ready.. Be cool.

Harper a woman in her late thirties wearing a white skirt a flowery blouse with a cell phone lanyard hanging in front, marches into the gallery room mumbling and counting her paces.

MO

No don't you dare! No ones getting hurt.

HARPER

Who's getting hurt? Is there a problem?

MO

No, no problem. Just hurt feelings, meeting someone later and they don't understand the meaning of loose plans.

HARPER

A good plan is everything.

MO

Stifles the true creativity.

HARPER

Even the successful lowest of the low have a plan. I mean a thief couldn't just walk in here and snatch a painting off the wall and abscond right out the front doors.

MO

Exactly what I was just saying.

Mo stares up at the huge Mondrian painting.

MO

Well maybe not abscond with that one?

HARPER

Oh?

The thief could paint it himself at home.

HARPER

Or herself, Mr. Oh Canada.

MO

What? My names Mo, and no woman would ever paint that?

HARPER

We only use pastel colors that smell like potpourri?

MO

You've lost faith in me already? No, not at all, no woman would ever paint that and try to pass it off as art and think the world would buy it.

HARPER

Cro-Magnon feminism melts the ice of patriarchy.

MO

It's lines and boxes and primary colors? Children cut those out and paste them on paper for there parents proud fridge museums.

HARPER

It's called Neo-Plasticism.

MO

But, a woman would make up a fancy name for it to make sure her husband got paid for his art.

HARPER

Oh my god!

The guard peeks in then ducks back out.

MO

Did I devolve to Neanderthal?

HARPER

I just realized who you are.

MO

Chimpanzee?

HARPER

You're the new voice of our new audio stops.

MO

Uh... Yeah...

HARPER

You sound so intelligent through the headphones.

MO

I'm glad you listened so intently.

HARPER

You were supposed to be here at three. We do make plans for a reason.

MO

I do apologize for the plight of the world.

HARPER

Well I'm Harper one of the lead curator here, I was going to--

MO

Yes the private tour...

(in a loud booming voice)

Here we have Crazy Woman with Cats from Picasso's Blue Period.

HARPER

You should speak softly. All the women that take the audio tours just swoon over your voice. It's voice man mania.

MO

And a few men?

HARPER

And a lot of men, it's a mania.

MO

Maybe I should be a hologram and carry a rose.

HARPER

We could beam you over to PBS for their pledge drives.

MO

Ladies and gentlemen, how much would you pay to have the magnificent Mo read your name when you pledge the John Stamos sings as The Beach Boys singing The Carpenters greatest hits package ?

HARPER

(raising her hand to the lord)

That package.

MO

And remember you get a free primary colors squares print tote bag you can keep your soul in.

HARPER

God bless us every one.

MO

(dancing in place)

Through the tulips.

Harper and Mo both smile and a quiet laugh as the guard walks through the room looking up and tilting his head at the Mondrian.

HARPER

Your name is fascinating.

MO

Mo?

HARPER

You just never here it... Except on the Simpsons.

MO

I do make a mean Blue Sapphire martini.

HARPER

I'd ask you if you had two brothers named Larry or Curly but I'm very afraid of the answer.

MO

My mother was our high schools art teacher. She thought I would be a great artist and be hung in the worlds greatest museums. My name is actually Monet.

HARPER

No pressure there, But I like that. You want to know why?

MO

Ah, but drum roll please... Full name... Monet Manet Rubens!

HARPER

Your mother sure had a plan.

MO

I wasn't even a good finger painter.

HARPER

Monet Manet Rubens, Monet Manet Rubens.

MO

It's not like Dorthey's ruby red slippers, I still won't be able to paint.

HARPER

(laughing and squeezing his bicep)

Rubens even... Is that why you keep in shape?

MO

I have a genetic bottomless stomach.

HARPER

Well I like your name, I really do.

MO

Well you seem to be enjoying it.

HARPER

I'm in a book club.

MO

That's good, you can read.

HARPER

Well I should.

MO

Let me guess... Buy the age of three?

HARPER

My full name? Harper Lee Bronte.

MO

To kill a book report.

HARPER

My allowance depended on it.

MO

Wow... Is your Mom president of the book club?

HARPER

She was a Literature professor. I grew up surrounded by all the classics.

MO

To kill a minor bird.

(pause)

HARPER

So should we start the tour?

MO

Oh I'm fine just meandering along by myself.

HARPER

It's the least I can do. You've given the whole gallery a buzz.

MO

Aren't you closing soon, it's almost five?

HARPER

Just our luck they gave me the keys and a guard is here until I leave.

MO

Until you leave... With a guard...

Harpers phone buzzes.

She smacks her chest and flips the phone up
looking weird and annoyed.

MO

You need to get that?

HARPER

I think if I don't they'll kill me.

MO

That doesn't sound like a good plan?

Harpers phone keeps buzzing as she smacks her chest again.

HARPER

Excuse me just one sec...

MO

By all means, we want to keep you among the living. I'll just mosey along by myself. Have a great night.

HARPER

No wait.

MO

I'd rather just--

HARPER

(quietly)

Hello?

(listens)

Why yes he is, I'm speaking with him now.

(listens)

Just a little late.

(listens)

Oh I'll make sure of it.

Harper drops the phone from her ear and it swings down on the lanyard and She smacks the phone against her chest.

MO

You'll make sure of it?

HARPER

That was ONE of my supervisors, just wanted to make sure I thanked you for all you are doing.

MO

Volunteering I feel like a member of the bohemian illuminati.

HARPER

I'll get you a free gallery tote bag on your way out.

MO

I always enjoy a good swag.

HARPER

So are we ready?

MO

I can just narrate the tour to myself, I'm good, really.

Harper starts to walk backwards out of the room then stops.

HARPER

Come on the tour will be fun, I do need to go with you.

MO

Not gonna take no for an answer are you?

HARPER

You'll get the swag tote?

MO

I'd prefer a painting.

So what painting would you prefer? Any genre you favor from your script?

MO

Forgiving the plastic--

HARPER

Neo-Plasticism.

MO

Neon-plastic, primary color square painters but I'd have to say Van Gogh's Sunflowers, first version.

HARPER

The perfect choice. I will put it on the tour. It just came in on loan last week from Munich.

MO

Lucky me the serendipity. Though the second version I hear is the best.

HARPER

Destroyed in a US air raid on Japan during World War II.

MO

Bombs away with a plan.

Mo's phone sounds off again with Paint It Black blaring his pants pocket.

The guard pokes his head with a sharp glance into the gallery.

Mo smacks his chest.

Harper gives Ivan a sheepish look and waves him off.

HARPER

Lets not get Ivan's blood pressure up. He's finally on a good complete meds regiment.

MO

Maybe it's his favorite song?

HARPER

That would have to be a national anthem from some borscht eating nation.

MO

He does look KGB.

Paint It Black jams again.

Ivan clears his throat loud jutting his head into the gallery room again glaring.

HARPER

Do something with that, he's going to start growling.

MO

I don't mind borscht when I'm really hungry.

HARPER

Make it stop.

Mo pulls out his phone from his pocket and stabs the screen hard.

MO

There I have banished it to Siberia.

HARPER

Wow a straight hang up. Your friend won't be mad?

MO

You have my full undivided attention my dear.

Harper walks out of the room.

HARPER (O.S.)

So what made you want to audition to be the audio tours voice?

Mo glances at his phone before stuffing it in his pocket following Harper out.

MO

My wife died.

SCENE 2

Harper and Mo stand in a gallery room filled with surrealist paintings.

Mo shakes his head at a painting above them.

HARPER

This piece is called Head of a Woman, it's by Miro.

MO

Wow.

HARPER

Fascinating isn't it?

MO

This is why people hate clowns.

HARPER

It was painted in nineteen thirty eight and represents the coming horrors of World War II.

MO

Ruined the circus for generations of kids.

HARPER

The blue background makes us feel as if we are below it, making us more vulnerable.

MO

No wonder clowns are sad.

Harper and Mo both stare at each other for a moment then look back at the painting.

HARPER

So you said your wife passed away?

MO

Yes a year ago this week actually.

HARPER

Well I'm very sorry for your loss.

MO

She always loved paintings.

HARPER

So she inspired your astute interest in art?

MO

She was always bringing home velvet painting home from garage sales.

HARPER

Have them appraised and insured?.

MO

You know, some of them were from the fifty's and did have some folk art value.

HARPER

The eye of the beholder. Duck and cover.

MO

This Head of a Woman thing would have really popped if it was a black light velvet painting.

HARPER

The poster for the save the clowns foundation.

MO

She was always wanting me to take her here but I never found the time.

HARPER

You still hear her asking.

MO

I thought because she always wanted to come here, I would finally come and check it out.

HARPER

And just imagine walking with her?

MO

And maybe I could meet some women.

HARPER

I see, so I'm a Tinder gallery?

MO

And I figured the more I learned about the art--

HARPER

You could set the trap with intelligent conversation from your audio stops scripts knowledge?

MO

And now you tell me I'm the gallery's rock star.

HARPER

As Sondheim once said, send in the clowns.

Harper walks into another gallery room and Mo follows while taking a quick glance at his phone.

In the new gallery room Harper stops in front of a painting and Mo swings his arms up and out in exaggerated excitement.

MO

You trying to get me in the mood?

HARPER

(ignoring the comment)

I present Modern Bohemia.

MO

It's magic, If you like that nude woman sort of thing.

HARPER

What do you really think about it. Keep in mind I know you've at least read my script about it once.

MO

Well... Hmmm...

HARPER

Got nothin? You look like you have a headache full of bees.

MO

Well ol' Ernst... Was ...

HARPER

Ice cream truck in the cul-de-sac.

MO

Ernie was.. Quite the abracadabra colorist!

HARPER

Wow the insight. Sorry I'm just not emotionally prepared.

MO

I kept it clean.

Harpers phone rings and she slaps her chest,
silencing it.

MO

Well what we both should do is look at it for thirty seconds, no phones, don't say a word, just look. I think we will see many of the same things.

HARPER

Are you trying to get me in the mood?

MO

You seem to already be in a mood.

(pause)

HARPER

Who do you identify with in the painting?

MO

I'd have to say.... The erotic African statue in the upper right corner.

HARPER

Not the flower arrangement of my condolences?

MO

That erotic statue influences the room the way only I could.

HARPER

Ah, women leaving your bed like workers from a factory.

MO

All for love.

HARPER

So did your wife pass by jumping off a bridge?

MO

Wow. Actually, she- di--

HARPER

What? Santa's going to put you on his naughty list.

MO

I had just got home from work and was walking up to our apartment building. I looked up at our place on the fifth floor and saw her smiling big as life and waving at me.

Harper puts her hand on her hips and rolls her eyes up in disbelief.

HARPER

The little wifey.

MO

She motioned for me to stop.

HARPER

My heart skips a beat.

MO

(acting it out)

With a big gesture she blew me a big, big kiss.

HARPER

Gettin' spicy.

MO

The she just jumped! Right at me! Missed me by half an inch!

HARPER

End of lifey.

MO

I see you have an ice maker feature built in to your Frigidair heart.

HARPER

Oh come on that can't be real.

MO

I still have a molar imbedded in my shin.

HARPER

Oh I'm sure you do, dental records of love.

MO

I can show you if you like.

HARPER

No I'm quite good. I'd try to change the subject again but I'm afraid I'd find out you're the Presidents gigolo.

MO

Well I was at this party once--

HARPER

Well I find that the forms of the artist, author, nude and female spectator unite in the western fantasies of freedom, intensity and eroticism.

MO

(audio stop narration voice)

It does express the ideal creative environment.

HARPER

The tribal art does express a complex balance of color form and pattern

MO

The woven meanings of the placement of the horizontal and vertical brushstrokes.

HARPER

The painting is from what is known as his tapestry period.

MO

Still doesn't explain why her nipples are purple.

HARPER

What your wife was trying to tell you was "I've mastered detachment!"

MO

It sounded like she said "you forgot the milk."

HARPER

Red and blue.

MO

You don't believe anything I say do you.

HARPER

I do, you sound like a real boy.

MO

(regular voice)

Well I guess it's part of my grieving process.

HARPER

You could scatter her ashes off of the balcony.

MO

I thought that if I could learn more about some of the paintings I could understand more.

HARPER

About her?

MO

She was always talking about what they meant to her. It was all Sports Center background chatter. To me

HARPER

Art, the Super Bowl of annoyance.

MO

The art of indifference.

HARPER

Why the velvet black light paintings?

MO

She had a personality that was always drifting in and out of the dark side of the moon.

HARPER

That side needs the most discovery.

MO

She was a cat person.

HARPER

I have three black toms of my own.

MO

So you're Really single.

HARPER

They're at my sisters now, thank you.

MO

You must finally have some promising prospects?

HARPER

I'm taking a trip soon.

MO

Ah let me guess, smart, artistic, sarcastic sense of humor, Handsome, he's even written a play?

HARPER

Oh I am the muse of penniless seduction, but just an unrequited adventure.

MO

Where to? Hmm, I would have to say... So many choices for you... The mysterious choice of... Paris.

HARPER

I have no idea where I'm off to.

MO

Too glam to give a damn.

HARPER

Just woke up with wanderlust.

MO

Oh, thought you always had a plan?

HARPER

Sometimes the best plan is to have no plan.

MO

I'll bet you have specific car Chapstick.

HARPER

Your mind is a Spirit Halloween store.

MO

You prolly eat Cheetos with chopsticks so you don't get the dust on your fingers.

HARPER

So you've never just left just for the sake of going?

MO

Underneath this classic denim button down is a Che T-shirt.

HARPER

Comfy on the edge.

MO

But I never live like a tourist.

Harper starts walking backwards into a new gallery room.

Mo's stomach growls loud.

HARPER

We don't have your usual vending machine tourist cuisine here.

MO

Is that a didgeridoo?

SCENE 3

Mo is leaning over purple velvet rope of and exhibit in the middle of the room.

Under a spotlight is a didgeridoo.

HARPER

Don't touch the exhibits please. Please don't touch the exhibits.

Ivan juts his head into the gallery room.

MO

But I'm a virtuoso.

HARPER

On a didgeridoo? How can one tell.

Ivan gives a bass didgeridoo growl as he yanks his head out of the room.

HARPER

Now you've done it.

MO

That wasn't half bad.

HARPER

You're the virtuoso.

MO

I really am very good, just let me prove it, I know what I'm doing, I won't hurt it.

HARPER

But I think Ivan would didgeridoo you.

MO

I thought you were the boss? The lead curator?

HARPER

Just one of the lead curators.

MO

But the most important one right?

HARPER

To the artwork, to the artwork.

MO

How does one get into the curating biz? Is there an art test? Complete a paint by number?

HARPER

Well first you need to acquire a hundred thousand dollars in student debt. Then love art, but have no artistic talent.

MO

That sounds easy enough. You can read though.

HARPER

Comes in handy because I get to write All the art scripts that you read.

MO

A thousand words into twenty five. That's gotta take talent.

HARPER

The one odd thing though is that I don't have to know how to hammer a nail into the wall and hang the paintings, I have someone that does that for me.

MO

Hey your a boss.

HARPER

The manager of leaving tomorrow.

MO

Why, sounds like cake and champagne.

HARPER

I took an internship in college and never left. The art world just comes to me. I've never left the city.

MO

Not at all? Not once?

HARPER

Van Gogh never painted at the terminal hub where I sign for his paintings.

MO

Maybe buy a ticket to Cleveland, start slow.

HARPER

My families all here, extended and five older brothers, I own half my own condo, lease a new car, I never Married or had kids. Why not go?

MO

Second thought, maybe Toledo as a start.

HARPER

I should probably own the jet with all my frequent flyer miles.

MO

Hmm, never been married?

HARPER

Miss the part about the five brothers and families all here? Who has the time?, Nieces and nephews.

MO

You should be staring in romcoms?

HARPER

Every man I've dated the past ten years was either a sommelier or a librarians helper.

MO

See the reading thing came in handy.

HARPER

One of my favorite smells is new books.

MO

A few more years you can start a reverse mortgage.

HARPER

I did avoid the endless Olive Garden Chads.

MO

I had an ex once call me the plunger.

HARPER

Let me guess 'cause you?

MO

Said I always brought up old shit.

HARPER

Well I collect men like the great Pacific garbage patch.

MO

Women want you to be all things all the time, it's unfair, unjust I say. It's not our fault

HARPER

Women just want a ten dollar coffee and a kiss on the forehead.

MO

Then how come I'm a red flag matador.

HARPER

You have to learn to be like me and do the dance of the nuances.

MO

Have you ever thought about a life of crime? Just go totally dark side?

HARPER

That's why I just need to go. Get out and go now, staying here is a crime.

MO

Using your chateau inheritance?

HARPER

Nope, no came over on the Mayflower money here.

MO

So you signed up for the ramen expedition.

HARPER

Ah but now, that's were the plan comes in.

INTERCOM

WE WILL BE CLOSING IN TEN MINUTES. PLEASE TAKE A LAST LOOK AND MOVE TO THE EXIT. WE WILL BE CLOSING IN TEN MINUTES.

MO

Ivan's gonna be bustin' heads, rounding them up for his gulag.

HARPER

Oh no.

MO

He's right behind me isn't he?

HARPER

Be brave my virtuoso. No I have to go lock the doors.

MO

I wanted to show you my licks.

HARPER

Do I need to make a no licking sign again?

MO

Go ahead I'm OK to look over the didgeridoo and walk myself out.

HARPER

We'll finish the tour. I just have to run and lock up.

MO

Really, I'm good.

HARPER

This late I can't take no for an answer, I promise we'll have fun.

MO

So I should warm my lips up for the didge?

HARPER

Keep your lips zipped...

MO

I feel like stripping down to Che for some jazz.

HARPER

And Ivan will join your revolution.

MO

I will need an audience for dancing.

HARPER

I doubt you know a good polka goosestep.

MO

That's it! Didgeridoo polka. I can sell my merch at the end of the audio tours.

HARPER

(monotone)

Oh please can I have a front row plus one? I'll do anything, just anything.

MO

My first groupie. What will we do?

HARPER

Oh you know, somehow I think your kissing sounds just like a didgeridoo.

INTERCOM

WE WILL BE CLOSING IN FIVE MINUTES. PLEASE MOVE TO THE EXIT. WE WILL BE CLOSING IN FIVE MINUTES.

MO

Does Ivan get to eat who's left roaming around?

HARPER

I would say it's his favorite sport, but it's more of a lifestyle.

MO

So I'm staying so he'll have to loosen his Borscht belt.

HARPER

I'll gladly give the eulogy.

Mo's stomach growls a grizzly bear impression.

INTERCOM

THANK YOU FOR VISITING US TODAY. THE DOORS ARE NOW CLOSING. IF LOCKED INSIDE THE DOORS OPEN AGAIN AT EIGHT AM. THERE IS A LOT OF OLD ARTWORK IN THE GALLERY AND FOR YOUR INFORMATION MOST OF IT IS HAUNTED, SO GOOD LUCK.

HARPER

Don't touch or lick anything, I'll be right back.

Harper walks fast backwards fast out of the gallery room.

Mo sticks his tongue out at her as she hurries her pace out.

SCENE 4

Harper, in a hallway gives a quiet shout into her phone.

HARPER

No, no, no, I got this.

(listens)

Well I'm the boss right now?

(listens)

So you're telling me you don't assume the best in people?

(listens)

I don't think he has any idea what he's going to do.

(listens)

He did tell me what his favorite painting here was.

(listens)

That's right.

(listens)

Oh I took a master class.

(listens)

I'm good, just put it on my tab.

The sudden warbling of a didgeridoo snakes into the hall.

HARPER

Oh shit!

(listens)

It's nothing.

(listens)

Well sometimes nothing can still be nothing

(listens)

I know, I know, I got this.

(listens)

Harper feels and hears the sounds of bear run-stomping to the red rock of Uluru dissonance.

HARPER

Don't worry, I know what do to.

(listens)

It will all be very mostly painless.

(listens)

You know me, I'm a smilehenge.

Harper starts tapping her foot to the newly arrived polka beat didgeridoo belches.

Noticing her tapping foot she stomps it down hard to stop it.

HARPER

I really have to go.

(listens)

Oh that's never going to happen.

SCENE 5

Mo is in the middle of the gallery room standing on the table that the didgeridoo was displayed on giving it his best that's not a didgeridoo, now that's a didgeridoo impression.

Ivan stomps as a madman into the gallery room.

IVAN

(Russian accent)

Stop at once, That sounds like laughing vipers!

Mo continues to wail away.

IVAN

Death comes not to take the old, but the ripe and that sound is ripe!

MO

Ivan my buddy, I do take request. Got any favorite polkas?

IVAN

You are without a Tsar in you head.

MO

There's gotta be one tune you love?

Mo starts slorkling again.

IVAN

I am all nineties hip hop!

Mo aims the end of the didgeridoo towards
Ivan's face and whips into the song O.P.P.

IVAN

My ears are wilting!

Mo arches back almost stumbling on the table,
sending syncopated warbling's to the ceiling.

Harper bounds into the room out of breath.

HARPER

Stop! Make it Stop! The vanity of the humanity's!

Mo blows the gurglevoid deeper into the corners
of the room.

IVAN

Let me show him where the lobsters spend the winter!

HARPER

Mo! Mo!!

IVAN

Mo can't blow!

Mo blast out one last loud yarp yoodle.

MO

And now for AC/DC!

IVAN

We are on the Highway To Hell?

HARPER

Ivan please free to kick any table leg, at any time, as hard as you would like!

Mo stops kortelling, and turns to face Harper in a cool pose.

MO

Hey I'm an artist.

IVAN

I will mangle the firewood mam.

Mo pushes out one last blorp, hopping down off the table.

MO

Ten years of practice for nothin'

HARPER

Cultural insubordination.

Ivan steps forward to grab the didgeridoo.

MO

Don't worry I'm putting it back to its ancient burial ground.

IVAN

To the millimeter.

HARPER

I'll deal with the DNA later.

IVAN

Spitting image of a serf.

With a light touch, Mo places the didgeridoo
back on the table stand.

MO

There, good as new.

IVAN

Escorting you out now.

HARPER

It's OK Ivan. I'll finish the tour, but I don't even want to hear a whistle.

MO

Thought you'd be used to whistles?

HARPER

Ah your America's best, why would I leave?

IVAN

Ugly American.

HARPER

Thank you Ivan. I got it from here.

IVAN

(disgusted)

USA.

Ivan stomp sulks out of the gallery room.

Harper adjusts the didgeridoo and straightens
the table.

HARPER

Were you bullied in high school or something?

MO

No... Not much, or at all, never.

HARPER

Forty years an orphan so you have some excuse for that behavior?

MO

Relax there's no one here. What's the saying? Get a life. I think.

HARPER

I don't have a life, I have a routine. And Now part of that routine is going to the international market and buying some Sterling Caviar to bribe Ivan with--

MO

Ivan's cool.

HARPER

So he will let me into the security office so I can erase your Idiot at Birdland ONE night only performance.

MO

It was a pleasure to play a real natural termite bored one. The pure tone.

HARPER

Oh you haven't seen tone yet.

MO

Oh I'm hearing a tune.

HARPER

Fifteen hundred years old didgeridoo. Should I take you to the information desk and call for you Mom?

Mo's stomach lets out a bad Beluga rumble.

HARPER

Now your body's playing it.

Mo slaps his denim covered abs.

MO

Does this flight come with a meal?

HARPER

This is not a meet cute.

MO

We could both use a top notch glass of merlot.

Harper motions up with her price is right pose arm to the painting in front of them.

HARPER

Here we have a fine example of Expressionism from James Ensor called The Intrigue.

MO

Whoa, scary clowns again.

HARPER

From one to another I thought you would appreciate them.

Mo leans in close to the painting.

HARPER

Please don't play it like a drum.

MO

That green haired guy in the upper right looks like Bert from Sesame Streets evil uncle or something.

HARPER

You are the thing that's like the others... They are the town gossips disguised in there mask.

MO

They are very expressive, like they're drunk.

HARPER

Wish I was drunk.

MO

They are proolly drunk on absinthe. The artist drink of choice for the expressionist.

HARPER

Impressionist.

MO

They liked it to, the green fairy. I've had Pernod, love the licorice taste but you can't get the real absinth anymore. Mt wife got me hooked. I'd kill for the real stuff.

HARPER

They make it in Czechoslovakia now, but not much wormwood in it anymore.

MO

Wormwood made all the artist go crazy and horny and they banned it. Is that how we got expressionism.

HARPER

That's it. I will call the Louver.

MO

It would be wild to try some. To bad there's no more adventure in the world. Just endless lawns and light beer.

HARPER

I have some back in my office.

MO

Actual beer? See you are wild. Though I would have guessed White Claw. Something simple.

HARPER

Oh my simple is stunning.

MO

Löwenbräu?

HARPER

A virgin pre-ban bottle of Pernod Fils absinthe from nineteen ten. A luxurious madness.

MO

I feel like painting clowns!

HARPER

Branded wax seal and original labels complete with only minor scuffing.

MO

I might just love you. Ever thought of drinking it?

HARPER

Lately, every other minute.

MO

Haven't you ever wanted to taste it just a little? I know, it's an investment Right?

HARPER

Well... It is worth five grand.

MO

That's a lot of White Claws. And it's in your office?

HARPER

Fairy dancing in the bottle for over a century. Total virgin.

MO

In a safe behind one your three diplomas playing three card drink me?

HARPER

On my bookshelf next to Gray's anatomy.

MO

That's a hundred miles of crash barrier.

HARPER

Well I guess I can't take it with me on the plane.

MO

So we have to drink it? Now!

HARPER

With you?

MO

When are you leaving.

HARPER

Last flight out tonight.

MO

The art of the right now.

HARPER

I do believe you will need a curator for that.

MO

The first sip of anise kissing your lips, sweet, slightly sticky.

HARPER

Uh huh.

MO

You have sugar cubes and an absinthe spoon right.

HARPER

I do believe the cubes are in the break room and sporks are in my desk drawer

MO

The Colonel of utensils.

HARPER

Well if we start drinking it, we'll have to drink the whole thing. It's a hundred and forty four proof.

MO

I'll bet you were a basement party queen.

HARPER

I had five older brothers remember.

MO

Always a bridesmaid.

HARPER

To buy me beer.

MO

Well go get it now!

Mo's stomach lets out a huge hunger growl.

HARPER

On an empty tummy? I'll end up propping you up next to the death mask collection.

MO

Carpe denim, this is once in a lifetime.

HARPER

I know some Latin.

Mo's pants pocket starts blaring Paint It Black.

The sound of Ivan's stomp grows louder.

HARPER

IVAN WATCH OUR GUEST PLEASE.

MO

Really, I'm not a child.

HARPER

I thought I spotted the outline a kazoo in your other pocket.

MO

I'm all a buzz and you're bashing me.

HARPER

I don't bash men, I roast them, they are very different things.

MO

Well I'll have you know--

HARPER

Have Ivan take you to the Van Gogh Gallery, It's only fitting we drink it there.

Mo's stomach rips out another roar as he slaps his pocket.

MO

We're gonna drink it under the Sunflowers?

HARPER

Yes your first version. The “Lausanne” Sunflowers. Last exhibited in nineteen forty eight. Took me twenty years to get it on loan ,so time to celebrate.

Mo’s phone again launches into Mick belting out Paint It Black as his stomach growls a wounded lion roar again.

MO

Better enjoy it while you can.

HARPER

You seem to be having issues I’ll let you get your affairs in order.

Harper strides out with a confident walk.

Ivan’s stomps boom closer.

HARPER (O.S.)

If you eat him Ivan please use a napkin this time.

MO

It is good to have manners.

Mo yanks out his phone.

Ivan vaults into the room.

MO

Ivan I really have to answer this like now.

Ivan stops abruptly in front of Mo an inch from his face.

MO

I get it you’re the iron curtain, but I really have to--

IVAN

No we are cool like a cucumber in Siberia.

MO

I've never been happier.

IVAN

I overheard mention of the opening of the absinthe.

MO

You shouldn't eavesdrop.

Ivan juts his strong hand on his hips.

MO

Hey but you be you.

IVAN

You must get me a taste of the green fairy.

MO

It's not my bar Mr. Ivan.

IVAN

My grandfather had a excellent bottle he was saving to share with me when I came of age.

MO

That is very, very Hallmark.

IVAN

But he ran off with the butcher when I was ten.

MO

A cut above.

IVAN

My lips have waited with the memory of my grandfather to French the lips of the fairy.

MO

Vive la France! What is the age of consent in Rusky land.

IVAN

Eleven in our village.

MO

You almost made it.

IVAN

I've been sad forever looking at the bottle when I pass Ms. Bronte's office. Rounds after rounds passing her door. Slowing step in slowing steps, weekdays, weekends, holidays like quicksand walking past.

MO

God bless us every one.

IVAN

It's not easy being green.

MO

Don't you Cossacks drink vodka?

IVAN

My Family we were sophisticated, not serfs. Lemon Cello, Kahlúa, Amaretto.

MO

All the classics.

IVAN

Just one sip of that magical green and the family legacy is complete.

Ivan wipes a tear from his eye.

MO

Now don't start singing the Russian national anthem.

IVAN

Allergies, just allergies, all allergies.

MO

Well I promise if I am able to I will make sure there is still some green fairy wading in the bottom of the bottle if I can. I want you to be able to eat a kielbasa again.

IVAN

You promised, a promise is everything to me, sacred as a blood brother honor.

MO

How do the do blood brothers in Russia, prick finger and lock them?

IVAN

Well in my village we--

MO

Slice palms with a hunting knife and shake hands hard?

IVAN

No, we're not stupid.

MO

That's a relief.

IVAN

We each cut one nipple off, throw them in shots of vodka, down them then give a bear hug, Hazza!

MO

Oh so Old school traditional.

IVAN

Yes, we only get one blood brother though so you must choose wisely. We save the other nipple for divorces.

MO

Makes sense, is there a right or left choice?

IVAN

My village is very free thinking, your choice left or right.

MO

All the colors of the rainbow.

IVAN

You promised so I owe you my life.

MO

A promise to try.

IVAN

Or else...

MO

We get divorced.

IVAN

You are good man.

MO

So the Van Gogh gallery? Which way? Harper said you'd--

Ivan slaps Mo hard and strong on the back.

IVAN

This way my friend. That Van Gogh.

MO

Are you a fan?

IVAN

(booming laugh)

Silly man, cut off his own ear.

MO

Silly, very silly indeed.

SCENE 6

Mo wanders the Van Gogh gallery.

A colorful collection of Van Gogh favorites hang on all four walls. In the middle of the gallery room sits a life size replica of the furniture in the painting "The bedroom In Arles". A table , two wooden and straw chairs, a wooden bed, white pillows, sheets and a bright red blanket.

MO

Oh I'll get her to--

(listens)

Out of the palm of my hand

(listens)

Get the guard drunk.

(listens)

Oh I have something special.

(listens)

Yeah I know how to use it.

(listens)

She'll be shocked.

(listens)

I think once she sees it she'll respect it.

(listens)

Sound of a woman's heels clanking on the floor
grow louder.

MO

It's in front of me right now and it is glorious view I assure you.

Harper strides in pushing a squeaky wheeled
cart full of food, the coveted bottle of absinthe
and two bottles of champagne.

Mo jams his phone down into his pocket.

HARPER

What is glorious view?

MO

The Sunflowers of course. Finally got with my friend I made plans with.

HARPER

Well I won't keep you from your plans long.

MO

That's OK your actually a great help... With this feast on the cart.

HARPER

Well you seemed to be starvin' your Marvin'. It's Friday fridge clean out day and I've
never had wormwood before so it's a good plan to have a full stomach.

MO

You are the Julia Child of stealing food, quite the smorgasbord.

HARPER

I've never stole anything in my life.

MO

Well I'm glad you did.

HARPER

I was going to throw it out tomorrow anyway.

MO

You've never stolen anything, that's some nice Tupperware. It's nice you give it back.

HARPER

I throw it all away.

MO

What?

HARPER

Once you've had your prized container that you've written your name on that's been patinaed with repeated microwaves of left overs thrown away you--

MO

Always take it home on Friday.

HARPER

Just buy some new ones to avoid the shame.

MO

Well should we let the green fairy out of the bottle? And we have a bed to sit on?

HARPER

I thought it would be fun if guest had the furniture from the Van Gogh's The Room In Arles to rest and relax on.

Mo pushes down on the mattress.

MO

It does set quite the mood, firm and sturdy.

HARPER

And there's nothing like a table and chairs for a hungry mood.

Harper squeaks the cart over to the table.

Mo jerks the bottle of absinthe up off the cart.

HARPER

Careful with that. You break it you buy it.

MO

But we're gonna drink it.

HARPER

I think you should coat your tummy with some food first.

MO

OH I'm good to go.

HARPER

You bohemian illuminati types are All the same.

MO

I should have been a sommelier.

HARPER

Don't ever do that.

MO

Let's get into this!

HARPER

I get half... Actually more than half.

Harper reaches down under the cart and lifts up two glasses and a handful of sporks and sets them on the wooden table.

MO

Looney Toons jelly glasses?

HARPER

Roadrunner for me, Wile E. Coyote for you.

MO

Beep, Beep.

Harper lifts two sugar cubes and places them on a spork.

HARPER

Well crack the wax and pour that fairy out.

Mo stares at the bottle then with a quick jerk puts the top in his mouth and starts twisting the waxed cork in between his front teeth.

HARPER

Not with your fricking mouth!

MO

How about your mouth give it a go?

Harper yanks the bottle away and grabs a spork scoring the wax and popping the top off.

Harper's phone starts buzzing. She slaps the phone almost dropping the absinthe.

MO

Break it you buy it.

HARPER

Ever been hit with an anvil?

MO

An anvil would come in handy, we could hammer out a corkscrew.

HARPER

Damn, we do defiantly need one of those.

MO

Do you have a sword?

HARPER

Do you have a Swiss army knife?

MO

No, we could saber it open.

HARPER

Is that a hobby you've practiced, or just seen in a movie you've fallen asleep to?

MO

I'll bet Ivan can saber it?

HARPER

IVAN, BRING ME A SWORD! PLEASE BRING ME A SWORD FROM THE
NAPOLEAN EXHIBIT!

Within a second Ivan enters the gallery with a sword. Grasp the bottle out of Harpers hands, points it towards the ceiling and clinks the sword down on the lower part of the bottle.

IVAN

Sword ready mam.

HARPER

Well there's that, should we say something?

IVAN

May we suffer as much sorrow as drops of absinthe we are about to leave in our glasses!

HARPER

Great first line for a horror movie Ivan?

Ivan grips the sword handle tight super flexing his forearm.

MO

DUCK!

Ivan with a forceful push, accelerates the blade up against the bottle, slicing the top off at the bottle lip. The cork fly's up across the gallery whacking against the ceiling.

IVAN

Huzzah to blood brothers of the green fairy!

MO

Promises are best kept warm and the fairy is free.

HARPER

I wish it was free.

Ivan holds the bottle up admiring the color of the green bottle.

IVAN

I prefer a Pepe Le Pew glass, he is my favorite. So suave with the females.

HARPER

We only have the two glasses Ivan. Please return the sword to the Napoleon gallery.

MO

I'm really more hungry than thirsty.

A scowling Ivan gently sets the absinthe bottle on the wooden table.

IVAN

Must be getting cold in here, my nipples are pokey.

HARPER

Well then please check the thermostat, it should always be between sixty five and sixty eight degrees constantly.

MO

Great temp for absinthe too I hear.

IVAN

See you brother.

Ivan slowly marches out of the gallery room swinging and slicing the sword in front of him.

HARPER

He's so weird sometimes.

MO

It's all about understanding and accepting different cultural customs.

HARPER

Well Hazzah to you.

MO

Ah you can smell the anise strong.

HARPER

Lets let it breathe the aroma a bit.

MO

This is the impression of torture.

Mo steps closer to the sunflowers painting.

MO

It's something to be drinking absinthe where Van Gogh could have had the same Sunflowers view.

HARPER

When life is serendipity it is defiantly at it's best.

Mo strolls right up beside Sunflowers and looks behind the frame.

MO

Even the frame is exquisite.

HARPER

That is actually a large part of a curators job, making sure the frames match the paintings and the periods.

Mo moves his hand towards the frame.

HARPER

Don't touch, please don't touch

MO

Just one little...

HARPER

You'll set off the alarm.

MO

Pressure sensitive James Bond type stuff?

HARPER

Mission Impossible laser type stuff.

MO

Gottcha.

HARPER

OH they will defiantly get you.

Mo steps back from the painting.

MO

I'll bet it's scary to actually hold the painting and hang it up there?

HARPER

Well you don't want to drop it, and you have to make sure you don't hammer your thumb.

MO

And the lasers.

HARPER

I turn those on after.

MO

(big stepping to the table)

Ok the fairy's out of breathe.

HARPER

You are the spirits doctor.

Harper lifts a spork and crushes the sugar cubes on the spork.

MO

What are you doing?

HARPER

Well absinthe coinsure, you're supposed to heat the spoon caramelizing the sugar so this is the next best thing.

MO

(bumping the table)

You hold and I'll pour?

HARPER

Watch it, or I'm going to start yelling in cursive.

Mo steadies the wobbling bottle

MO

Perfect penmanship I'm sure.

HARPER

I'll hold and pour thank you

Harper grabs and pour. The green fairy pours slowly over the sugar spork into her Road Runner glass.

MO

Don't spill remember what Ivan said about the sorrow and the drops.

HARPER

I could just drink the whole thing.

Harper steady's the spork over her glass shaking a bit.

MO

At least switch hands.

HARPER

I am fine, you're making me nervous.

Harper slowly begins to pour the absinthe
steady over the sugar cubes into the jelly glass.

MO

(in his audio stop voice)

Harper with a steady hand holds the sweetened spork as the green fairy dances out
catching the sweetness--

HARPER

Stop! The sorrow is hitting the table.

MO

It's like it's glowing green.

HARPER

Like a magic trick almost.

Harper swings the fairy over to a desperate Wile
E. Coyote.

MO

A little more, a little more.

HARPER

I have a horror movie scream.

MO

There that's perfect.

HARPER

The best licorice smell ever.

Harper takes a bottle of water off of the cart and
twist it open.

HARPER

How much water?

MO

You add water? I'll drink mine straight.

HARPER

I don't want to embalm you.

MO

I can take it.

HARPER

I don't think Ivan can't take it. You have a lot of black out holidays?

Mo raises the glasses handing Harper hers.

HARPER

Start with a sip. High alcohol and the wormwood.

MO

It's green, it's harmless.

Mo swashes back a huge gulp.

HARPER

You never hear the bullet.

Mo coughs a bit, does a mini spit take and stumbles back a bit.

HARPER

But most of the time you feel it.

MO

Holy... That is strong.

Harper takes a sip of hers savoring, then a couple others.

HARPER

Very, very nice , I feel like a muse and you sound haunted.

Mo slaps his stomach as it growls an MGM lion roar.

MO

What do we have on the food cart?

HARPER

We have a selection from the Sunflowers arrival pot luck on Wednesday.

MO

Three days old we're rollin' the dice on the belly already.

Mo's stomach roars again as he downs another
gulp of fairy.

MO

All looks good though.

HARPER

The classics. Little smokies, Swedish meatballs, egg rolls tex mex 6 layer dip. Then moving onto the desert section we have the ever popular fudgy brownies, cherry cobbler turtle pie, banana cream pie and my favorite raspberry icebox cake.

MO

I love those little smokies.

Mo sips a bit of absinthe.

HARPER

So I was wondering how Sunflowers became your favorite Van Gogh.

MO

My fav overall. But I can't say.

HARPER

It's funny sometimes that people need to be reminded that it's always polite to answer the question when they are drinking a five thousand bottle of absinthe.

Mo swings back another gulp and coughs a bit.

Then he dances more of the green fairy into his
Jelly glass.

HARPER

You're at about two thousand now.

MO

I was sitting in the backyard at the picnic table and she came home with this gaudy Japanese print vase she bought from a friend, my girl talked her down a couple bucks, that I was happy about though. She also had some sunflowers she had gotten at the farmers market.

HARPER

Like the ones Van Gogh painted?

MO

Exactly! The vase beyond ostentatious.

HARPER

Big words now.

MO

But you need a big statement vase for sunflowers like that.

HARPER

You most defiantly do.

Harper sips a long slow sip of absinthe smiling as she does.

MO

Well she wanted them higher in the vase.

HARPER

Has to be just right.

MO

Well she started stuffing everything in the thing, she was very impatient, always needed instant gratification. So I said slow down lets think this out.

HARPER

You coming up with a plan?

MO

So while she was still stuff things in and out, I suggested putting a towel in there. She could adjust it to the right height and it would soak up the water for the flowers. Win, win.

HARPER

Even a blind squirrel gets lucky with a nut.

MO

It was perfect, I took a picture of it. She was so happy, big smile on her face, I gave her a hug and we kissed. It was like a living poem.

Harper and Mo both take a big swig of absinthe.

HARPER

That sound perfect.

MO

She took the sunflowers in for some water and a couple of minutes later I heard it crash on the kitchen floor.

HARPER

Oh no...

MO

She had passed out... We went to the ER and that's when we found out how sick she was.

HARPER

I'm so sorry. Oh so that's...

MO

It was her last healthy happy moment.

HARPER

I don't know what to say.

MO

If I had to live a few moments of my life for eternity I would choose those moments so far.

HARPER

So far?

MO

Well you never know, you gotta keep movin'.

HARPER

I guess...

Mo's stomach thunderbooms.

HARPER

Would you eat something please before that come out an alien.

MO

OK, OK an eggroll.

Mo downs the eggroll in two bites.

HARPER

Careful those are--

Mo suddenly spins around in pain panting.

MO

What the actual hell is in these? HELL?! Oh my God.

HARPER

Ghost pepper I do believe.

MO

Burn the Picasso! Water, water!

Harper tosses Mo the bottle of water and just about drowns drinking it.

MO

Who can eat these?

HARPER

Oh those are the Abigail challenge.

MO

(fanning his mouth)

The what the?

HARPER

The Abigail challenge, She is this oh so cute ninety three year old docent.

MO

Ninety three? She eats those? She's made it to Ninety three?

HARPER

She's the sweetest little thing.

MO

No sweet in these. She's the devils spawn.

HARPER

If you could meet her, the nicest anyone can be, only has about three tastebuds left and she likes spicy so anything she ever brings is the Abigail challenge. Whoever can eat what she brings gets there choice of a whole desert dish to take home.

MO

How many times have you won?

Harper pics up an eggroll, smiles big and slowly eats it talking with her mouthful.

HARPER

Oh most months.

MO

I knew you were a demon.

HARPER

I really love the Raspberry Icebox cake. But I shared anyway.

Mo inspects the other food on the cart breathing big in and out of his moth.

MO

What other "the food is lava" selections do you recommend? How about little smokies. Those are a classic.

Mo grabs a spork and jabs it into the Tupperware.

HARPER

I think that--

MO

What, Aunt Pat cooked it in a gallon of fireball.

HARPER

I think the spork in this case was meant to scoop the smokie.

Mo stabs the spork into the little smokies bowl one more time with all his might.

A big slorp of little smokies sauce splatters all up and down of Harpers flowery blouse and pressed white skirt.

Harpers body tenses, her face turns beet red.

HARPER

Scoop, I said scoop!

MO

It kinda mixes in with the flowers.

HARPER

White skirt, white skirt, white skirt!

MO

Maybe rub some of Abigail's egg roll on it and burn it off.

HARPER

You in your Canadian tuxedo!

Mo reaches over before Harper can react and finger swipes a bit of little smokies gravy off her skirt and licks it.

MO

Didn't affect the taste none.

HARPER

You have the taste of a thousand hallmark movie men.

MO

Relax, is that your raspberry thing there have some of that and smile.

Harper grabs a spork quick and scoops up an over size piece of raspberry thing holding it high in the air.

HARPER

That is how you scoop and it's called raspberry icebox cake!

Harper pull back her arm and quickly and gracefully flings the raspberry icebox cake clump bullseyeing Mo right between the eyes.

MO

You didn't!

HARPER

(singing)

Oh Canada! Our home and native land! True patriot love in all of us command!

Mo scrapes off as much as he can into his hand as he blinks his eyes in a flurry.

He then flip slops the mess right onto Harpers open mouth singing face.

MO

(singing)

With glowing hearts we see thee rise, The true north strong and free!

HARPER

That's it Canuck!

Harper slowly jams and twist her hand in the cheery cobble and flings it frisbee style.

MO

(singing)

Tastes so good, makes a grown man cry.

Mo casually grasp the half eaten banana cream pie holds it out in front of him.

MO

Phone please?

Harper clutches her phone and swings it around to her back just as the leftover pie smacks her square in the face.

HARPER

A Neanderthal and a gentlemen.

Harper and Mo stand and stare at each other deserts slipping off of there faces to the floor.

The only movement between them, there eyes blinking and flipping more of the sweet course to the ground.

Nothing but silence and blinking.

HARPER

DIE!

Harper and Mo suddenly grab, retreat, hoist and heave the remains of the pot luck in a food fight furry.

They throw and fling food at each other around the cart, two chairs and the bed.

HARPER

Watch the paintings!!

They stagger, claw and wallop each other in a food blur frenzy.

You watch the paintings.

MO

Harper and Mo abruptly run up to the cart at the same time, grab sporks, dip them into the little smokies bowl and start flipping up the gravy into each others faces at point blank range.

They both grab egg rolls back up then chase each other in a figure eight around the table and two chairs.

Harper whips her egg roll for a headshot.

Missed again!

MO

Passing the cart Harper scoops up a fistful of turtle pie.

Now I got you.

HARPER

Harper stumbles slipping and falling awkward onto the Van Gogh bed.

Mo jumps and lands right next to Harper on the bed with a big grin on his face.

Yes you do got me.

MO

There was never doubt.

HARPER

Harper slaps the glop of turtle pie on Mo's eyes and smears it down his face as she smiles.

Taste the vanities.

HARPER

Mo jolts up off of the bed, followed by Harper.

MO

My eyes! Why does it burn?

HARPER

It's a good burn. Sweet Abigail brought two dishes.

HARPER

This day is called the feast of Crispian. He that outlives this day and comes home safe.

Harper scoops up another glob of turtle fire pie.

MO

Stop! Stop!!

Mo rubs his eyes furiously.

HARPER

We will stand a tip-toe when the day is named.

Harper slops the turtle fire pie onto Mo's face.

MO

Uncle, uncle for the love of God uncle!

HARPER

He that shall live this day, and see old age!

Harper and Mo drip covered in a wet sticky pot luck chic. Battle wounds plopping and sliding to the ground of the fallen.

Harper grabs the bottle of absinthe and takes a slow swig then hands it to Mo

Mo tips the bottle back but quickly flips it up.

Mo's stomach growls and roars louder.

Mo scrapes a glob of pot luck suicide off of his face and lick it off of his finger.

MO

I didn't get anything to eat.

HARPER

(laughing)

I gave you plenty of chances. And by-the -way, you are so handsome now.

MO

(rubbing one of his eyes)

I need a shower or an ambulance.

HARPER

Ivan!

MO

The guards have showers?

HARPER

We have a wishing well fountain in the lobby. We can wash and wish off a couple layers I think.

MO

That doesn't seem like curator etiquette.

HARPER

I've always wanted to stand in it. Been a secret obsession for years. I've paid for it. Ivan!

Ivan comes stomping into the Van Gogh gallery.

He stares speechless and bewildered at the pot luck explosion all around him.

HARPER

Ivan, I'm a little tipsy but there seems to have been a spill. Huzzah?

With a big gesture, Mo sets the half empty absinthe bottle down and the sticky goopy cart.

MO

A promise is a promise. Huzzah!

Ivan reaches for the bottle but slips on the potluck floor stew and land with a thud on his butt.

IVAN

Huzzah...

Ivan gets up and starts to sample the potluck left overs on the cart.

Mo's phone starts blaring Paint It Black.

HARPER

Sounds like Mick again.

MO

Sorry I'll be quick. I'll be right along.

HARPER

No I'll wait, we've grown so close.

Mo's phone continues blaring Paint It Black.

IVAN

(with a full mouth)

No phone calls in the museum.

MO

(looking at Ivan)

Promise?

HARPER

Hurry, I want to wash this goop off.

Mo rips his phone out of his pocket and slaps it to his ear.

MO

Mo's Museum of Modern Art. We are having a going away potluck.

(listens)

It's a joke.

(listens)

Almost ready. Maybe we can go out for pizza after. I'm pretty hungry.

(listens)

Stop, it was a half joke.

(listens)

I know all I need to know to make it happen.

(listens)

No don't, I don't need a ride.

(listens)

Don't, I'm just running a little behind, gotta go. Bye. Don't.

Mo jabs his phone screen smearing it with food
goop then into his pocket.

HARPER

Sounds like your friend wants to see you bad.

MO

The impatience of some opportunities.

IVAN

Hey you guys ate all the little smokies.

ACT 2

SCENE 1

Harper and Mo, buzzing drunk, stand in front of the single tired running fountain looking down at the splashing rippling water.

MO

So how does it feel about to do something you've always wanted to do against all the rules?

HARPER

It feels sticky, very sticky.

MO

Are you ready?

HARPER

Just tipsy enough to enjoy it.

MO

So... Do we jump in with our clothes, or strip down to our skivvies?

HARPER

Our skivvies? Are we in an old west saloon room jumping in a washing tub?

MO

You know your ...

HARPER

Go ahead you can say it.

MO

I can't say it.

HARPER

Yours better be boxers.

MO

Bra and panties. I hate that word.

HARPER

What word? BRAAAAAA or PAAANNNTTIES!

MO

Panties of course.

HARPER

I hate the word moist.

MO

Potato, potato.

HARPER

Panties! Panties! Panties!

Mo steps in the water fully clothed and stands there uncomfortable, water halfway up his shins.

Harper pulls off her blouse with a whirl tossing it in the fountain, lanyard phone swinging around her neck then resting on her bra.

HARPER

I would have at least taken off my shoes.

Harper kicks off her shoes and steps into the fountain, hopping a bit and shaking.

Mo juts his face right into the fountain washing off the little smokies gravy.

MO

This is gonna be a sepia tone fountain. All apologies to Mondrian of course.

HARPER

I heard he's working for the Bellagio now.

Harper arches her hands into the falling fountain water splashing her face to clean it.

HARPER

Woo, water has a bit of a chill.

MO

That's why I kept my clothes and shoes on.

HARPER

You are a thermal genius.

MO

What about your skirt?

Harper kick splashes Mo.

HARPER

I'd hate to see you faint at the site of my panties. I never really learned to swim so you might drown.

MO

You are the kindest person I have ever met.

Harper kicks her blouse around with her feet knocking off the chunks of pot luck.

HARPER

Go ahead denim cowboy, skivvies it is.

Mo pulls his shirt up and over his washboard abs and head and flips it into the water.

HARPER

Mr. Rueben's paint me a picture, now we're talking. Boom. Boom Ba Boom! Boom, Boom Ba Boom!

Mo in a slow male stripper fashion undoes his button fly's

Harper bends down and starts splashing water up at Mo.

HARPER

Boom, Boom, Boom! Boom, Boom, Boom!

Mo, hooks his thumbs in his belt loops, hold them out, then drops the Dad jeans to the water.

Mo with his hands on his hips stands proud in a Canadian flag speedo.

MO

I'm keeping the shoes.

Harper puts her hand on her hips and just stands there staring.

MO

They are not panties--

Harper juts up her hand stopping Mo from talking and just continues to stand there staring.

HARPER

I hate hockey!

(pause)

Mo slips his shoes out of his dad jeans and splashes them with one of his shoes'

MO

There has to be a couple hundred in coinage in here.

HARPER

Ivan says three seventy three and a nickel. And don't even think about it.

MO

I've never stolen anything in my life.

HARPER

That's the one comforting thing about you. One in a row. You are the sublime sculpture of being a live.

They both begin to splash water on themselves cleaning up and kick their clothes around in the water agitating the pot luck off.

MO

So how did you get into the curator biz?

HARPER

Ah just your standard fairyland tale of starting as an intern and never leaving.

MO

That's great, you found something you love right out the gate.

HARPER

I found steady habits that were quick to get used to.

MO

You never had a rebellious period?

HARPER

I am all revolution but I'm too quick with a hangover.

MO

So now you're suddenly don't worry 'bout the horses being blind just load the wagons.

HARPER

The melancholy of grace can churn into a tsunami.

MO

A black key melody hit song.

HARPER

You have passed the Bechdel test.

MO

The what?

HARPER

What about you at your crossroads, the relationship world wide in front of you?
Women worshipping you?

MO

OH don't ever pray at a church on my street.

HARPER

Communion could be considered social drinking.

MO

So you never got married huh.

HARPER

And failed the Bechdel test.

MO

You proly talk to your cats like they understand.

HARPER

Trying to find love and this is what the universe is giving me.

MO

I met my wife at a gay bar.

HARPER

One of my exes ghosted me after his Mom died.

MO

My last date, the woman spent the whole evening telling me how much she hated beagles. Just loved all other breeds.

HARPER

Making out on a couch with a guy once. Heard a cough, it was his wife in the closet videoing us.

MO

I picked a woman up once and first she had me drive her to a "friends house," to buy crack.

HARPER

On a third date. The waitress told us she was pregnant, with my dates baby, screamed I was a homewrecker. He told her she looked hot.

MO

Picked up another woman and she wanted to go someplace first. She was a stripper. I was just her bodyguard bouncer date.

HARPER

A date once said he found vaginas very off putting and would only touch them with his toes.

MO

So never one true love?, Nothing? No one?

HARPER

My Panties are very angry.

Mo splashes in the water.

(pause)

MO

So is Sunflowers your favorite painting? You worked so hard to get it here.

HARPER

That would be mostly greed that makes it my favorite.

MO

Because it's worth millions?

HARPER

Because we can charge a lot of money for people to come see it. So I can have a shot at not being passed over for a larger raise for the tens year in a row.

MO

So not the beauty.

HARPER

The beauty? The beauty died the second after Van Gogh finished painting it. Then it became angst. Angst that he couldn't sell it and it was worth nothing. Then angst that it was worth millions and what anyone would do to get there hands on it and parade it. Beauty left with the last brush stroke.

MO

Your eyes are angry to.

HARPER

My eyes are 3d lens for the opportunity of possession.

MO

Think of the opportunities of the paintings beauty.

HARPER

I now have the opportunity to splash in the fountain.

MO

It's always better to have the opportunity to sell right?

HARPER

It's always better to be the curator, because you have to know who to sell it to.

MO

The beauty in knowledge.

HARPER

And knowledge will set you free.

MO

If you skimmed a few wishing fountain coins every day in five hundred years, Sunflowers would be yours.

HARPER

I might actually have a boyfriend by then.

MO

(audio stop voice)

Around four hundred and fifty years, your growing love for me would overcome you.

HARPER

And on the seventh day she killed him and rested.

MO

(audio stop voice)

And he loved her through eternity, as she forever whispered his name Mo, Mo, Mo.

HARPER

But alas he hadn't watched enough Sesame Street to learn that she was actually whispering No, No, No.

MO

(audio stop voice)

She was the most wonderful woman in the world.

HARPER

Don't talk dirty to me.

(pause)

MO

Well we are both clean in the fountain now.

HARPER

And a little cold.

Harper and Mo ring out there clothes and hop out of the fountain, Mo still in his shoes.

HARPER

Clean but wet.

MO

Have Ivan bring us towels?

HARPER

Better, blow dryers! Follow me.

MO

Following you is becoming a steady habit...

Mo looks at Harper puzzled.

MO

Blow dryers?

HARPER

In the restroom.

MO

I'm questioning my life choices.

HARPER

What were you doing in a gay bar?

They both start ambling out of the gallery holding their wet clothes. Mo's waterlogged shoes squishing and squeaking.

MO

Shit! Shit, Shit, Shit!

HARPER

Overreact much?

MO

No! I left my phone in my pocket, it's ruined.

Mo jerks his phone out of his rumbled up dripping pants shaking water out of it.

Harper grabs her phone and pulls the lanyard down between her breast.

HARPER

You can always use mine.

MO

You have no idea.

HARPER

Oh I'm the one?

SCENE 2

Harper and Mo are inside the women's restroom. (The audience sees the outside of the restroom door and the open lobby. They just here Harper and Mo's voices.)

MO

We have these hand dryers in the men's too.

HARPER

(annoyed)

That's great.

Harper breathes heavy.

MO

I think they'll work surprisingly well.

HARPER

Uh huh...

MO

Even on your skirt.

HARPER

(breathing heavier)

That's great...

MO

Why didn't you take it off?

HARPER

Would you please just shut up.

MO

OK, OK... It that OK?

HARPER

Just kiss me. Just fricking kiss me.

The sounds of kissing and breathlessness.

MO

OK?

HARPER

More than OK.

The sounds of kissing and breathless heaving
become more passionate.

MO

That OK to?

HARPER

Right there.

The sounds of passion, kissing and heavy
breathing become a lot more heated.

HARPER

Stop, Stop, Stop, Stop! Molar, Molar!

MO

What, what?

HARPER

Your dead wife's tooth, it bit me!

MO

(laughing)

I told you.

HARPER

Well you told me when it wasn't true.

MO

You know all my secrets

HARPER

She left a mark!

MO

It's just a red spot.

HARPER

Looks like it's going to scar to me.

MO
How?

HARPER
Smiling up at me.

MO
No.

HARPER
All I know is that you're a walking mausoleum.

MO
I'll turn my leg see.

HARPER
You stopped wearing the ring but kept the tooth?

MO
Ones emotional, one's physical.

HARPER
Well you made the wrong choice. I don't want to touch it again. And you are going to the dentist. Now move right here, just like that.

MO
Like this?

HARPER
Perfect.

The sounds of kissing and panting become
passionate again.

MO
I, well...

HARPER
Now what?

MO
Uh, I don't have a condom.

HARPER

Just pull the goalie. I'm sure you're the pullout king anyway right? Your signature move?

MO

I should just kiss.

Passionate kissing and panting begin earnestly.

MO

Hey you're commando!? No wonder--

HARPER

(out of breath)

Say one more word and I'm screaming panties.

MO

Oh my God what is that?

HARPER

Don't worry about it.

MO

Don't worry about it?

HARPER

It's nothing.

MO

Uh, a little more than nothing when it pokes you.

HARPER

You're telling me.

MO

Am I in danger?

HARPER

Lets just finish please, then we'll talk about it.

MO

Talk? I think running might be in order.

HARPER

You do know how to set the mood don't You.

MO

It's a gun!

Harper, frustrated lets out a loud sigh.

HARPER

It's in a garter holster, it won't go off. Though I wish something would.

MO

But it's still a gun. Why do you have a gun.

HARPER

Really we have to do this now? Right now?

MO

Are you in danger?

HARPER

It's because of your Sunflowers. The contract stipulated an arm guard must be present at all times. I'm here late a lot, often with Ivan. Ivan with a gun is... Well we don't have enough money for that many lawyers OK? Can we please continue?

MO

OK got it.... can you take it off?

HARPER

Fine... One, two, three snaps and we're off.

MO

Thank you, I feel safer.

HARPER

Well you shouldn't. Now Put your hand here.

MO

Really? Wow.

HARPER

And I'll put mine right here. Will that do?

Actually--

MO

Shut up and fuck me!

HARPER

OK, OK.

MO

Now!

HARPER

Passionate kissing and short-winded
breathlessness begin again.

Ivan very drunk, sways into the lobby, holding
and swinging the bottle of absinthe.

Ivan stops right beside the restroom door.

The lustful sounds of Heavy breathing and
kissing get louder and more intense.

Very nice. Nice, Nice, Nice.

HARPER

Ivan dances to the rhythm of harpers panting.

Good?

MO

Fervor rhythmic breathing goes in intensity.

Don't you dare put it in there.

HARPER

Ivan does a twirl dancing.

That's the right one.

HARPER

Better than a toe?

MO

HARPER

(out of breath)

This little piggy went to market.

Animalistic passionate slaps and grunts begin to accompany the heavy rhythmic breathing.

Ivan begins to dance impressive hip hop moves.

Harper and Mo pant lustfully in rhythm. The sound of a constant slap, slap, slap getting louder.

MO

You have the best sex faces.

HARPER

You keep talking even though you know I have a gun.

Huffs and squeals intensify towards a climax.

Ivan tips the absinthe back for one last big swig as he dances.

HARPER

That's it, just like that don't stop.

MO

Shut up I'm trying to concentrate.

Kissing, huffs, grunts and gasps whirl into a cacophony.

Ivan burns up the disco dance floor.

HARPER

(very out of breath)

Almost there.

MO

I'm getting a cramp.

HARPER

Don't you dare fucking stop.

Ivan starts twerking as he spins around.

HARPER

That's it, that's it! Sweet spot, sweet spot, sweet spot!!!

Ivan fast grooves his whole body.

Harper SCREAMS a horror movie scream.

Ivan suddenly stands at attention.

MO

Are you alright did I hurt you?

HARPER

(screaming)

OH CANADA!!!

Ivan flips the bottle up in the air. It lands with a crash on the floor.

Ivan falls over landing flat on his back.

HARPER

(trying to catch her breath)

What the hell was that?

MO

You prolly broke a window with that scream.

HARPER

Give me my skirt!

Ivan begins to snore.

HARPER

Go out and see what it is.

MO

You're the woman with the gun.

HARPER

Fine we'll both go. I'll hold your hand.

MO

Hold on, I didn't finish?

HARPER

I'll put an exhibit in the museum. The first time a man didn't finish.

MO

Fair is fair.

HARPER

Put the flag back on.

Harper opens the restroom door a crack,
peeking out.

MO

There done.

HARPER

(whispering)

Panties, panties, panties.

They slowly slink out of the restroom.

HARPER

It's Ivan.

MO

Is he dead?

Harper rushes up and bends over Ivan
concerned.

HARPER

Nope. He seems to be sleeping off two thousand dollars worth of absinthe!

MO

My nipple is safe.

Mo covers his nipples with his hands.

HARPER

I see he used his blood brothers spiel to intimidate you?

MO

Hey your phone light is on.

Harper lifts her phone up on the lanyard and the bright light catches her blindly right in the eye.

MO

Was your camera on?

Mo grabs the phone yanking on the lanyard pulling Harper towards him.

MO

It is. We just made our first sex tape.

Harper jerks the phone back, looks at the screen and stabs at it with her finger.

The sound of Harpers sex scream blares from the phone.

MO

OH the Horror.

Ivan lifts up off of the floor at the waist.

IVAN

HUZZAH!

MO

We can always relive the moment.

Mo stands proudly displaying the Canadian flag with his hands firmly on his hips.

Ivan falls back to the floor with a hard thud.

HARPER

Deleting now!

MO

Hey that's some of my best work.

HARPER

Another reason to delete it.

As Harper jabs the phone, it begins ringing.

HARPER

Jesus...

Harper slaps the phone to her ear.

HARPER

Well hello once again.

(listens)

Stop yelling.

(listens)

They what?

(listens)

That's not what we agreed to at all.

(listens)

Well I'm not going to do that now.

(listens)

Without me you've got nothing, you have a nice life.

(listens)

Good luck, and by the way... Drowned.

Harper finger stabs her phone and slaps it back to her bra covered breast.

MO

What was all that?

HARPER
Well...

MO
Well what?

HARPER
I'm going to tell you, but you have to promise not to freak out.

MO
Freak out I never freak out.

HARPER
Lets go get the cart so we can wheel Ivan to my office to sleep it off.

Harper starts to stroll out of the lobby with Mo in tow.

MO
So what are you gonna tell me?

HARPER
I really had a nice time tonight.

MO
So like a date nice time?

HARPER
A nice time.

MO
So my charm finally won you over?

HARPER
You know the gun I have?

MO
Your protecting Sunflowers, I'm not scared. Just touching it the way I did was a surprise, no freak out at all.

HARPER

Well it's kinda actually meant to kill you with.

SCENE 3

Harper and Mo are in the Van Gogh gallery standing around the messy pot luck covered cart.

MO

So you knew the whole time that I was here to steal the painting? The whole time?

HARPER

Hey Ivan didn't drink the champagne.

MO

You knew I was going to make you help me?

HARPER

There's still some raspberry ice box cake left, win, win.

MO

You do everything I ask?

HARPER

Ivan must have drunk the rest of the little smokies gravy right from the bowl.

MO

Have you at gunpoint make you turn off the lasers and help me take the Sunflowers down.

HARPER

You have a gun?

MO

Oh you know I do and it's soaked.

HARPER

They still fire when they're wet. You should clean it as soon as possible though so it doesn't rust or get corroded.

MO

So I see you took the introductory gun course.

HARPER

Safety first.

MO

You help me carry it to my car and then, you kill me?!

HARPER

Well at that point I would have pulled my gun on you and had you carry it to my car.

MO

Oh well chivalry isn't dead after all, unlike me evidentially.

HARPER

Well you not dead are you? They changed my cut from two million to one.

MO

They offered me one million to start with!

HARPER

They could have offered you twenty if you think about it.

MO

OH I'm thinking about it.

HARPER

So I told them the deal was off.

MO

I'm so grateful you have standards.

HARPER

Figured they'd call you right away and have you kill me.

MO

But my phone.

HARPER

Is dead!

MO
And I'm just...

HARPER
Alive.

MO
Alive!

HARPER
But if it would have rang, un-alive.

MO
You would have really done it?

HARPER
Hmm... Would I have?

MO
Parts of you a very angry.

HARPER
Oh not so much anymore.

MO
Yeah, what about what just happened?

HARPER
(laughing)
Wanted you to go out with a smile on your face.

MO
I don't even know how to think now? What to think?

HARPER
We have champagne and cake.

MO
So what happens to the Sunflowers now?

HARPER

Oh we are still stealing it for sure.

MO

Am I alive in this scenario?

HARPER

Might even get to finish.

MO

My un-alive life is improving slightly.

HARPER

Have you ever wanted to live in France?

MO

Never been, heard it's nice, kinda rude. Why?

HARPER

Why not?

MO

So you had a plan for a plan the whole time?

HARPER

I have to sell it myself now, or we could just keep it and hang it in our living room.

MO

In our living room?

HARPER

Well I can't let you out of my sight now. I think you'll do as a partner in crime.

MO

I'll do?

HARPER

You try hard and lets just say you have nice toes.

MO

Nice toes...

HARPER

Only took me an hour to tame to.

MO

I can never be tamed!

HARPER

Just open up the champagne while I cut some cake.

Mo grabs and grips the champagne bottle and
rips off the foil and wire.

MO

So how do we get it through customs?

HARPER

I have signed paperwork that I am the guardian of all the paintings here on loan. I'm just returning them.

MO

So we could take any of them?

HARPER

Sunflowers, Starry night, Potato Eaters, Bedroom in Arles, Café Terrace at night, the latter actually being a recreation of the last supper. Left that controversial part out of your script.

Mo stands back a bit and pushes hard on the
champagne cork, groaning a bit.

HARPER

Don't aim it at the!

The Champagne cork launches hard rocketing
through the Van Gogh gallery and right at
Sunflowers, bullseye through the center flower.

Mo stands frozen in shock.

Harper forks a bit of cake.

HARPER

Starry night, Potato Eaters, Bedroom in Arles, and Café Terrace at night.

Harper plops the raspberry ice box cake bite into her mouth and smiles with a relaxed chew.

MO

I am so, so sorry. What have I done.

HARPER

Relax I can get it repaired. They'll never know the three hundred million dollar painting they just bought has champagne cork sized hole in it.

MO

I am so sorry.

HARPER

Find our glasses and have some cake, we need to get going soon.

BANG!!! BANG!!!

A man at the front gallery doorway is shooting at Harper and Mo. (the actor is at the back of the theater walking up one of the isles.)

Harper and Mo hit the floor by the cart and bed.

BANG!!!

MO

I don't think he likes your plan.

BANG!!!

HARPER

Dammit, fixing two wholes, cutting into our bottom line.

MO

Now would be a great time to get your gun out and practice your gun safety.

HARPER

In the women's restroom along with yours.

MO

Great.

HARPER

Just had to have me take it off, it's poking me. Did a tooth bite you?

BANG!

HARPER

Three holes.

MO

Hey you're not doing yourself any favors shooting the merchandise!

HARPER

Going to have to sell it to the swiss.

Mo heaves the open bubbling bottle at the shooter, forcing him to take cover.

MO

So were we going to get married in France?

HARPER

I think eventually. Maybe two kids?

MO

At least three.

HARPER

It's not your vagina.

MO

I'd say keep going 'till we get a boy.

HARPER

Neandertal.

Harper find a fork and reaches up and takes a bite of raspberry ice box cake.

BANG!!

MO

What are you doing?

HARPER

It's just going to go to waste.

MO

We're kinda busy here.

HARPER

Well I always said I always wanted my last meal to be raspberry ice box cake and well, here I am with a mouthful.

BANG!! BANG!!

HARPER

Four holes.

MO

Are you aiming for it moron?

BANG!

HARPER

He's gotta reload!

Harper stands up as the shooter crouches and reloads.

MO

What are you doing?

HARPER

It's too bad we weren't married.

MO

Get down!

Harper grabs the other bottle of champagne.

HARPER

I'm a minister off the internet, we could do it right now. I marry friends all the time.

MO

What? Now?

HARPER

Monet Manet Rubens do you take Harper to be your almost lawfully wedded wife?

Harper rips the foil and wire off of the bottle.

MO

I do?

HARPER

Louder.

Mo stands up.

MO

I DO!

HARPER

Harper Lee Bronte do you take Mo to be your almost lawfully wedded husband?

The shooter stands up.

BANG!!

MO

FIVE HOLES!

Harper pushes on the champagne cork as hard as she can

POP!!!!!!

The cork fires at the shooter.

MO

Got 'em baby, right between the eye's

The shooter falls back unconscious.

I DO!!!

HARPER

(pause)

Ivan stumbles quick into the gallery.

HUZZAH!!!

IVAN

THE END