

ACT I
SCENE 1

(In the Giggling Pansy. A SPOTLIGHT is on WELL-DRESSED MAN. MULDOON is speaking from the darkness while WELL-DRESSED MAN lip-synchs.)

WELL-DRESSED MAN/MULDOON (V.O.)

Welcome to my sanctuary and place of business; a tavern for lovers, leavers, latches, liars, loners, luses and other people that can be described with L words. It's a tavern I like to call the Giggling Pansy, because that's its name. Situated right in the heart of Neo-Sodom, at a three-way intersection between Tobacco Road, Allusion Alley, and Cliché Corner. Next door to the combination Starbucks-Dunkin Donuts.

(SPOTLIGHT on MULDOON behind the bar. WELL-DRESSED MAN continues to lip-synch while MULDOON speaks)

WELL-DRESSED MAN/MULDOON (V.O.)

That's Muldoon. He's actually the one speaking right now. I'm just lip-synching to diddle with your head.

(WELL-DRESSED MAN EXITS. MULDOON comes out from behind the bar as LIGHTS COME UP. SERGIO and RANDY are seated at the bar. FRANCINE and XAVIER are at a table. CHARLIE is moving around the bar.)

MULDOON

That's right. I'm Muldoon. I tend bar here in this cozy liquor-nook.

(STEVIE enters and sits at the bar.)

MULDOON

Stevie! I haven't seen you for ages. What can I do you for?

STEVIE

Hey Muldoon. You guys sell cyanide capsules?

MULDOON

Afraid not. Drinks only, chum.

STEVIE

Guess you can't help me then.

SERGIO

You can help me.

MULDOON

Of course Sergio. What'll it be?

SERGIO

Same as always, Muldoon: a virgin martini, no garnish.

(MULDOON prepares SERGIO'S drink, an empty martini glass. STEVIE stares at SERGIO.)

SERGIO

Fuck're you staring at? I don't drink.

STEVIE

I just...

SERGIO

Shut the fuck up. I come here for the conversation-thanks, Muldoon- not the drink. Drink's a social lubricant. Most of the time I feel pretty well-lubed. Check this puppy out.

(SERGIO produces catapult blueprints.)

STEVIE

Is that a trebuchet?

SERGIO

Trebuchet? It's a catapult, pussyfart. Since I retired I got a lot of free time to dick around. Figured I'd build one of these.

STEVIE

Why are you doing that?

SERGIO

So I can launch shit really far, why do you think?

STEVIE

Cool.

(Stevie is quiet.)

SERGIO

Hey. Cheer up, sunshine. You can call it a trebuchet if you want.

STEVIE

I don't care what you call it.

(CHARLIE approaches FRANCINE and XAVIER
from behind the bar.)

CHARLIE

Hello, my name is Charlie, and I'll be your server this evening. Can I start you two with something to drink?

FRANCINE

Yes, I'd like a glass of hemlock, half full.

XAVIER

I'll have the same, but make mine half empty.

CHARLIE

Hemlock? Are you sure?

FRANCINE

Of course!

XAVIER

Tonight is the night of our suicide pact.

CHARLIE

Suicide?

FRANCINE

Suicide!

XAVIER

Suicide!

CHARLIE

But why?

FRANCINE

To show our undying love for one another.

CHARLIE

Oh. Did you write a suicide note?

XAVIER

It's more like a list, with funeral arrangements and whatnot. To save the survivors some trouble.

(CHARLIE stares.)

FRANCINE

Don't worry, we'll tip well.

CHARLIE

I'll get your drinks. Mickey, where are we keeping the hemlock?

MULDOON

In the back, right next to the cyanide capsules.

(looking at STEVIE.)

I mean the RC Cola, Charlie. Right next to the RC Cola. Here Stevie, have a whiskey. It's on me. So what's up? Why so glum, Sweet Potato?

STEVIE

I just found out my ex-girlfriend is engaged to my best friend.

MULDOON

Katherine's engaged to Dave? How'd that happen?

STEVIE

He proposed to her, and she said, "Yes."

MULDOON

No, I mean, where were you when this happened?

STEVIE

I was still overseas.

SERGIO

Military?

STEVIE

No, I was teaching English to underprivileged Chinese toddlers.

SERGIO

You pick up any Chinese while you were over there?

STEVIE

No, but a lot of broken English.

SERGIO

When'd you find out about your girl and your buddy?

STEVIE

When I got back.

RANDY

There's three rules of relationships: location, location, location.

STEVIE

I think that's real estate, guy.

RANDY

No, I mean location spatially and emotionally. If two people are close enough spatially and emotionally, chances are they'll hook up.

STEVIE

What do you know?

(RANDY starts jumping up and down.)

RANDY

I've seen it happen. And it happened to you.

STEVIE

Who the hell is this guy?

MULDOON

That's Randy. He used to have a serious drug problem, so he went to a hypnotist. Now whenever he has a craving, he just jumps up and down to make it go away.

RANDY

(still jumping)

That's why I can't be in rooms with low ceilings.

MULDOON

Randy gets a lot of cravings. But he has a point: If you put two people in a room together long enough, they're either going to fight or make whoopee. And while you were in the kitchen baking a casserole, they were in the living room making whoopee.

STEVIE

Please, stop.

SERGIO

Think you're in love with her?

(RANDY stops jumping.)

STEVIE

Yeah. A lot.

SERGIO

But you left.

STEVIE

Yeah. I wanted to travel. But after leaving I realized what I actually wanted was here.

SERGIO

So what're you gonna do about it?

STEVIE

There's not much I really can do.

SERGIO

Sure there is. Propose to her.

STEVIE

What?

RANDY

Yeah, propose to her!

STEVIE

She's already been proposed to.

MULDOON

I don't think there are any rules against a double-proposal. She just can't say yes twice. Unless she's an unconventional feminist Mormon or something.

STEVIE

What about Dave?

MULDOON

You don't need to propose to him.

STEVIE

No, I mean, this'll probably make him angry.

RANDY

Yes, probably. But he's dating the woman you love, and you were dating her first.

STEVIE

But technically, we broke up when I went overseas.

SERGIO

Did your friend think you'd be teaching those Chinese babies forever?

STEVIE

No.

SERGIO

Well, I don't know him, but in my personal opinion, he can go fuck himself. Put a fat, fucking expensive boulder of a diamond on your lady's ring finger so that every time she tries to lift her arm she has to use the other one to help it. Then at least she'll have to think about her choices.

(A GUNSHOT is heard.)

STEVIE

What was that?

MULDOON

The Russian Roulette Championship Tournament for underprivileged Chinese youths is being held across the street. They must be warming up.

(Another gunshot.)

STEVIE

Okay, a big ring. Where'd you get yours?

MULDOON

I won it. It says "y-q-o-o-q" in lowercase, emboldened letters, so every time I engage in a bout of fisticuffs, my opponent walks away with the word "poopy" imprinted on his forehead. It tickles me so.

STEVIE

Nice. How'd you win it?

MULDOON

At last year's Russian Roulette tournament. You're looking at a three-time Russian Roulette champion.

STEVIE

Why aren't you there now?

MULDOON

I'm a simple barkeep with simple tastes. I've won unimaginable treasures at past tournaments, but now, in the twilight of my years, I find that gin and bourbon give me thrills enough. And though the first place prize is always invaluable, sometimes you need to know when to quit.

(Another gunshot.)

STEVIE

You think they got room for one more competitor?

MULDOON

I don't think it's too late. They're probably still warming up. But you shouldn't fire a gun when you're drunk.

STEVIE

Yeah?

(STEVIE takes a shot.)

STEVIE

You shouldn't swallow shots either.

RANDY

When you're drunk?

STEVIE

No. When you're firing a gun.

(STEVIE stands and begins to walk away.)

MULDOON

No matter what happens, you'll always be a winner to me.

(STEVIE exits. End scene.)