

THE ESSENCE OF LOVE

by

Philip Ayckbourn

Agent: Richard Ireson
The Narrow Road Company

1st Floor
37 Great Queen Street
London,
WC2B 5AA

T 020 7831 4450
E richardireson@narrowroad.co.uk
www.narrowroad.co.uk

2009. Ver. March 2020

Characters:

Cast of 4/5 (2/3M 2F)

DIANA MOORE – around fifty

GEMMA MOORE – nineteen

MARTIN WALKER – around fifty

TOM WALKER – twenty-one

ABDUL HAMID – Moroccan street vendor in his sixties (Can be played by actor who plays Martin.)

V.O. YOUNG MOROCCAN STREET VENDOR

Synopsis of scenes:

Act 1

Scene 1 – 2.30 p.m.

Scene 2 – The following morning. 10.30 a.m.

Scene 3 – That evening. 6.30 p.m.

Act 2

Scene 1 – The following morning. 9.00 a.m.

Scene 2 – That afternoon. 5.00 p.m.

Scene 3 – That evening. 11.00 p.m.

Scene 4 – The following afternoon. 4.00 p.m.

Scene 5 – The following morning. 10.30 a.m.

Place – Two adjoining hotel roof terraces in Marrakech.

Time – The present.

Act 1

Scene 1

2.30 p.m.

Two adjoining hotel roof terraces in Marrakech. Low lying individual shrubs in pots form a gesture of a divide between the two areas. A patio table with two chairs upstage and a sun-lounger downstage are to be found on either terrace. Upstage doorways on either side lead into their respective hotel rooms. Downstage and looking out to the audience is the view of Marrakech with a street below.

On the SR area MARTIN sits in one of the chairs. He restlessly reads his book and swats away the occasional fly. TOM sits in the sun-lounger sketching in an artist's pad. His drawings are executed in black only using charcoal pencils and are not drawn from life but from his own vision. His plastic water bottle is on the floor beside him. YOUNG MOROCCAN STREET VENDOR is heard.

V.O. YMSV: *(Off. Street below.)* Music of Marrakech: Gnawa, Arabic, Berber, Raï. Rugs, djellabahs, Moroccan slippers, straw hats. All cheapest price.

MARTIN crosses to the edge of the terrace and looks over.

Hello, mister, you take a look?

MARTIN: *(Calling down.)* Maybe later.

V.O. YMSV: *(Off. Street below.)* All cheapest price.

MARTIN: Come on, Tom, for God's sake let's do something!

TOM: I'm doing this.

MARTIN: We're in Marrakech, Tom, Marrakech!

TOM: I know where we are, thanks.

MARTIN: Probably, if not *the* most exotic city in the world and what are we doing, sitting around on a hotel terrace twiddling our thumbs!

TOM: I'm doing this.

MARTIN: Are you going to be doing that all day? All week? Come on, Tom, let's do something.

TOM: I'm doing this!

MARTIN: I've paid good money for us to be here.

TOM: No, you paid good money for you and *her* to be here.

MARTIN: Yes, well, of course I'm delighted it's you now, Tom. We don't spend enough time together, you and I... you and me... I never know which one is correct. Look, Tom –

TOM: You're in my light.

MARTIN: Listen, Tom –

TOM: You're still in my light.

MARTIN: Better? I know you still somewhat blame me for what happened between your mother and I... mother and me.

TOM: Somewhat! I blame you entirely.

MARTIN: Yes, well, there's two sides to everything, you know.

TOM: You're the one that went off with that half-literate, chain-smoking Italian vampire... who eventually took a knife to you.

MARTIN: She was a mistake, I agree.

TOM: Not that you've done a lot better since: a sorry stream of sad, underage losers.

MARTIN: Not underage, Tom, never underage.

TOM: Well under *your* age, that's equally as obscene.

MARTIN: Well, maybe you're just jealous, Tom. We don't hear much about your conquests, do we?

TOM: You don't, no.

MARTIN: Come on, Tom, give me something, I never know what to tell my friends when they ask me about you.

TOM: Tell them to mind their own business.

MARTIN: They probably think you're...

TOM: What?

MARTIN: You know... You're not, are you? I mean if you are, of course that's quite all right with me.

TOM: I'm not. Look, just... read your book.

MARTIN: I've read it... twice.

TOM: I'm sure there's still lots you've missed... there usually is.

MARTIN: I want to see Marrakech!

TOM: Then go and see Marrakech!

MARTIN: I want to see it with you!

TOM: I'm doing this!

MARTIN: Okay, I'm going.

TOM: Good.

MARTIN: But I'd just like to say, Tom –

TOM: Oh!

MARTIN: Hear me out, Tom. I'd just like to say, your art... I don't pretend to understand it, but I know it's something that... well, something that you're very... dedicated to, which is good. Not saying that. I'm just saying, if you're... you know... apprehensive about... meeting girls... women –

TOM: Look –

MARTIN: Hear me out, Tom, hear me out. They can be tricky creatures, you don't have to tell me that... I know. I probably sampled a cross-section of practically all of them at uni alone. I didn't earn the reputation of The Staffordshire Stallion for keeping my nose pressed firmly in my books.

TOM: Please!

MARTIN: What I'm saying is, Tom, just... don't pass me by. I can help with the difficult introductions... believe me, that's the hardest part, the rest is all downhill, so to speak... plain sailing is probably a better way of putting it.

TOM: No, I think downhill is right in your case.

MARTIN: You only get one shot at being young, Tom, it's all too quickly gone. I'd give my right arm to be your age again... figuratively speaking of course. I suppose, in a nutshell, what I'm saying is, you've got the rest of your life to do that, Tom, just... don't let love pass you by. That's all, I've said my bit. And I'm here to help you, Tom. I can be a valuable ally in your romantic crusade.

TOM: Have you finished?

MARTIN: I'm done.

TOM: Firstly, let me say, there is nothing that I can possibly learn from you except how *not* to live my life.

MARTIN: Tom –

TOM: Secondly, FYI, I'm not apprehensive about meeting girls... women. On the contrary, I can get them like that! (*Clicks fingers.*) If I want to. And I have. Not that I'm going to tell you about any of them... or worse, introduce them to you.

MARTIN: Tom, you know I wouldn't –

TOM: Thirdly, FYI, the reason I'm not seeing anyone on a full-time basis is because, as yet, I haven't met a girl... woman, who's come close to equalling my intelligence, my artistic sophistication, my cultural orientation, my style, my dress sense or unique sense of humour. And what's more can pack all that into a half decent physique that's worth a second look at. Please tell your friends. Now, I would really like to get on with this.

MARTIN: Fine. Please yourself, I'm sure you will. FYI I'm off to see Marrakech.

TOM: Good. And don't bring any of it back here or she's going off the roof.

MARTIN: Have a wonderful day.

TOM: I will.

MARTIN exits through the USSR doorway. After a few moments TOM puts down his sketch pad and drinks from his water bottle. He gets up and looks over the edge of the terrace. He glances across to the adjacent terrace and crosses to the USSR doorway.

(Calling through.) You gone? Hello?

TOM removes his shirt and places it over a chair. He does the same with his trousers. He moves the sun-lounger to a spot nearby. He lies on it and enjoys the sun. DIANA enters through the USL doorway. She is dressed in a colourful outfit with makeup to match. TOM rolls off the lounger and crawls underneath it to hide.

DIANA: *(Calling back.)* I was only trying to help you out, darling, that's all. No need to get so sniffy about it. *(View.)* Oh, look! Come out here, Gem darling, you'll love this! Gemma, come out here!

DIANA crosses to the edge of the terrace and takes in the view.

It's wonderful, darling! You can see the mountains from here. Gemma, come out here, you're missing it!

GEMMA enters through the USL doorway. She is dressed in a much plainer outfit to her mother. She looks sourly at DIANA and sits in a chair.

Look at this! You're not looking, darling. Well, I'm sorry, I thought he was lovely.

GEMMA: Yes, that was obvious.

DIANA: I wouldn't have swapped seats if I knew you weren't going to say a word to him for the whole journey. It's not that I wanted to sit next to that man with awful halitosis.

GEMMA: I don't know why you did.

DIANA: For you to get chatting. It could've been the start of a beautiful holiday romance. When I was your age, Gem darling, I wouldn't think about going on holiday without there being a little innocent flirting involved with a boy I'd meet. Perhaps a little heavy petting and maybe the occasional off-piste fumble... if you get my drift.

GEMMA: Oh!

DIANA: You just have to be a little more sociable, approachable, try a little, from time to time. I had them all eating out of my hands at your age... all the boys.

GEMMA: I know, you've said.

DIANA: And it wasn't because I was beautiful... of course that didn't go unnoticed, but it was because I made an effort, (*face*) with this, (*breasts*) with these (*bottom*) and with this. We'll work on it, this holiday, and on your personality too.

GEMMA: I've got a personality, thanks! Just because you choose not to see it doesn't mean I haven't got one.

DIANA: I know you have, darling, it's just a lot of the time it's... not that forthcoming. It's only because I care, Gem darling, that's all. Tomorrow we'll go shopping, we'll find some gorgeous outfits for us both. I want to get something a bit like what I wore for my Cleopatra at –

*TOM has surreptitiously retrieved his trousers from the chair and struggles to put them on under his lounge.
DIANA stops to look.*

GEMMA: What?

GEMMA gets up to look.

(Embarrassed.) Mum!

Aware of the hiatus TOM ceases his activity.

DIANA: Hello, there!

TOM flinches and hits his head beneath the lounge.

TOM: Ow!

He looks out from under the lounge.

DIANA: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the idea is to lie on top of them.

TOM: Needed some shade.

DIANA: Diana... Di. How do you do? And this is my daughter, Gemma... Gem. We should've been here yesterday... missed our plane.

TOM: Perhaps I could just... put my clothes on.

DIANA: Oh, yes. Not looking. No need to cover up for our sakes. A little nudity is quite all right in my book... and Gem's too, I'm sure... eh, Gem?

TOM has hurriedly put on his trousers and his shirt.

Okay, safe to look? Yes, if one can't strip off here on a balcony in Marrakech where can one do it, eh?

TOM moves the sun-lounger to its former place.

Let's start again shall we? Di. How do you do?

TOM: Tom.

DIANA: Tom. And this is Gem.

GEMMA: Hi.

DIANA: What a view, eh Tom? You been here long?

TOM: Since yesterday.

DIANA: Alone or...?

TOM: My dad.

DIANA: Oh, family thing too. Perhaps we should get together sometime, go halves on a dining table.

GEMMA: Mum.

DIANA: Come and say hello, Gem, instead of skulking in the corner. Oh, artist I see, Tom. Me too. Not a painter, I hasten to add... couldn't draw to save my life. No, thespian me... treading the boards. Don't worry, I'm not a huge star so don't feel you ought to recognise me... not unless you're an avid follower of the Neptune Players in Hove. No, didn't think so. What is it you draw, Tom, portraits, landscapes... nudes perhaps?

TOM: No. It's my own unique thing, you wouldn't have heard of it.

DIANA: Oh, intriguing. Does it have a name?

TOM: Abstract existentialism.

DIANA: Oh. Interesting, eh Gem? Maybe sometime I can have a little look... if your willing to show, that is. No, I'm more of an Impressionist girl myself, Degas, Monet and oh, Cézanne, he brings me out in goose bumps. You like the Impressionists, Tom? No, I'm putting you on the spot, asking you to cast judgement on your fellow artists, mustn't do that. Okay, I'm wearing far too much for this heat. I need to take a leaf out of your book, Tom. Perhaps you and your dad might care to join

us for a glass of bubbly on the terrace later... yours or ours.
Ciao for now.

DIANA gestures for GEMMA to talk with TOM and exits through the USL doorway.

GEMMA: Sorry. She's always trying to match me up with every boy she sees.

TOM: Yes, look...?

GEMMA: Gemma.

TOM: Yeah, I'm actually here to work. I was just taking a... bit of a break, that's all. So, what I'm saying is, I'm not here to socialise. So please tell your mother.

GEMMA: Yes, I will.

TOM: Thanks.

TOM sits on his lounge again and takes up his drawing materials. MARTIN enters through the USR doorway.

MARTIN: Oh, neighbours!

TOM: Oh Jesus, I thought you'd gone!

MARTIN: I left my sunglasses behind. *(To Gemma.)* Hello there, Martin... Marty.

GEMMA: Gemma.

MARTIN: Gemma, lovely name.

TOM: Your sunglasses are on your head.

MARTIN: Oh yes, silly me. Always doing things like that.

TOM: You can go now.

MARTIN: I'm saying hello to Gemma, Tom. Honestly, my son, I'm sure he came from the milkman.

TOM: I wish I had.

MARTIN: I bet he hasn't even said hello. Have you said hello to Gemma, Tom?

GEMMA: He's said hello.

MARTIN: Well that's a start. Are you here with a friend... or maybe a few of you on a cultural break... girls together?

GEMMA: My mum.

MARTIN: Oh. From Blighty too are you?

GEMMA: Yes.

MARTIN: What part?

GEMMA: Hove.

MARTIN: Ah, coastal girl. Hemel Hempstead me. He's in a squat in London somewhere.

TOM: It's not a squat.

MARTIN: Are you at uni, Gemma or...?

GEMMA: I work, in a shop.

MARTIN: Retailer. Selling?

GEMMA: Toys.

MARTIN: *(Suggestively.)* Oh, what kind of toys? Anything I might have come across?

TOM: *(More to himself.)* Oh Jesus!

GEMMA: Children's toys.

MARTIN: Yes, right. No, never worked in a shop myself. The closest I got to that was –

DIANA enters through USL doorway.

DIANA: I head more voices. Hello there. You must be Tom's father.

MARTIN: *(Less enthusiastically.)* Yes... Martin.

DIANA: Hello, Martin. Di.

MARTIN: What!

DIANA: Di... Diana.

MARTIN: Oh. Hello.

DIANA: We caught Tom a bit off guard, I'm afraid.

MARTIN: Off guard?

TOM: It doesn't matter.

DIANA: I've ordered up some bubbly if you'd like to join us.

MARTIN: Ah... love to, but I have to be somewhere. Maybe another time. Tom will be delighted to, I'm sure. (*Looks at watch.*) Running late. Nice to meet you Gemma... and you, Di. Have fun.

DIANA: We will.

MARTIN exits through the USR doorway.

Where's he off to, anywhere interesting?

TOM: Yes actually, his kinky club.

DIANA: Kinky club!

TOM: Yeah.

DIANA: What belly dancing you mean?

TOM: I'm afraid it's a little stronger than that. Fetishism, S&M, bondage, you name it, he's doing it.

DIANA: Goodness!

TOM: Live snakes too with borderline underage girls. Seriously. There's nothing those girls can't do with snakes apparently... so he says. He knows I don't approve.

DIANA: I'm surprised something like that's allowed in a place like this with the strict –

TOM: If you know where to look. He did... he always does. Back of a carpet shop, apparently.

DIANA: So he's into all that your dad, is he, Tom?

TOM: Is he! He can't get enough of it. That and the booze. My mum sent me here to police him. His liver's practically gone. Please don't encourage him.

DIANA: Oh dear! He looks quite sprightly.

TOM: Only 'cos he's off to his kinky club.

DIANA: Yes, I'm sure that would do it. You'll join us for a glass of bubbly won't you, Tom?

GEMMA: Mum, I think he wants to work.

DIANA: Oh nonsense! Nobody comes on holiday to work, eh Tom? Might as well stay at home. No, people come on holiday to have fun, to meet people, to socialise, have a little drink and... well, not to work.

GEMMA exits through the USL doorway.

Oh! She disapproves of my habits. She's so squeaky clean, it's unhealthy. Just because I like a little drink of an evening, a little smoke from time to time... if you know what I mean, Tom. Of course you do, you're an artist. She's the one who should be shocking me surely. I certainly was with my mother. Daddy jokes that I put her into an early grave. Which is probably true in hindsight. No, she takes after my ex-husband, he wouldn't say boo to a goose. Completely infuriating at times. I mean, that's really what finished us. Men in my opinion should, if you pardon my frankness, Tom, have balls. No point being one if you don't have them. I know it's an old fashioned opinion, but I'm an old fashioned girl. I like a man to stand at the helm... in certain matters, take a good, firm hold of the reins and not be afraid to use the whip when needs be. Well, I'm sure your dad knows what I'm talking about, eh Tom? And I'm sure you do too.

Doorbell rings.

Ah, there's our bubbly. Don't go away.

DIANA exits through the USR doorway.

TOM: *(To himself.)* Why me? Why me?

TOM takes his drawing materials and his water bottle and exits through the USR doorway.

Lights down.

Scene 2

The following morning. 10.30 a.m.

GEMMA enters through the USL doorway. She carries her book. She glances briefly across to the adjacent terrace and then crosses to the edge of her own and takes in the view.

V.O. YMSV: *(Off. Street below.)* Sunglasses: Tom Ford, Gucci, Calvin Klein, Versace, Hugo Boss. All cheapest price. Hey, lady, you come and see?

GEMMA: No... I've got some, thanks.

GEMMA steps back from the edge. TOM enters through the USR doorway. He carries his drawing materials and his water bottle. GEMMA and he share a brief but frosty look. TOM crosses to his sun-lounger and GEMMA crosses to a chair. TOM opens his artist's pad and begins to draw. GEMMA reads her book. DIANA enters through the USL doorway. She wears her exercise outfit and carries her bag. TOM puts his sunglasses on.

DIANA: *(To TOM.)* Morning!

TOM: *(Coolly.)* Morning.

DIANA: Another lovely one! Mind you we'll probably get sick of saying that in a couple of days. You missed your champers yesterday.

TOM: Heat stroke, had to lie down.

DIANA: Oh dear! Better today I hope.

TOM: *(More to himself.)* We'll see.

DIANA: Wear a hat. Is your dad around?

TOM: Haven't seen him.

DIANA: Maybe he's still chained up.

GEMMA: Mum!

TOM: *(More to himself.)* Let's hope so.

DIANA: Plans for today, Tom?

TOM: Just doing this.

DIANA: We're going shopping. Ought to get to grip with these dirhams first, work out what they're worth... in real money that is. Have a go at our haggling. We'll probably get taken to the cleaners. Oh well, all part of the holiday fun. You're welcome to come with us, Tom, if –

GEMMA: Mum, he wants to do his art.

DIANA: Oh! Well the offer's there, Tom, if you fancy a little excursion. (*Exercises.*) Okay, let's get going with this, shall we?

GEMMA: Mum, do you have to?

DIANA: Yes.

GEMMA: We're on holiday.

DIANA: I've got to keep my instrument in pristine condition. I never miss a day, you know that.

GEMMA: But –

DIANA: (*To TOM.*) She knows that.

DIANA begins her exercise routine. Some of it is tailored to the fact TOM might be noticing. After a while she incorporates vocal exercises. TOM, annoyed, exits through the USSR doorway.

GEMMA: See!

DIANA: See what?

GEMMA: You've driven him off.

DIANA: I've driven him off! Nonsense! Why don't you talk to him instead of hiding behind that book? I mean, just look at the cover, that's probably what drove him off... if anything did.

GEMMA: I told you, he doesn't want to talk... to either of us. He made that perfectly clear yesterday.

DIANA: You're just saying that.

GEMMA: I'm not. Anyway, he's extremely arrogant. I don't want to talk to him.

DIANA: And you're extremely judgemental. That's one way to stay single all your life. I'm just concerned about you, Gem, darling,

that's all. I just don't want you to end up like a miserable spinster in a house full of cats, like Mrs Hawkins.

GEMMA: I'm not going to.

DIANA: You say that, Gem darling, you say that now. Come on, let's do some exercises together, show him you're not just a couch potato and have got a bit of life in you.

GEMMA: Just leave me alone!

GEMMA exits through the USL doorway.

DIANA: Gem? Gemma? Oh! *(To herself.)* Daughters, daughters, daughters! Oh!

DIANA is about to exit after GEMMA.

ABDUL-HAMID: *(Off. Street below.)* Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms. Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms.

DIANA crosses to the edge of the terrace and looks down.

Good day, lady!

DIANA: Hello!

ABDUL-HAMID: *(Off. Street below.)* May I show you?

DIANA: *(Calling down.)* Why not? Shall I come down? Hello? *(To herself.)* Oh, he's gone!

DIANA continues to look down. ABDUL-HAMID arrives on the terrace by his own particular route. He carries his bag of merchandise.

ABDUL-HAMID: Salam, lady.

DIANA: Oh! Where did you spring from?

ABDUL-HAMID: One moment, please.

ABDUL-HAMID crosses to the SR terrace and looks up to a window high USR.

It's okay, coast clear. Hotel boss see me here, he send fat brother to break legs... or neck.

DIANA: Oh dear!

ABDUL-HAMID: It's okay, he send before, but Abdul-Hamid quick and fat brother slow, no contest. Still the mongoose must not get sleepy otherwise the snake will strike.

DIANA: True, true.

ABDUL-HAMID: Ah, perfume! Like a thousand Moroccan roses!

DIANA: Thank you. That's good, yes?

ABDUL-HAMID: Very good.

ABDUL-HAMID takes DIANA's hand and studies it.

Ah!

DIANA: What?

ABDUL-HAMID: Ah ha!

DIANA: Good?

ABDUL-HAMID: Ah!

DIANA: Not good?

ABDUL-HAMID: Oh!

DIANA: Bit of both perhaps?

ABDUL-HAMID: I see passion, extreme passion.

DIANA: That sounds like me.

ABDUL-HAMID: But not with husband.

DIANA: Yes, that's definitely me.

ABDUL-HAMID: He dead?

DIANA: America.

ABDUL-HAMID: *(Positively.)* Ah, America! *(Considers. Not so positively.)* Hm, America. One child I see?

DIANA: Yes, daughter.

ABDUL-HAMID: Beautiful daughter, like mother?

DIANA: Potentially.

ABDUL-HAMID: She got boyfriend?

DIANA: We're working on it.

ABDUL-HAMID: I see love.

DIANA: For me or...?

ABDUL-HAMID: For her.

DIANA: Well that's good. Enough about her, more about me.

ABDUL-HAMID: No more. I show you merchandise now. One moment.

ABDUL-HAMID crosses to the SR terrace again and looks up to the window.

DIANA: Coast clear?

ABDUL-HAMID: Coast clear.

ABDUL-HAMID open his bag. The inside of the bag extends to create a display of various merchandise.

Bracelets, rings, silver, gold. Please, take a look. All genuine, all best price.

DIANA: So much to choose from. May I?

ABDUL-HAMID: By all means.

DIANA takes a pendant.

Ah, exceptional taste.

DIANA: Thank you.

DIANA tries it on.

ABDUL-HAMID: Beautiful.

DIANA: Yes?

ABDUL-HAMID: This stone for extreme good luck.

DIANA: Well we all need that.

ABDUL-HAMID: You see.

ABDUL-HAMID takes a decorative hand mirror from the bag and holds it up for DIANA to look.

DIANA: Yes.

ABDUL-HAMID: With this.

ABDUL-HAMID takes out a bracelet and gives it to DIANA.

DIANA: That's nice.

ABDUL-HAMID: For extreme long life.

DIANA: Well, we all need that too.

DIANA puts it on.

Yes, I like that.

ABDUL-HAMID: And this.

ABDUL-HAMID takes a ring from his bag.

Beautiful ring.

DIANA: Yes, it is. What's this for?

ABDUL-HAMID: Whatever you want.

DIANA: Then I'll take it.

ABDUL-HAMID: You look like wife of sultan!

DIANA: Oh!

ABDUL-HAMID: You have beautiful skin.

DIANA: Thank you.

ABDUL-HAMID: But what women does not want more beautiful skin forever?
You have good luck, you have long life but you do not want to have skin like an old peach.

DIANA: No.

ABDUL-HAMID takes out a small jar.

ABDUL-HAMID: All Moroccan women swear in this.

ABDUL-HAMID unscrews the lid. DIANA sniffs it.

DIANA: Mm, divine! Yes, I'll have that too. And I love that mirror. Is it for sale?

ABDUL-HAMID: For you, lady, yes.

DIANA: Good. Now, here we go, how much?

ABDUL-HAMID: For everything. (*Calculates.*) One thousand dirhams.

DIANA: One thousand! That sounds a lot.

ABDUL-HAMID: In your money, it is nothing. But for special lady, special price... nine hundred and fifty.

DIANA: Shall we say nine hundred... and twenty?

ABDUL-HAMID: Nine hundred... and forty.

DIANA: Nine hundred... and thirty?

ABDUL-HAMID: Okay, deal! You bargain well.

DIANA: Thank you. I'm actually pretty new to this.

ABDUL-HAMID: Impossible to tell!

DIANA: Well, I am an actress.

ABDUL-HAMID: Oh, big star, Hollywood?

DIANA: Not quite Hollywood. I'm a stage actress, although I did have a walk on part in a famous British soap opera once. The lady on the canal boat. Blink and you'd have missed me. Oh, yes, payment.

DIANA fetches her bag. She takes out an envelope of dirhams.

Right, let's see.

ABDUL-HAMID: Nine of these... and three of these.

DIANA: There.

DIANA gives money to ABDUL-HAMID.

ABDUL-HAMID: My pleasure doing business with you. May I know your name?

DIANA: Diana... Di.

ABDUL-HAMID: Diana-Di.

DIANA: Just Di.

ABDUL-HAMID: Ah. Abdul-Hamid. One last thing, free gift for lovely lady Di.

DIANA: Oh! Never say no to a free gift!

ABDUL-HAMID takes a small phial from his bag.

ABDUL-HAMID: Love potion, very strong.

DIANA: Oh!

ABDUL-HAMID: One drop added to any liquid, whoever drink and their eye first look on... *(Suggestively.)* Hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo!

DIANA: Sounds too good to be true, Abdul-Hamid.

ABDUL-HAMID: No want it?

DIANA: Now I didn't say that. Never say no to a free gift!

ABDUL-HAMID presents it to DIANA. DIANA takes it.

ABDUL-HAMID: May help daughter.

DIANA: Now that's a point... if it works.

ABDUL-HAMID: It works. Now, must go. Goodbye, Di.

DIANA: Abdul Hamid.

ABDUL-HAMID: Allah be with you.

DIANA: And you.

ABDUL-HAMID: You look million dirhams!

DIANA: Thank you.

ABDUL-HAMID exits the way he came. DIANA examines her purchases. She looks at the phial.

Love potion. Honestly, who does he think I am?

DIANA considers for a moment and then glances across to the adjacent balcony. She notices TOM's water bottle. She looks back to the USL doorway in GEMMA's direction.

Well, there's only one way to find out, I suppose.

She looks over to the USR doorway and then furtively crosses the divide. She crosses to TOM's water bottle, unscrews the top and pours in a couple of drops of the potion. She screws the top back on the water bottle and examines it. She replaces the bottle and crosses back over the divide. She throws the phial in her bag.

(Calling towards USL doorway.) Gem –

DIANA checks herself. She decides instead to be the first to test its efficacy. She takes a magazine from her bag and reclines on her sun-lounger.

(Sudden realisation.) God, what if it's poison! Diana! You've just put an unknown substance given to you by a complete stranger, in Marrakech, into someone else's drink! Are you mad! Why would he give me poison? He was friendly. He was smiling. That doesn't mean anything. Of course he was smiling, you were giving him money. Diana! No, don't get hysterical, it's probably just tap water.

DIANA takes the phial from her bag. She pours a drop of the potion onto her finger to test it. She hesitates.

Or poison. Diana!

She returns the phial to her bag and is about to cross the divide to retrieve TOM's bottle when TOM enters through the USR doorway. He wears headphones plugged into his mobile. DIANA turns her attempted cross into a leg stretch.

Good, got your sounds, Tom.

TOM: *(Talking loudly.)* Yes, it is!

TOM crosses to his sun-lounger. He sits on it and picks up his artist's pad.

DIANA: Oh!

TOM picks up his water bottle.

No, Tom... Tom!

TOM: What?

TOM takes off a headphone and drinks.

DIANA: Don't...

TOM: *(Looking at DIANA. Potion working.)* Ah!

TOM stares at DIANA.

DIANA: Tom?

GEMMA enters through the USL doorway. She holds DIANA's mobile.

GEMMA: Lionel.

DIANA: What?

GEMMA: Lionel.

GEMMA hands the mobile to DIANA. DIANA keeps half an eye on TOM as she speaks on her mobile.

DIANA: *(To mobile.)* Lionel?... No, darling, I'm in Marrakech... Yes... What's that?... Yes, I mean no... No, I'm fine... Whose?... Oh, Tony Hogget. Yes, I think so.

DIANA searches in her bag.

Lionel, I just have to take you inside with me... No, stop that, Lionel, that's very naughty. No, I didn't say that.

DIANA exits through the USL doorway.

TOM: *(To himself.)* Oh! Oh!

GEMMA: Something the matter?

TOM: What's... what's her name?

GEMMA: Whose?

TOM: Hers!

GEMMA: Her name?

TOM: Yes.

GEMMA: Diana.

TOM: *(To himself.)* Oh, Diana!

GEMMA: Are you okay?

TOM: *(To himself.)* Stared at her like a fool!

GEMMA: What?

TOM: *(To himself.)* Couldn't speak. Diana!

MARTIN enters through the USR doorway. He wears sunglasses and moves gingerly.

MARTIN: Oh, Tom is that you? I presume it is. Gemma is it?

GEMMA: Yes.

MARTIN: Morning.

GEMMA: Morning.

MARTIN: Think my drink must've been spiked last night... more than once. I can hardly see. Interesting place though, from what I can remember. Good entertainment. Quiet one on the terrace, I think for me today. You?

GEMMA: Just...

MARTIN: Reading? A book isn't it? I can just about make that out. Breezy romance... trashy holiday novel?

GEMMA: No, it's a book about fair trading.

MARTIN: Ah. I'm reading about the Moroccan sultans. They didn't hold back when it came to lavish entertainments. And I bet no-one dared spike their drinks, otherwise it would be... *(MARTIN mimes a throat being cut.)*

TOM has been lost in his thoughts. He sniffs his shirt and hurriedly crosses to the USR doorway.

Okay, Tom?

TOM exits through the USR doorway ignoring MARTIN.

And good morning to you too.

GEMMA: Is he...?
MARTIN: Hm?
GEMMA: Is he okay?
MARTIN: Him? It depends what you mean by okay.
GEMMA: He seems...
MARTIN: Up tight, judgemental, supercilious, superior? I'm afraid that's Tom. I don't think his artist confederates help. From the sound of it, from the little he's said, they all seem to be completely up their own –

DIANA enters though the USL doorway.

DIANA: Morning.
MARTIN: *(Less enthusiastically.)* Oh... Morning.
DIANA: Where's Tom?
MARTIN: He's... not sure. Sorry, need to sit down. Chillax for a while.

MARTIN crosses to a chair and sits.

DIANA: Is he okay?
GEMMA: No, someone spiked his drink.
DIANA: Oh! How do you know?
GEMMA: He just said so.
DIANA: Did he! Where is he?
GEMMA: *(MARTIN.)* He's over there.
DIANA: Not him, Tom.
GEMMA: He went inside.
DIANA: Ah.
GEMMA: Is everything okay?
DIANA: Yes... yes it's fine.

GEMMA: He seems to be acting strangely though.

DIANA: Who?

GEMMA: Tom. More so than usual.

DIANA: What do you mean by strangely?

GEMMA: Well he was just sitting there looking...

DIANA: What?

GEMMA: I don't know, it's like he's... taken something, some... drug.

DIANA: Ah.

GEMMA: He wanted to know your name.

DIANA: He knows my name.

GEMMA: He'd obviously forgotten it.

DIANA: Possibly his heat stroke again.

TOM enters through the USSR doorway. GEMMA crosses to her chair and takes up her book. TOM stares at DIANA.

All right, Tom?

TOM: Yes.

DIANA: Wondered where you'd gone.

TOM: I'm here.

DIANA: Yes. Well... are you feeling okay?

TOM: Yes.

DIANA: Good. Well...

TOM: Diana?

DIANA: Yes?

TOM: It's a... a lovely name.

DIANA: Oh, thank you. I like it.

TOM: So do I.

DIANA: Tom's a nice name too.

TOM: Thank you.

DIANA: You're welcome.

TOM: I... I...

DIANA: Yes? Yes, Tom?

TOM: I... Would you like to see my... my drawings?

DIANA: Ah. Yes, yes I would.

TOM goes to fetch his artist's pad. He nervously approaches DIANA.

What do you call your style again, Tom?

TOM: Abstract existentialism.

DIANA: Yes, you're going to have to explain what that is.

TOM: It's a fusion of abstract conceptualism with a sense of existential... in an existential form, which represents... which... I'm sorry, I'm usually a bit more...

DIANA: It's okay, Tom, I'm sure Cezanne had similar problems when trying to explain his work to ignoramuses like me.

TOM: No, you're not... you're not.

DIANA: Thank you. Perhaps I should just have a...

TOM: Yes.

TOM opens the pad and shows his work.

DIANA: Ah!

TOM: These are just a few that I've been... I've been working on lately.

DIANA: Yes, yes, that's... Well... Look at that. Yes, that's very... very bold... very bold, Tom.

TOM: Thank you.

DIANA: Wow! Yes! Oh yes, that's... that's quite something. Do you just work in black?

TOM: Yes. I find colour is too... too...

DIANA: Colourful?

TOM: Yes! Yes!

DIANA: Oh yes, that's a... that's an interesting one. Like two mirrors in a hairdresser's that go on to infinity. I like it.

TOM tears the drawing from his pad.

TOM: Then I want you to have it.

DIANA: What? Sure?

TOM: Yes.

DIANA: Well... thanks. I'll put it up somewhere at home.

TOM: Your bedroom... I mean... somewhere.

DIANA: Yes, maybe the bedroom. Well thank you, Tom, that's been a... an education... in abstract existentialism.

TOM: Ah...

DIANA: Yes?

TOM: Perhaps you... perhaps you'd like to... go for a walk?

DIANA: A walk?

TOM: Yes. To... have a look around.

DIANA: Sure, that would be...

TOM: Just... the two of us.

DIANA: Sure.

TOM: I'll... meet you in the foyer.

DIANA: Give me a few minutes, Tom, to... put on something suitable for... walking in. Five minutes.

TOM: Five minutes.

DIANA: Better make it ten.

TOM: All the time you need... Diana.

TOM takes his drawing materials, but forgets his water bottle, and exits through the USSR doorway.

DIANA: *(More to herself.)* Okay.

DIANA fetches her bag.

GEMMA: What's going on?

DIANA: Going on? Nothing's going on, he was showing me his artwork.

GEMMA: Why?

DIANA: Because he wanted to and I wanted to see it, that's why.

GEMMA: Isn't he acting a bit...?

DIANA: A bit what?

GEMMA: Strangely.

DIANA: I've no idea what you're talking about. You've got completely the wrong idea of him... as usual. He's not arrogant as you imagine him to be, he's actually very friendly and sociable. In fact we're taking a walk together.

GEMMA: What!

DIANA: A walk, W.A.L.K.

GEMMA: What for?

DIANA: Why do people normally take a walk together? Really, Gem darling, you say some silly things. Okay, we'll postpone our shopping till another time. That's okay, isn't it? Good. *(Jewellery.)* Oh, what do you think of these?

GEMMA: Where did you get them?

DIANA: A travelling merchant who dropped by earlier. This is for good luck, this is for long life and this... this is for you.

DIANA gives GEMMA the ring.

GEMMA: What's this for?

DIANA: For attracting a man.

DIANA gives GEMMA the hand mirror.

Here, this might come in useful too. See you later.

DIANA exits through the USL doorway. MARTIN snores.

Lights down.

Scene 3

That evening. 6.30 p.m.

GEMMA: *(To mobile.)* Hi, just wondering where you are. Perhaps you can call me when you get this, let me know you're... okay.

GEMMA hangs up. She picks up the hand mirror and looks at it. MARTIN enters through the USR doorway. He holds a glass of whisky and a bowl of cashew nuts.

MARTIN: Oh, hello.

GEMMA: Oh... hello.

MARTIN: They're still not back yet?

GEMMA: No.

MARTIN: Oh. Well they're obviously having fun... wherever they are. And you're sure they went off together, together together, not just leaving at the same time?

GEMMA: No, together together.

MARTIN: Well, wouldn't have put money on that one, would you?

GEMMA: No.

MARTIN: They could've got lost, I suppose, it's a bit of a maze out there.

GEMMA's mobile beeps.

Her? What does she say?

GEMMA: *(Reading text.)* Don't worry, everything's A okay.

MARTIN: Oh well, I suppose everything must be... A okay then. We're not to worry. *(Feeling sunburn.)* Oh!

GEMMA: How's your...?

MARTIN: Painful. Can't blame the sun for doing his job, can we? Her job. My own fault for falling asleep on the lounge with my shirt off. Thought I'd take advantage of it since Tom's gone. He seems to have claimed it for his own. His artist's studio. Have you seen them?

GEMMA: No.

MARTIN: Don't, they'll give you nightmares. Don't see why he can't do something a little more palatable like landscapes or nudes. Do you paint, Gemma?

GEMMA: No.

MARTIN: Any hobbies?

GEMMA: I write... a bit.

MARTIN: What genre?

GEMMA: Fiction.

MARTIN: Ah, anything published?

GEMMA: No.

MARTIN: Big fan of fiction me, big fan. Perhaps you'd like to show me something of your... if you're –

GEMMA: No, it's... it's not...

MARTIN: Not yet for the showing? I understand. (*Drink.*) Fancy joining me for one of these? This is whisky. G and T perhaps? Or a nice cool glass of white wine, perfect at this time of day.

GEMMA: No, I...

MARTIN: I'm buying.

GEMMA: No... thanks.

MARTIN: Well, let me know if you change your mind. Just a call away. Cashew nut perhaps?

GEMMA declines.

MARTIN: They're good. Certainly picked well here, didn't we? Wonderful view. No-one to whisk you away, Gemma, on romantic breaks like these... apart from your mum, of course? No boyfriend?

GEMMA shakes her head.

Well that's not good enough is it, Gemma? A lovely girl like you should have someone to wine you and dine you in romantic settings like these. You must have interest surely.

GEMMA: I'm... I don't have time for... for that at the moment, as much

as my mother wants me to.

MARTIN: No time for love!

GEMMA: I'm taking time to work out what it is I want... out of life. Don't want my life to revolve around... anyone else... at the moment.

MARTIN: Shame to lose out on some of life's pleasures along the journey. (*TOM.*) Don't want to end up like him. Although, having said that, he's acting a little out of character at the moment. Are you sure I can't order you something up from the bar?

GEMMA: No, really, I'm...

MARTIN: Seems a shame to sit around here empty handed on such a lovely evening. Push the boat out a little, you're on holiday.

GEMMA: Thanks, but... (*Mobile.*) Actually there's someone I need to –

MARTIN: Cashew nut at least. Go on, let me offer you something.

GEMMA: Thanks.

GEMMA reluctantly takes a cashew nut and eats it.

MARTIN: Listen, Gemma, if I might be allowed to say something. You'll probably shoot me down in –

GEMMA starts to choke on the nut.

Oh, gone down the wrong way?

MARTIN considers giving GEMMA the whisky.

No.

He sees TOM's water bottle.

Ah!

MARTIN goes to fetch it.

Here we are, drink some of this.

MARTIN gives the bottle to GEMMA. GEMMA drinks.

Better?

GEMMA: (*Looking at MARTIN. Potion working.*) Oh!

MARTIN: Nasty when that happens. Have another sip. Hold on to it for the moment.

GEMMA does so.

GEMMA: Oh!

MARTIN: Good. You look better. Feel it?

GEMMA: Yes.

MARTIN: Good. What was I saying? Oh yes, like I say, you'll probably shoot me down in flames, Gemma, but –

GEMMA: Gem.

MARTIN: What's that?

GEMMA: You can call me Gem.

MARTIN: Gem. Okay, Gem. Call me Marty.

GEMMA: Marty.

MARTIN: Yes. Ah, yes, you'll probably shoot me down in flames –

GEMMA: No... I won't.

MARTIN: What?

GEMMA: Shoot you down... in flames.

MARTIN: Figuratively speaking, I mean. But I would hazard a guess that you don't have a particularly high opinion of yourself, Gem. Am I right? Thought so. You see I'm a very good judge of people. You need to be in my business.

GEMMA: What is it you do, Marty?

MARTIN: Air and water purification systems.

GEMMA: Oh!

MARTIN: I'm the big cheese, the head honcho, the buck stops with me. And my job is to galvanise and motivate people... my team, that is. Relatively new enterprise, three years in operation, had some initial teething problems, but we're going strong now. Set it up myself, had enough of slaving away for others and decided to go it alone. Best thing I ever did. Anyway, we seem

to have started talking about me. Very clever of you to get me off the subject. It's you we're talking about, your low opinion of yourself. And you know what that's down to... what I think it's down to, Gem? Your mother. I know the type, if you forgive me for saying so, they don't let you breathe, give you space, they're all over you, stifling your every move. Am I right? You know I am. You know what the best thing for you to do, Gem? Might as well even start this holiday.

GEMMA: What's that, Marty?

MARTIN: Is for you to make a bid for your own independence. Do what *you* want to do, go where *you* want to go... with whoever you want to go with... whomever.

GEMMA: You're right, I will!

MARTIN: Good! That's what I like to hear. You know perhaps tomorrow you can make your first bid for independence by coming and exploring the markets, or souks as they call them, with me.

GEMMA: Yes.

MARTIN: Yes?

GEMMA: Yes, I'd love that!

MARTIN: Good. Good! We might even get lucky.

GEMMA: Lucky?

MARTIN: Pick up a magic carpet or a lantern with a genie inside. 'Yes, master, your wish is my command.'

GEMMA laughs.

You have a lovely laugh, Gem.

GEMMA: Thanks, Marty.

MARTIN: See, just because they're off having fun it doesn't mean we can't be having some fun together too. Are you sure I can't offer you that drink?

GEMMA: Yes.

MARTIN: What, 'yes' no I can't or 'yes' yes I can?

GEMMA: 'Yes', yes you can.

MARTIN: Okay, that's the spirit! I'll go and... What would you like, white wine or...? I know, do you like sparkling, champers?

GEMMA: Yes.

MARTIN: I think I'm ready to move onto something more playful. Perhaps I should order us up a bottle of that. What do you say?

GEMMA: Wonderful!

MARTIN: Great! Okay. Don't go away, Gem.

GEMMA: I won't, Marty.

MARTIN exits through the USR doorway. GEMMA moves dreamily about the terrace. She becomes aware of her clothes and hurriedly exits through the USL doorway. She puts the water bottle on the SL patio table en route. MARTIN enters through the USR doorway.

MARTIN: Okay, all ordered and on it's... Gem? Gemma? Are you hiding somewhere? Gemma? Gem?

DIANA appears at the USL doorway. She is dressed in a lavish Moroccan outfit.

DIANA: Ta da!

MARTIN: Ah!

DIANA: We're back! What do you think, Martin? I haggled stupendously for this. You ought to see what Tom's wearing.

TOM appears at the USL doorway wearing an equally sumptuous Moroccan outfit. He holds a couple of shopping bags.

Just look at him! Doesn't he look something?

MARTIN: Yes. Tom?

DIANA: Is Gemma about?

MARTIN: Ah...

DIANA: *(Calling back through USL doorway.)* Gem, darling! Gemma!

MARTIN: You okay, Tom?

TOM: Oh yes!

DIANA: Have you seen her?

MARTIN: A moment ago, she... went inside.

DIANA: Ah. He's going to do me now... my portrait.

MARTIN: Is he?

DIANA: He is. He purchased some paints, he needed colour! Where do you want me, maestro, outside or inside?

TOM: Inside perhaps, reclining on the ottoman.

DIANA: Good idea. He's full of good ideas. Now would you like to do me in this? Or...

DIANA takes another newly-purchased outfit from the shopping bag.

...in this?

TOM: Both, they're both equally as magnificent! I'll do two portraits... five, ten, twenty!

GEMMA enters through the USL doorway. She has managed to put together a racier outfit. She carries a tube of after-sun cream and is more focussed on MARTIN than DIANA or TOM.

DIANA: Hello, Gem darling.

GEMMA: Oh, hello.

DIANA: You look... nice.

GEMMA: Thanks.

DIANA: You've been okay here, have you, alone?

GEMMA: Yes.

DIANA: Good. (*Outfit.*) What do you think of this?

GEMMA: Nice.

TOM: Come on, Di, let me do your portraits now. To the ottoman!

TOM takes DIANA's arm and leads her through the USL doorway.

DIANA: Tom! *(Off.)* Careful, Tom, I bruise easily.

GEMMA: Hi.

MARTIN: I'd thought you'd run off somewhere.

GEMMA: No, I went to get this.

MARTIN: What is it?

GEMMA: Cream, for your sunburn.

MARTIN: Oh.

GEMMA: Maybe I can... if you want me to... put it on for you?

MARTIN: Oh, oh yes, if you...?

GEMMA: Yes. *(Shirt.)* Lift up.

MARTIN: Yes. They look something, don't they? Like a couple of –

MARTIN lifts up the back of his shirt. GEMMA puts cream on her hands and puts her hands on MARTIN's back.

Oh! Oh, yes! Oh yes, that's nice! Cooling and refreshing. You have... Oh yes! A magical touch.

Sound of doorbell is heard from MARTIN's room.

Oh, there's the champers. Thanks for that, Gem, that was really... really... wonderful. Think it's made quite a difference. Yes, quite a difference. Be right back.

MARTIN exits through the USR doorway. GEMMA enjoys the moment. DIANA enters through the USL doorway.

DIANA: All right, Gem, darling?

GEMMA: Yes, thanks.

DIANA: You've dressed up. Are you going somewhere?

GEMMA: No.

DIANA: Oh. Well, you look... nice.

GEMMA: Thanks.

DIANA: (*MARTIN.*) What's... what's he doing?

TOM: (*Off. Calling.*) Where's my model gone!

GEMMA: Oughtn't you be getting back to Picasso?

DIANA: He's only painting my portrait.

GEMMA: I don't want to know.

TOM: (*Off. Calling.*) Diana!

DIANA: (*Calling.*) I'm coming! (*To GEMMA.*) Just so long as you're...

GEMMA: What?

DIANA: You know... in control... of the situation.

TOM: (*Off. Calling.*) Diana!

GEMMA: Off you go.

DIANA: (*Calling.*) Coming, Mr Impatient!

DIANA exits through the USL doorway. Sound of champagne cork popping from within the SR hotel room. GEMMA swirls about the terrace.

GEMMA: (*Sofly to herself.*) Marty, Marty, Marty... etc.

MARTIN enters through the USR doorway holding two glasses of champagne.

MARTIN: Having a little dance, are we?

GEMMA: I've been secretly learning some salsa dancing.

MARTIN: I'd join you. Trouble is I've got two left feet me.

GEMMA: It's easy, it just takes a little practice.

MARTIN: (*Giving glass.*) Here we are, Gem.

GEMMA: Thanks, Marty.

MARTIN: Well, cin cin.

GEMMA: Cin cin.

MARTIN: Here's to... What shall we drink to?
GEMMA: To being lost forever in the eternal moment!
MARTIN: Never drank to that before, but I'll go along with the sentiment.
GEMMA: Cin cin.
MARTIN: Cin cin.

They drink.

Mmm, lovely! (*Sunburn.*) Yes, that's made a big difference, thank you, Gem.

GEMMA: My pleasure.
MARTIN: Yes, they're looking quite something, aren't they? I don't know how your mother's managed to bring Tom out of his shell quite like this, but she has.
GEMMA: I want to hear more... about you, your work, your air and water purification systems.
MARTIN: Well... you're asking for it.
GEMMA: I'm listening.
MARTIN: All right. Water for instance. If I was wearing my salesman's hat... not so much nowadays.
GEMMA: Put it on.
MARTIN: Oh, okay.

MARTIN puts on an imaginary hat.

GEMMA: It suits you.
MARTIN: Thanks. Yes, I'd tell you not to drink that.

MARTIN points to the water bottle.

GEMMA: Because of the wastage?
MARTIN: And not only that –
GEMMA: I was reading that eighty-percent of plastic bottles get thrown into landfills.

MARTIN: Quite –

GEMMA: Twenty percent recycled.

MARTIN: Right –

GEMMA: What was it? Something like seventeen million barrels of oil are used in the production of plastic bottles in the USA alone.

MARTIN: Yes, and here's the good news –

GEMMA: That's mind boggling, isn't it?

MARTIN: And here's the good news, if I can get a word in.

GEMMA: Sorry, Marty, go on.

MARTIN: So the good news is... what is the good news? Yes, the good news is, when we provide a product, a simple in-house, under-sink, water filtration unit, that not only provides clear, odourless, tasteless water... which is the way water should be, but can save a small fortune in the household pocket in a few months alone. Think water, think Walker. Surname.

MARTIN shows his pendant of a large W.

Gift from the team.

GEMMA: It's lovely.

MARTIN: Well, it's just a...

GEMMA: And you're the big boss!

MARTIN: I am.

GEMMA: Do they call you 'sir', your team?

MARTIN: We tend not to be that formal.

GEMMA: I think it's wonderful what you're doing, Marty, how you're helping the environment. You deserve a big pat on the back.

MARTIN: Thanks, probably not have that pat on the back just at the moment, eh? Ouch!

GEMMA: I'd love to do something like that, something worthwhile.

MARTIN: Well you've got your shop, selling toys to children. That's

worthwhile, isn't it?

GEMMA: They're just mass produced items and most of them made in intolerable conditions for the workers.

MARTIN: Oh... well, sounds like you're maybe in the wrong place.

GEMMA: Yes.

MARTIN: Perhaps you should come and work for me instead.

GEMMA: I'd love to!

MARTIN: What?

GEMMA: I'd love to do that!

MARTIN: What, selling air and water purification systems?

GEMMA: Yes! I want to join your team!

MARTIN: Really?

GEMMA: Yes!

MARTIN: Well, you'd certainly be a welcome addition, add a bit of youthful vigour to the team... not that any of us are old, by any means, just not as young as you.

GEMMA: I'd love to!

MARTIN: Great! Perhaps we can talk about it some more on our saunter around the souks tomorrow.

GEMMA: Yes. (*Toasting.*) To air and water purification systems!

MARTIN: To air and water purification systems! First time I've made a toast to that before too. And to new recruits!

GEMMA: New recruits!

MARTIN: Well... turning into quite an unexpected evening, isn't it, this?

GEMMA: Yes. Marty?

MARTIN: Yes?

GEMMA: Will you promise not to laugh at me if I show you something?

MARTIN: Show me...?

GEMMA: They're quite... personal.

MARTIN: They?

GEMMA: Yes. It's something I don't show anyone. No one knows about them.

MARTIN: Ah, the mind boggles.

GEMMA: But promise not to laugh?

MARTIN: I won't.

GEMMA crosses to the USL doorway as DIANA enters through the USL doorway.

DIANA: All right, Gem darling?

GEMMA exits through the USL doorway.

Enjoying a little drink together?

MARTIN: We are.

DIANA: Just remember, Martin, she's nineteen.

MARTIN: Old enough to make her own decisions in life without the aid of her mother.

DIANA: Well, just remember where you are. It's not a kinky S and M dungeon, filled with borderline underage snake girls.

MARTIN: I'm sorry?

DIANA: I know what you're into. And if you try to drag my daughter into your sordid fantasies you'll be dealing with me... and her father, who happens to be an ex-international boxer.

GEMMA appears at the USL doorway. She carries a note book behind her back.

GEMMA: What do you want?

DIANA: Just came out to get a bit of fresh air.

GEMMA: Got some now?

DIANA: Yes, thank you. I'll just be in here.

TOM: (Off.) Di, Di, DI, Di, Di, DI, Di!

DIANA exits through the USL doorway.

DIANA: (Off.) Coming!

GEMMA: Promise not to tease me if I show you?

MARTIN: Cross my heart and hope to die.

GEMMA shows her notebook.

GEMMA: They're poems.

MARTIN: Ah!

GEMMA: No one knows I write them. But I want to share one with you.

MARTIN: Sure, by all means. I'm a... I'm a big fan of poetry.

GEMMA: They're mostly about environmental issues, what we're doing to the planet. But there's one about my yearning, my longing for... Well, I won't spoil it for you. Would you like to...?

MARTIN: Yes, yes, I'd love to. Read away.

GEMMA: It's called 'Love's Essence'.
(Reads.) In the earth a seed there lies
She will not bloom as much she tries
Contained within her earthly womb
Her subterranean stony tomb
She cries for light but light there's none
No life beyond this world to come

MARTIN: Well, that's –

GEMMA: (Reads.) But with the touch of mercy's hand
Water falls upon the land
It trickles down to where she sits
And kisses life into her lips
And like a mighty tide in flood
It courses through her thirsty blood
And inch by inch she pushes though
Her rocky canopy and to
The air above, her home the light

MARTIN: Bravo, that's –

GEMMA: I am that seed, I was interred
Within the ground, not seen nor heard

Until your mercy came to me
And set my prisoned sorrow free
With your elixir pure and true
Love's essence is each drop of you

That's it.

MARTIN: Well that's... wonderful, wonderful! I'm...

GEMMA: You like it?

MARTIN: I love it!

GEMMA tears the poem from her book.

GEMMA: Here, for you!

MARTIN: For me?

GEMMA: I want you to have it.

MARTIN: Well... thank you, I'm... honoured.

MARTIN takes the poem.

I'll treasure it. I couldn't write poetry to save my life. It's a bit like my dancing, two left feet. Perhaps I've got two left brains.

GEMMA: I'll teach you.

MARTIN: Poetry?

GEMMA: No, salsa.

MARTIN: Oh. I'm warning you, two left feet me.

GEMMA puts the glasses down.

GEMMA: All you need to do is this.

GEMMA demonstrates.

That's it. Now together. We hold like this. And put all that together. That's it, that's good. You're a natural.

MARTIN: I'm enjoying this.

GEMMA: Me too.

MARTIN: Oh, lost it! Well... that was... that was very... very...

They are about to kiss when DIANA appears at the USL doorway. She has changed into her other outfit.

DIANA: Well! (*Outfit.*) What do you think of this one?

GEMMA and MARTIN part, much to GEMMA's annoyance.

Perhaps I could have a brief word with my daughter, Martin... alone.

GEMMA: I don't want a word.

DIANA: I do. If you don't mind, Martin.

MARTIN: I'll just be in here.

MARTIN exits through the USR doorway.

GEMMA: What do you want?

DIANA: Are you doing this to punish me?

GEMMA: What!

DIANA: Is this what this is about? Just because I've spent the day with Tom? I'm concerned, Gem darling, that's all. Remember, he's old enough to be your father.

TOM: (*Off. Calling.*) Diana!

GEMMA: And he's young enough to be your son.

DIANA: (*Calling.*) I'm coming! (*To GEMMA.*) Just remember what he's into, his S & M, his borderline underage snake girls.

GEMMA: (*Dismissively.*) Oh!

DIANA: You may've put it out of your mind, but I haven't.

TOM: (*Off. Calling.*) Where's my Venus?

GEMMA: I won't ask what you're into in there.

DIANA: He's painting my portraits, that's all.

TOM: (*Off. Calling.*) Diana!

GEMMA: Hadn't you better be getting back to him before his brush dries?

DIANA: Remember, you're not going to see him after this holiday.
Don't do something you might regret... for the rest of your life.

GEMMA: Actually, I'm going to work for him.

DIANA: What!

GEMMA: He's asked me. I'm going to be part of his sales team in Hemel Hempstead selling air and water purification systems and there's nothing you can do to stop me.

TOM appears at the USL doorway with a drink in his hand.

TOM: You keep running off! I want you!

TOM takes DIANA's arm and pulls her back to the doorway.

DIANA: Tom! Tom, that hurts!

TOM: Come on, Di, back to the ottoman with you!

DIANA: *(To GEMMA.)* We'll discuss that one, Gemma, I don't approve, I don't approve at all.

TOM and DIANA exit through the USL doorway.

(Off.) Ow, Tom! Be gentle, be gentle with me!

GEMMA calls across to the USR doorway.

GEMMA: Marty! Marty, she's gone!

MARTIN enters from the USR doorway. He carries a portable music player, a CD and the champagne bottle.

MARTIN: Everything okay?

GEMMA: It's fine.

MARTIN: Is she...?

GEMMA: I told her I'm going to work for you.

MARTIN: How does she feel about that?

GEMMA: I don't care. It's how *I* feel that matters.

MARTIN: That's the spirit! I'll drink to that. Here we are.

MARTIN refills GEMMA's glass and then his own.

GEMMA: *(Toasting.)* To us!

MARTIN: To us! I thought since we're in a musical mood. Something I picked up on my travels yesterday. *(Holds up CD.)* 'The Spirit of Marrakech'. Give it a whirl shall we?

MARTIN puts the CD on. Music plays.

Sounds okay. Perhaps we should learn to dance to this.

GEMMA: Marty?

MARTIN: Yes?

GEMMA: You know where you went last night?

MARTIN: Just about.

GEMMA: What do they do?

MARTIN: Do?

GEMMA: What do they have there?

MARTIN: Well, it's mainly their own Moroccan cuisine.

GEMMA: No, I mean with the entertainments.

MARTIN: Entertainments?

GEMMA: I don't mind, if that's what you're into.

MARTIN: Sorry?

GEMMA: I'm not going to be judgemental. They're not underage though are they?

MARTIN: Who, the waiters?

GEMMA: No, the snake girls.

MARTIN: Snake girls! I think someone's been concocting stories about me. And I think I know who that might be.

GEMMA: So you're not into S & M and all that?

MARTIN: No. Does that disappoint you?

GEMMA: No.

MARTIN: Not with my sunburn, eh? (*Miming a whip.*) Ouch! No, I wouldn't believe anything he tells you.

GEMMA: Sit down, Marty, I'll give you some entertainment.

MARTIN: Yes?

MARTIN sits. GEMMA puts her glass down, turns the music up and starts to perform her version of a belly dance.

Ooh, a belly dance!

GEMMA's dance culminates in GEMMA sitting astride MARTIN's lap. They kiss passionately. DIANA enters through the USL doorway.

DIANA: Oh my God! Gemma!

TOM enters through the USL doorway. He holds up a colourful abstract existentialist portrait of DIANA.

TOM: My Venus!

DIANA: Oh God!

Blackout.

Act 2

Scene 1

The following morning. 9.00 a.m.

Colourful portraits of Diana adorn the SL terrace area. Some of the divide shrubs have been rearranged and used to support a couple of the pictures. There is a broken plant pot beside the SR chair. The hand mirror and TOM's water bottle remain on the SL patio table.

TOM enters through the USR doorway wearing a paint-daubed dressing gown and carrying more portraits. Brushes stick out of his pocket and his face and hands are smeared with paint. He arranges and adjusts the pictures.

V.O. YMSV: *(Off. Street below.)* Music of Marrakech: Gnawa, Arabic, Berber, Raï. All cheapest CD's. Also, rock 'n roll, hip-hop, reggae, drum and bass, garage, heavy metal, all good music. All cheapest price.

GEMMA enters from the USL doorway. She is dressed for MARTIN. TOM and GEMMA are euphoric and carefree and not particularly concerned with each other.

GEMMA: *(Pictures.)* Ugh! Morning.

TOM: Morning.

GEMMA: *(Eagerly.)* Is he up?

TOM: No idea. *(Eagerly.)* Is she?

GEMMA: No idea. You've been busy.

GEMMA moves happily about the terrace.

TOM: I don't know what you see in him.

GEMMA: He's a god come to earth. His every move has majesty, grace, beauty. His voice sends tremors deep into my soul. His eyes are like deep pools of love.

TOM: My God! What are you on?

GEMMA: You don't see it because you're blind. Anyway, I could ask you what you see in her.

TOM: You could and I'd tell you she is everything a woman should be: beautiful, sexy, commanding, gentle, passionate, inspiring, mysterious, subtle... there aren't enough words to describe her. She is... perfection.

GEMMA: If you say so.

TOM: I do.

GEMMA: I wonder how his hand is today?

TOM: I wonder what she'll be wearing today.

TOM becomes aware of his own appearance. He hurriedly exits through the USR doorway. GEMMA starts to tidy up the broken pot. DIANA enters through the USL doorway.

DIANA: *(Pictures.)* Ugh! Morning, Gem darling. Anyone around? Listen, Gem, I did it for your own good.

GEMMA: You could've killed him.

DIANA: I knew where I was aiming... his hand got in the way, that's all.

GEMMA: I'm going to do it, you can't stop me.

DIANA: I know I can't stop you, Gem darling, I just want to strongly... very strongly, persuade you not to. It's a passing infatuation with an older man.

GEMMA: It's not passing.

DIANA: It's because your father didn't live up to your expectations... or anybody's expectations for that matter.

GEMMA: It's nothing to do with that, don't bring him into it. It's love.

DIANA: How can it be love! Be reasonable, Gem darling...

DIANA notices the water bottle on the table. She picks it up.

...how can it be...?

She notices the one missing by TOM's lounge.

(More to herself.) Of course, of course, of course, of course, of course!

GEMMA: What?

DIANA: Ah... nothing.

GEMMA puts the broken pot to one side.

GEMMA: Anyway, Picasso is looking for you. Marty and I are going out today, but I'm sure you'll both be just fine without us. No doubt he wants to draw some more portraits of you... if he's got any paint left, that is.

GEMMA exits through the USL doorway.

DIANA: *(To herself.)* Okay, what to do? What to do? So Tom's infatuated with me and Gem's infatuated with Martin. So if I want Tom to fall for Gem then...

DIANA crosses the divide and is about to put the water bottle down beside TOM's sun-lounger.

No, that's no good, she's still infatuated with *him!*

She crosses back over the divide with the water bottle

So if I somehow get Gem to drink and get her to see Tom. Put some of this in her tea. I wonder if it works boiled? No that's not going to work either, Tom will still be infatuated with *me!* They both need to drink and see each other. That's it! What if it's just a one hit wonder? Once taken, that's it... forever. Oh God! There's no hope for her!

DIANA considers her own situation. She looks at one of the portraits.

I suppose I could live with it. At least I'm encouraging him to do colour. No, Diana, it's wrong! You need to fix this. But what am I going to do? Oh!

ABDUL-HAMID: *(Off. Street below.)* Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms. Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms.

DIANA crosses to the edge of the terrace and looks down.

DIANA: *(Calling down.)* Salam!

ABDUL-HAMID: *(Off.)* Salam, lady Di!

DIANA: *(Calling down.)* Abdul-Hamid, do you think you could come up a moment, I want to ask your advice about something? Hello! Hello! Abdul-Hamid!

DIANA continues to look down. ABDUL-HAMID appears on the terrace with his bag of merchandise.

ABDUL-HAMID: Salam, lady Di.

DIANA: Oh, there you are!

ABDUL-HAMID: Allah send another scorcher.

DIANA: Yes, he does... she... he?

ABDUL-HAMID: Allah is all. Excuse me.

ABDUL-HAMID crosses to the SR terrace and looks up to a window high USR.

It's okay, coast clear. No fat brother. *(Pictures.)* You do these?

DIANA: No.

ABDUL-HAMID: Interesting.

DIANA: Yes, look –

ABDUL-HAMID: You want to make more purchases?

DIANA: No, not at the moment.

ABDUL-HAMID: Lady Di try potion?

DIANA: Yes.

ABDUL-HAMID: And...? Hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo!

DIANA: Yes, well that's what I want to talk about. Does it... does it wear off after... a day or two perhaps?

ABDUL-HAMID: Wear off! No, on the contrary, passion grow more and more powerful every day.

DIANA: Oh God! Well then is it possible once I've given it to somebody to give it to them again and make them fall in love with someone else?

ABDUL-HAMID: Ah!

DIANA: Yes?

ABDUL-HAMID: No, impossible!

DIANA: Oh!

ABDUL-HAMID: You given it to someone you didn't mean to?

DIANA: Yes... well, no... well, yes.

ABDUL-HAMID: Is this a riddle?

DIANA: No, it's a bit of a mess. You wouldn't then happen to have some... antidote for it, would you, Abdul-Hamid?

ABDUL-HAMID: Antidote?

DIANA: Yes... antidote.

ABDUL-HAMID: Oh, antidote!

DIANA: You do?

ABDUL-HAMID: Of course! Everything in life has an antidote, if you know where to look.

DIANA: Then have you got it?

ABDUL-HAMID: Of course!

DIANA: Then can I have it?

ABDUL-HAMID: No...

DIANA: No?

ABDUL-HAMID: You may purchase.

DIANA: Ah, yes, of course. Wait there, I'll just get my bag.

DIANA exits through the USL doorway. ABDUL-HAMID looks at a picture. DIANA enters through the USL doorway with her bag. She takes out her purse.

Okay, how much?

ABDUL-HAMID: For antidote, three thousand.

DIANA: Three thousand!

ABDUL-HAMID: Three thousand.

DIANA: That's practically the whole of my holiday money. Okay, shall we say one thousand?

ABDUL-HAMID: Pah! Antidote worth more than that. You insult the maker!

DIANA: Okay, two thousand then. Not a penny more... or dirham.

ABDUL-HAMID: Two thousand eight-hundred and... this picture of you.

DIANA: I'm afraid that's not mine to give away.

ABDUL-HAMID: Then two thousand eight-hundred and fifty... five. Final price.

DIANA: Oh! Okay then.

ABDUL-HAMID takes a small phial out of his bag

ABDUL-HAMID: Antidote.

DIANA gives him the money.

DIANA: And you're sure this works?

ABDUL-HAMID: It will kill the passion in a moment. One drop and...

ABDUL-HAMID demonstrates sexual passion decreasing with his arm.

DIANA: And that's it?

ABDUL-HAMID: All over.

DIANA: Will there be any side effects?

ABDUL-HAMID: A little headache, dizziness perhaps, but no more.

DIANA: And will they... will they remember what happened when they were under the influence of the...?

ABDUL-HAMID: No memory. All gone! Like a dream... poof!

DIANA: I suppose it's worth it then.

ABDUL-HAMID: More purchases?

DIANA: No, I think I've done all my purchasing for today, thanks Abdul-Hamid.

ABDUL-HAMID: A pleasure doing business with you, lady Di.

DIANA: Yes, I'm sure.

ABDUL-HAMID: Ma'a salama.

DIANA: Ma'a salama.

ABDUL-HAMID exits the way he came. DIANA examines her new purchase. GEMMA enters through the USL doorway.

GEMMA: What's that?

DIANA: Oh, just some perfume I bought yesterday.

DIANA throws the phial into her bag.

Darling, I've been thinking.

GEMMA: I don't want to speak about it.

DIANA: No I'm... I'm thinking you're absolutely right, if you want to go and sell air and water purification systems in Hemel Hempstead that is completely your choice.

GEMMA: It is.

DIANA: And I'm not going to stand in your way. Of course I want what's best for you, but I'm sure Martin's a wonderful, sincere and trustworthy man who's going to take absolute care of you and has your highest interests at heart.

GEMMA: Thank you.

DIANA: I'm just being selfish. It's because I love you, Gem, and I don't want to lose you to the wilderness of Hemel Hempstead. That's all it is, darling, my selfishness. Anyway, that said, how about a drink of something? A lovely cup of tea.

GEMMA: No, thanks.

DIANA: You've got to have your morning cuppa. Gets you going for the day.

GEMMA: I'm fine.

DIANA: Lemonade then? A nice refreshing glass of lemonade.

GEMMA: No. I want you to apologise to him for throwing that pot.

DIANA: Yes, I'll make us up some lemonade and then I'll apologise.

GEMMA crosses to the USL doorway.

Where are you going?

GEMMA: To get my sunglasses.

GEMMA exits through the USL doorway. DIANA goes to fetch the phial from her bag.

DIANA: Oh no!

She takes out two identical phials.

Oh! Which one? Which one? Eeny, meeny, miny, moe, catch a tiger by the toe, if he hollers let him go, eeny, meeny, miny, moe... my mother told me to pick the very best one and you are... not it.

She throws one back in her bag and exits with the other through the USL doorway. TOM enters through the USR doorway. He has changed. He notices DIANA's bag.

TOM: *(Excited.)* Ah!

He makes a couple of adjustments to his art exhibition. GEMMA enters through the USL doorway with her sunglasses.

(Disappointed.) Oh!

GEMMA: *(Disappointed.)* Oh! He's still not up?

TOM: You'll both be gone for the day, right?

GEMMA: And maybe some of the night too.

TOM: Good. I'll tell him you're waiting.

GEMMA: Thanks. And tell him Mum's okay about us now, we've talked.

TOM: What am I, your messenger? I'll tell him.

TOM exits through the USR doorway. GEMMA picks up the hand mirror and looks at herself. She puts it down and notices the phial in DIANA's bag. She takes it out.

She removes the top and sniffs it. She is bemused by its lack of odour. She puts a drop on her finger and sniffs it again. She puts her tongue to it.

GEMMA: (Antidote working.) Ugh!

As if waking up from a heady dream, she surveys her surroundings trying to remember. She looks at the phial in her hand. She replaces the top and puts it on the table. She glances at the pictures, bemused. MARTIN enters through the USSR doorway. His hand is bandaged.

MARTIN: Hello, Gem.

GEMMA: Oh... hi.

MARTIN: How are we this morning?

GEMMA: Ah... okay, I think.

MARTIN: Champagne head?

GEMMA: What?

MARTIN: We can soon walk that off. Tom said she was okay with us now. You've had words.

GEMMA: Sorry?

MARTIN: You've chatted with your mother.

GEMMA: About what?

MARTIN: About us. Tom said. Unless he was making it up. He could've been, I suppose. Well let's hope she's not going to throw any more plant pots at me anyway. That hurt. Don't think it's broken. All the fingers are moving, which is a good sign. I tell you, if I hadn't had my hand where I did something down here might not be going anywhere for a while and that wouldn't be too good, would it, eh Gem?

MARTIN winks at GEMMA much to her disgust.

Is everything okay? You seem a bit...?

GEMMA: What?

MARTIN: Well, not the perky self you were yesterday... last night.

GEMMA: Last night?

MARTIN: Yes, you know... you and me together... having fun.

GEMMA: What kind of fun?

MARTIN: Well, surely you haven't forgotten... have you?

GEMMA: Forgotten what?

MARTIN: You know... the champagne, the salsa, the belly dance... you and me... here on the chair.

GEMMA: On the chair!

MARTIN: Yes.

GEMMA: You and me!

MARTIN: Yes.

GEMMA: Doing what?

MARTIN: You don't remember? It was a passionate kiss... well, it was for me anyway.

GEMMA: We kissed!

MARTIN: No, you're just teasing me, Gem.

GEMMA: Just... that?

MARTIN: I know you had a little bit to drink, but not enough to erase all memory, surely.

GEMMA: No... I don't believe you.

MARTIN: Well, you can always ask your mother and Tom.

GEMMA: What! They... they were... they saw us...?

MARTIN: Unfortunately, yes. (*Holding up his hurt hand.*) And the rest is history. No, come on, Gem, what's going on here?

GEMMA sits in shock. She takes the water bottle from the table and drinks.

It can only be one of two things: either you have a very low tolerance for alcohol, or you are teasing me something terrible.

GEMMA: *(Looking at MARTIN. Potion working.)* Ah!

GEMMA looks at MARTIN lovingly.

MARTIN: Ah ha! See, I knew you were just... Thought you couldn't have forgotten. You shouldn't, I'm very gullible.

GEMMA: It's Martin, isn't it?

MARTIN: Marty, yes. Now stop it, Gem.

GEMMA: Stop what?

MARTIN: Looks like I'm just going to have to get used to your sense of humour, aren't I. So... are you still up for it?

GEMMA: Up for it?

MARTIN: Yes, going out exploring the souks. You still up for that?

GEMMA: You and me?

MARTIN: Yes.

GEMMA: Oh yes!

MARTIN: Great! Well, I'm ready whenever you are. *(Water bottle.)* Oh, that's Tom's, isn't it. Thank you.

MARTIN takes the bottle from GEMMA and crosses to the SR sun-lounger to replace it.

Hopefully he hasn't noticed it missing. He's very tetchy about me touching anything of his. Well, shall I meet you down in the foyer, say in five minutes?

GEMMA: I can be ready in two.

MARTIN: Two it is. See you down there, Gem.

GEMMA: Marty.

MARTIN: You had me fooled then, Gem, you had me fooled. You're a naughty girl, a very naughty girl.

MARTIN exits through the USR doorway. GEMMA crosses towards the USL exit. She picks up the hand mirror en route and checks her face. She decides to apply some make-up. She searches through DIANA's bag and takes out a lipstick. She applies it. She

examines herself in the mirror and realises it's too much. She attempts to wipe it off with the back of her hand. She looks at her smudged hand and takes out some tissues from the bag to wipe it with. She needs to wet the tissue a little and sees the phial on the table. She takes the phial, removes the top, sniffs it and puts some drops on the tissue. She wipes her hand. It works. She puts a few more drops on the tissue and using the mirror wipes the lipstick from her lips. She licks her lips.

GEMMA: (Antidote working.) Ugh!

Once more, as if waking up from a heady dream, she surveys her surroundings, trying to remember. She looks at the phial in her hand. She replaces the top and puts it back on the table. DIANA enters through the USL doorway. She holds a glass of lemonade.

DIANA: Okay, Gem darling, before you go, a lovely refreshing glass of lemonade for you.

GEMMA: Go?

DIANA: Wherever you're going. Mine's not to ask questions, I'm not going to pry.

GEMMA: Are you all right?

DIANA: I'm perfectly all right. I'm perfectly all right with everything, I've told you.

GEMMA: Are you drunk?

DIANA: Drunk! No, I'm very sober, thank you.

GEMMA: You're acting strangely.

DIANA: I think we're all acting a little strangely, darling, but that's by the bye.

GEMMA: (Pictures.) What are all these pictures doing? Are they supposed to be of you?

DIANA: I know, don't. Drink this.

GEMMA: I don't want to.

DIANA: I'm not letting you take one step further without being properly hydrated for the day. I'm your mother and I care about you and

I'm not going to see a daughter of mine die of dehydration in Marrakech!

GEMMA: Okay, calm down, I'll drink it.

DIANA: Thank you, thank you, thank you!

GEMMA drinks the lemonade. DIANA studies her.

GEMMA: *(Looking at DIANA. Potion working.)* Ah!

DIANA: Gem?

GEMMA: Oh, Mum! Oh, Mum!

DIANA: Gem?

GEMMA: I love you! I love you! I love you so much!

GEMMA puts the glass down on the table and throws her arms around DIANA.

DIANA: Oh no! Gem let go, darling, you're strangling me!

GEMMA: What did I do to deserve such a wonderful mum!

DIANA: Gemma! *(More to herself.)* How is this happening?

DIANA sees the phial on the table. She picks it up.

Oh no!

TOM enters from the USSR doorway.

TOM: Diana! My Diana! My Goddess!

DIANA: Morning, Tom. Gemma, let go, love!

TOM: I've been up all night painting you.

DIANA: Yes, so I see. Gemma, let go!

GEMMA: I can't, Mum, I can't, I just want to be with you always, hugging you!

DIANA: Then not round the neck, down here.

DIANA slides GEMMA's arms down to around her waist.

And not too tightly.

TOM: *(Explaining pictures.)* This one is a representation of you as an abstraction, but still I've tried to capture your essential beauty in a physical context –

DIANA: Yes, it's –

TOM: This one I've played with the void and spatial reductionism. Just your eyes are visible, just your beautiful eyes.

DIANA: Thank you, Tom.

GEMMA: Mum, what shall we do today?

From this point their dialogue overlaps.

TOM: This one I've put you into a context that juxtaposes beauty, your beauty, with elemental uncertainty –

DIANA: Oh –

GEMMA: Let's go shopping, Mum –

TOM: But that's not saying that anything about you is uncertain –

DIANA: No –

GEMMA: That would be good, wouldn't it? –

TOM: Just the contextual framework which represents the instability of life –

GEMMA: We can pick up some beautiful outfits for us both –

TOM leads DIANA by the arm as he takes her on a tour of his art. GEMMA takes DIANA's other hand.

DIANA: Yes –

TOM: This one I've captured an expression of you in a dichotomy of form and formlessness –

GEMMA: Get loads of trinkets and souvenirs to take home with us –

TOM: One part of you is fragmented by time while another part of you lives in the eternal now-ness of expression –

GEMMA: Maybe even a carpet, if we can take it back with us –

TOM: Now this one was a bit more of an experiment –

GEMMA: Mum –

TOM: What I've tried to do here, is place you in a –

GEMMA: What do you say, Mum? Anything you want to do.

TOM: Although I want to know if you feel I've captured you in the way that portrays –

GEMMA: Mum! Mum!

DIANA: *(Commandingly.)* Okay, enough!

TOM and GEMMA fall silent. They stare lovingly at DIANA.

Tom... Gemma... I need to... You ought to know... I should... Okay, perhaps just for today we can all go out together.

TOM: Together!

GEMMA: Together!

DIANA: It's what I would like, Tom, Gemma. Neither of you would deny me what I want, would you?

TOM: No.

GEMMA: No.

DIANA: Okay, good.

DIANA takes her bag. She drops the phial inside it and puts on her sunglasses.

Well I'm ready, if you cats are. Let's go!

DIANA exits through the USL doorway followed closely by GEMMA and TOM. After a couple of moments MARTIN enters through the USR doorway.

MARTIN: Gemma? Gem are you hiding somewhere, teasing me again?

MARTIN crosses the divide.

(Calling towards the USL doorway.) Gemma? Are you in there?

He puts his head through the USL doorway.

Gemma? Gem? Gemma? Anybody home? Anyone?

He turns back towards the terrace.

Hmm.

He picks up the hand mirror and looks at it. He checks his teeth and his tongue. He cups his hand and checks his breath. He picks up the lemonade to freshen his mouth and drinks. He sees his face in the mirror.

(To himself in mirror. Potion working.) Ah!

A broad grin crosses his face.

Who is that man! You sexy beast you! Yes you! Yes you!

Lights down.

Scene 2

That afternoon. 5.00 p.m.

A full length mirror is placed on the SR terrace. The glass of lemonade and the hand mirror are gone.

Sound of champagne cork popping from within the SR hotel room.

MARTIN: *(Off.)* Ha ha! Some more of this! Fill my vessel full, slave girl! Full, I say, full! Good, you have redeemed yourself, I will not thrash you. Not this time.

MARTIN enters through the USR doorway. He has attempted to make himself look like a sultan by wrapping a bed-sheet about himself. He wears a turban made out of a pillowcase or something similar with a curtain cord to hold it in place. He holds a glass of champagne, not his first, and also the hand mirror. He uses both mirrors to admire himself when the whim strikes him.

I am the sultan, whatever I command is done. No quibbling or off with their heads! Off with them! Off! Beg for mercy, grovel at my feet and I might show some... if it pleases me. Today it doesn't, so off with his head!... And his!... And his! Slave girls bring me fruit. Not those ones, they have pips in! And these have stones in! Will you break my beautiful teeth! Now dancers dance for me. Yes, that's good, the sultan is well pleased. You may all come to my bed chamber tonight. Yes, even you. *(Pictures.)* Who is this royal artist! Off with his head immediately for adorning my palace with such monstrosities!

MARTIN puts his glass down and takes a couple of pictures from the divide. He tosses them disdainfully onto the SL terrace area.

Now I will have my customary stroll about my palace grounds. See how my loyal subjects wave to me, their glorious ruler. Ah, there's my royal peacocks, my royal fountains, my royal gardeners. No need to bow so low, old man, I exempt you... save it for your weeding. Good. Now, before tonight's revelries I will go and rest. Slaves, attend me! Bring my drink. I said bring my drink!

MARTIN fetches his glass from the table and exits through the USR doorway. DIANA enters through the USL doorway. She flops in a chair.

DIANA: Oh, exhausted! I can't keep this up! I shouldn't keep this up. You're bad, Diana, bad! I should do the right thing... however disappointing that might be.

TOM enters through the USL doorway.

TOM: You must be ready for your shoulder rub now, Di.

DIANA: Oh... yes.

TOM goes to massage DIANA's shoulders. GEMMA enters through the USL doorway.

GEMMA: I've laid all your purchases out on the bed, Mum, ready for you to have your catwalk.

DIANA: Thanks, Gem, I will in a minute, I just need – Ow, Tom! Not so forcefully.

TOM: Sorry.

GEMMA: Let me give you a foot rub.

GEMMA slips off DIANA's shoes and rubs her feet.

DIANA: Yes, that's good, Gem, but not too hard. No, that's too hard! Ow, Tom! (*Getting up.*) Now look, listen... You two just stop for a moment, just sit down and relax and I'll get you both a nice refreshing glass of lemonade.

GEMMA: I can do it, Mum, you sit down.

DIANA: No, I'll do it, you sit down! Both of you... draw some breath. (*Noting phial in her bag.*) Now, antidote.

GEMMA: What's that?

DIANA: Nothing. Now, won't be a mo.

DIANA exits through the USL doorway. TOM and GEMMA suddenly have the same idea. They both make a B-line for the USL sun-lounger. TOM gets there first and pushes GEMMA away.

GEMMA: Ow, brute!

TOM: Too slow! She doesn't want you hanging around, you know, she wants to be with me.

GEMMA: That's not true.

TOM: It is!

GEMMA: Isn't! You're just saying that because you want her all to yourself. She's my mother.

TOM: What was wrong with *him*?

GEMMA: Who?

TOM: My dad.

GEMMA: Your dad!

TOM: Fickle little thing, aren't you? As inconstant as the British weather.

GEMMA: I've no idea what you're talking about.

MARTIN enters through the USR doorway. He holds his glass of champagne and the hand mirror.

MARTIN: (*To himself.*) I cannot sleep. My royal head is filled with thoughts of internecine strife and impending foreign wars. I must think... and drink.

He sits in one of the chairs. TOM and GEMMA look at him in a bemused way. DIANA enters through the USL doorway with two glasses of lemonade.

DIANA: Now... (*Seeing MARTIN.*) Oh, hello there. I think I owe you an apology. I'm sorry I... I was just trying to be a good mother, that's all. Anyway sorry. I hope it gets better soon... your hand.

MARTIN waves DIANA away.

(To TOM and GEMMA.) Now... before you drink this, both of you, I'd just like to say I've had a wonderful time. With you, Tom, last night was... well, you made me feel very... desirable.

TOM: Oh, you are!

DIANA: Thank you, Tom. And, Gem, I'll remember these few brief hours with you as... well, as the daughter I never had.

GEMMA: I love you, Mum.

DIANA: I love you too, Gem. Now, drink before I change my mind.

DIANA crosses to the USL doorway.

TOM: Di?

GEMMA: Mum?

DIANA: Drink! I'll be with you in a mo.

DIANA watches from the USL doorway as TOM and GEMMA drink.

TOM: *(Antidote working.)* Ugh!

GEMMA: *(Antidote working.)* Ugh!

Disoriented, they both survey their surroundings. DIANA exits through the USL doorway.

TOM: What... what's going on?

GEMMA: What are you...?

TOM: I... *(Glass of lemonade.)* I don't want this, thanks.

TOM gives the glass to GEMMA.

GEMMA: It's not mine.

TOM notices the pictures. He picks one up.

Did you do those?

TOM: No.

TOM quickly puts picture down and crosses to the SR terrace.

(To MARTIN.) Dad?

MARTIN: Are you talking to me?

TOM: Why are you dressed like a... like an idiot?

MARTIN: Insolent boy! I'll have you whipped! No way to address your sultan.

TOM: What?

MARTIN: Away!

TOM: You're pissed.

MARTIN: Oh, these commoners! Whipping's too good for them. Too good.

MARTIN exits through the USR doorway. GEMMA looks on, bemused. TOM sits on the sun-lounger and puts his head in his hands.

TOM: Oh God, I feel like...

He takes his water bottle and drinks.

GEMMA: This isn't my lemonade.

TOM: *(Seeing GEMMA. Potion working.)* Ah!

GEMMA: What?

Lights down.

Scene 3

That evening. 11.00 p.m.

The pictures, TOM's water bottle and the lemonade glasses have been removed.

TOM paces the USR terrace. He checks his watch. He crosses to the USL terrace and looks across to the USL doorway.

TOM: *(To himself.)* Gemma, Gemma, Gemma, Gemma, Gemma!
(Going down on his knee.) I love you, Gemma, I love you! Be mine! Be mine! *(Sniffing his shirt.)* Oh, sweaty!

TOM hurries through the USR doorway, checking his hair in the full length mirror en route. GEMMA and DIANA enter through the USL doorway. They both look across to the USR terrace.

DIANA: I think you should just talk to him at least. Like I say –

GEMMA: Like *I* say, I don't want to talk about him.

DIANA: Gem –

GEMMA: How can he be so smitten so all of a sudden?

DIANA: I know it's hard to... Well that's men sometimes, capricious creatures.

GEMMA: He's barely said two words to me before tonight.

DIANA: Well... he's obviously been supressing it and now it's suddenly all... coming out.

GEMMA: I say he's drunk or on drugs.

DIANA: Boys don't have to be drunk or on drugs to fall in love with you, Gem darling. You mustn't think like that.

GEMMA: He was obviously absolutely besotted with you up until not too long ago judging by all those hideous portraits he's painted of you.

DIANA: He was probably just doing that to get closer to you. I'm telling you, Gem, men go about things in a very irrational way sometimes, though they'd love to think of themselves as the logical sex.

GEMMA: I don't want to talk about him. I'm just going to ignore him.

DIANA: I don't think that's going to help, Gem darling.

TOM enters through the USSR doorway. He has changed his shirt. He crosses to the divide.

TOM: Hi.

DIANA: Good evening, Tom. We've just been for a delicious dinner. Place across the road. You ought to go there with... with your dad sometime. How's his hand? Getting better I hope. He certainly looked something earlier, dressed up like a Bedouin, wasn't he? Well... I'm just going to get myself a nightcap.

GEMMA: Mum!

DIANA exits through the USL doorway.

TOM: How are you? Gemma?

GEMMA: Are you talking to me?

TOM: Why do you scorn me? Have I said anything –

GEMMA: I don't want to talk to you. And I don't want you to talk to me.

TOM: I would cut out my tongue if it meant not talking to you.

GEMMA: What!

TOM: There would be no place for it in my head.

GEMMA: You are drunk.

TOM: I'm only drunk when I look at you. You intoxicate me.

GEMMA: Please. Save your clever chat up lines for... people in your own high circle of artistic friends you may have. It doesn't work on me.

TOM: Gemma –

GEMMA: Look, I know what this is, what you're doing. You're bored, you want to get a little holiday fun. You've tried it with my mum and now you're trying it with me.

TOM: Your mum! No, it's you, Gemma, you. You're the only one I have eyes for.

GEMMA: Oh please, just...

TOM: How can I prove it? How can I prove to you how true... how true and sincere my heart is? Gemma, set me a test, ask me to do anything and I'll do it.

GEMMA: Yes, go away.

TOM: Anything but that. Don't send me out of the light and into darkness.

GEMMA: Good God! Do these lines really work for you?

TOM: Gemma, what do you want me to say? I can only speak from my heart. Teach me a simpler language and I'll speak it. But when I look at you, into your eyes –

GEMMA: Has she paid you to do this... to say this?

TOM: What?

GEMMA: She's paid you, hasn't she, my mother?

TOM: No. I swear, I swear she hasn't. On my life! (*Heart.*) I speak from here, from here.

GEMMA: Look, just... leave me alone!

TOM: Gemma, don't go! Please, don't go!

GEMMA: You're so fake! You're a lying, manipulative, game-playing... chancer!

TOM dejectedly falls to his knees.

It may've worked on her but it's not going to work on me. I don't want you to talk to me or come near me for the rest of the time I'm here, okay? Okay?

TOM starts to weep.

Oh God!

GEMMA crosses to the USL doorway. She looks back.

You can stop now, I've gone.

TOM continues to weep.

What do you want? What is it you want from me!

TOM stands and walks to the edge of the terrace. He stretches his arms out as if he is going to jump.

Tom? Tom, what are you doing? Tom, stop! Are you mad!

TOM: If I can't have you then life means nothing to me.

GEMMA: Come away from the edge, Tom! Tom!

GEMMA hurries to him and grabs his hand. She pulls him back from the edge.

What drugs are you on?

TOM falls to his knees in front of her.

TOM: Gemma, I'm on you! Can't you see that! Can't you see! I love you, Gemma! I love you, Gemma! (*Shouting out to the world.*) I love Gemma!

GEMMA: Shhh! Tom!

MARTIN enters through the USSR doorway. He is bruised and bleeding and his sheets are scuffed and torn. He holds the hand mirror and looks at himself.

MARTIN: Oh! My face! My face! Look what they've done to my face!

GEMMA: Oh God!

MARTIN: Oh!

GEMMA: What happened?

MARTIN: They attacked me.

GEMMA: Who?

MARTIN: The people, the people out there.

GEMMA: You went out like that!

MARTIN: My face! Look at my face!

GEMMA: Tom, come and see to your Dad. Look at him!

MARTIN: My face!

TOM looks lovingly at GEMMA.

GEMMA: Not me, him! We need to get him inside, clean him up. Help me.

TOM: *(To GEMMA.)* You're beautiful!

MARTIN: I'm not, I'm ruined! Ruined!

GEMMA: *(To TOM.)* Help me!

GEMMA and TOM help MARTIN through the USSR doorway.

That's it, this way.

MARTIN: *(Exiting. Crying out.)* My face! My beautiful face!

Lights down.

Scene 4

The following afternoon. 4.00 p.m.

DIANA lies on her sun-lounger. She reads a magazine. She is restless and bored. She throws the magazine down and wanders about the terrace. She looks towards the USSR doorway.

ABDUL-HAMID: *(Off. Street below.)* Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms. Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms.

DIANA: *(To herself.)* Not today, thank you.

She takes her mobile from her bag and checks for messages. There are none.

(To herself.) Well, it's not wrong, is it? She's happy. So is he. Okay, it wouldn't have happened if he hadn't... But that doesn't mean it might *not* have happened... eventually... sometime in the next three days. No, who are you kidding, Diana, it would never have happened. With me neither... with him. Don't get jealous, Di, I know you. Just because he's lavishing his unwavering attentions on her and taking no notice of you whatsoever is nothing to get upset about. You've had your fun, Diana, now it's Gem's turn. No, it's not because of that, it's because it's wrong, he's drugged, and that's wrong, plain and simple. It's an un-level playing field. Okay she's happy, but... if she ever found out... How could she find out? I'm not going to tell her... am I? God, she'd kill me... No, Diana, you need to tell her now... or never. Oh!

MARTIN enters through the USSR doorway. He wears a hotel dressing gown and holds the hand mirror. His face has been cleaned up but there is bruising. He wears sunglasses.

Oh, good morning.

MARTIN barely acknowledges DIANA. He sits and looks at his face in the mirror.

Heard you got into a bit of a scrape last night. Oh well, all adds to the holiday stories, doesn't it, down at the Dog and Duck, or wherever your local happens to be. Good the kids seem to be getting on so well, eh? Who'd have thought it? Not me. You'd think, on the surface, they'd be pretty mismatched but love is blind, eh? If it is love that is. Mustn't assume, must we? Quiet one on the terrace for you today then? Me too. I've done my

purchasing for the week. Now it's just... catching up on the old tan. Yes... Well... nice to chat.

Sound of GEMMA and TOM laughing and having fun from within SL hotel room.

Ah, sounds like they're back. Look forward to hearing their adventures together, eh?

GEMMA enters through the USL doorway followed by TOM. GEMMA wears a newly purchased outfit and TOM carries a stuffed toy camel.

GEMMA: We're back! (*Outfit.*) What do you think?

DIANA: It's lovely, darling. Goodness, Tom, what have you got there!

GEMMA: A souvenir he bought for me. We'll probably never be able to get it on the plane but he insisted on buying it. We've been all around the markets, we must've seen everything. We had our palms read. I'm going to have five children and Tom's going to have five children too.

DIANA: Goodness, five!

GEMMA: I even held a live snake and you know how much I'm scared of snakes.

DIANA: I do. Listen, Gem, we need to have a little chat.

GEMMA: Tom and I are going out for dinner.

TOM: I'll go and have that shower and I'll be back in five.

GEMMA: Okay.

TOM and GEMMA take each others hands and kiss.

DIANA: Better make that ten minutes, Tom.

GEMMA: Mum, we want to go out.

DIANA: Ten.

TOM: Okay.

TOM stands the stuffed camel on his own sun-lounger and then exits through the USR doorway without acknowledging MARTIN.

GEMMA: What is it? I want to have a shower and get changed.

DIANA: Okay, right... Well, it's difficult to know quite where to start.

GEMMA: Mum!

DIANA: I'll just say it... You won't like it, but... I'll just say it.

GEMMA: Say what?

DIANA: It's about Tom.

GEMMA: Yes?

DIANA: You may want to sit down for this, Gem.

GEMMA: I'm happy standing. What about Tom? Mum!

DIANA: Tom's infatuation with you.

GEMMA: Yes?

DIANA: It's not quite as it may seem... that is, it seems to be something that it actually... isn't.

GEMMA: Mum, stop being cryptic.

DIANA: Okay, hear me out, Gem, hear me... Are you sure you don't want to sit?

GEMMA: No!

DIANA: Okay, the other day I was given a... a love potion from a street trader. I didn't think there was anything in it. No doubt a palmed off version of one of those quack 'promise the moon' things one purchases, one *can* purchase, on mock pharmaceutical websites, you know the kind of... Well, perhaps you don't. Anyway, I thought I'd humour myself, give it a try, so I... foolishly in hindsight, put a little into Tom's water bottle. I really didn't think anything would come of it... but it did. Tom drank it and since I happened to be the person he first saw, which is how the potion works apparently, Tom fell head-over-heels in... infatuation with me. And then what happened with you and... (*MARTIN.*) Well, that's by the bye now. So, the next day, yesterday, I, to put things right, managed to purchase an antidote which slightly got confused with... Anyway, the long and the short of it is, Tom has managed to... imbibe some more of the original love potion and has now fallen... head-over-heels in... infatuation with you.

- GEMMA: *(Laughing.)* Oh, Mum!
- DIANA: I know it sounds a little far fetched.
- GEMMA: Just a little.
- DIANA: Gemma, darling, I can... I can prove it. I've got the potions here, the original and the antidote.
- GEMMA: Mum, why are you doing this? You're jealous because I've met someone at last, someone who wants to give me all their love, someone who wants to spend every minute of every day with me for the rest of our lives together and you can't stand it. Why don't you just come out and say it, Mum, that you're jealous? Jealous! Jealous! Jealous!
- DIANA: Okay, Gemma, I promise I will not say another word about this if you will just indulge me for five minutes.
- GEMMA: Mum!
- DIANA: Five minutes.
- GEMMA: To prove what?
- DIANA: To prove Tom's love is not... what you think it is.
- GEMMA: I don't like this, Mum, I don't like this at all.
- DIANA: And neither do I, Gem darling, believe me. Gem?
- GEMMA: Five minutes.
- GEMMA sits angrily. DIANA goes to her bag. She takes out a phial.*
- DIANA: Okay, this is the... the...
- She takes out the other phial. She has mixed them up again.*
- Oh God! Okay, it's all right, we can do a preliminary run.
(MARTIN.) On him.
- GEMMA: He's not well.
- DIANA: This will perk him up a bit... *one* of these will anyway. Okay, let's try this one. I'll put this one here, so we don't get them confused... again.

DIANA puts one of the phials on the SL table and keeps hold of the other.

Okay. Let's see what this does. Are you watching?

GEMMA: Oh yes, I'm watching.

DIANA: *(To MARTIN.)* Hello? Martin? Ah... I've got something you may want to try. It's a beautiful spirit of Marrakech. Quite delicious. It has magical medicinal properties apparently. It's very good on facial bruising.

MARTIN: It will heal my face?

DIANA: And the rest.

MARTIN crosses to the divide and takes the phial.

Just a little on your finger.

MARTIN puts his hand out. DIANA puts some of contents of the phial on MARTIN's finger.

Careful. Now, in the mouth.

MARTIN sucks on his finger.

MARTIN: *(Antidote working.)* Ugh!

DIANA: Okay, wrong one.

DIANA crosses to the SL table and swaps the phials.

MARTIN: What...? Oh, my head! *(Touching his face.)* Ow, my face! Hello, Gem. What happened?

DIANA: You had a bad fall.

MARTIN: Did I! When?

DIANA: Just now.

MARTIN: How?

DIANA: Don't speak, just... drink this.

MARTIN: What is it?

DIANA: It's a very strong pain killer. Don't worry, I use it all the time. Just put a little on you finger.

MARTIN: On my finger?

DIANA: It's incredibly strong, that's all that's needed.

MARTIN: Are you sure?

DIANA: Trust me, Martin, I used to be a nurse.

MARTIN puts his hand out. DIANA puts some of contents of the phial on MARTIN's finger.

Hold steady. Now in the mouth.

MARTIN sucks on his finger.

MARTIN: *(Seeing Potion working.)* Ah!

DIANA: There we go.

MARTIN: Beautiful, beautiful lady!

DIANA: That'll be me.

MARTIN: You're a vision of –

DIANA: Loveliness?

MARTIN: Yes!

DIANA: Exquisite perfection?

MARTIN: Yes!

DIANA: A radiant goddess perhaps?

MARTIN: Oh yes! I couldn't have put it better myself.

DIANA: Would you say you're infatuated with me?

MARTIN: Oh, too weak a word for what I feel.

MARTIN takes DIANA's hand and kisses it and her arm.

DIANA: And do you want to spend every minute of every day with me for the rest of our lives together?

MARTIN: Nothing would please me more.

DIANA: (To GEMMA.) Sound familiar. Now, Martin, let go please.

DIANA exchanges the phials.

MARTIN: Where are you going?

DIANA: I'll be back in just one tick.

DIANA sprinkles some of the antidote on the back of her hand.

I'm back.

MARTIN: I've missed you!

DIANA holds her hand out. MARTIN takes it and kisses.

(Antidote working.) Ugh!

DIANA withdraws her hand.

MARTIN: What...? Oh, my head! *(Touching his face.)* Ow, my face! Hello, Gem. What happened?

DIANA: You had a bad fall.

MARTIN: Did I! When?

DIANA: You need to sit down, you've been wandering around, deliriously.

MARTIN: Have I?

DIANA: You have. Sit down, over there.

MARTIN: *(Full length mirror.)* What's this doing out here?

DIANA looks at GEMMA.

GEMMA: I'm sorry, but that doesn't prove anything.

MARTIN: *(Seeing himself.)* My face! Look at me!

GEMMA: It's obviously something you've set up with him.

DIANA: Gemma, I'm telling you the truth.

MARTIN: Oh!

TOM enters through the USR doorway.

Tom? What happened to me?

TOM: You were beaten up. *(To GEMMA.)* I'm ready.

MARTIN: Beaten up by who... by whom? Tom!

TOM: By people... I don't know... maybe monkeys.

MARTIN: Monkeys!

TOM: You were beaten up, that's all I know.

MARTIN: Oh!

MARTIN exits through the USSR doorway.

TOM: Ready?

GEMMA: Not quite. Mum's been delaying me with her desperate games.

DIANA has sprinkled more of the antidote on her hand.

DIANA: Tom, will you kiss my hand?

TOM: Kiss your hand?

GEMMA: Mum!

DIANA: If a lady offers her hand a gentleman must kiss it.

GEMMA: Mum!

TOM: Of course. You're the mother of this beautiful vision, I'll kiss it a thousand times.

TOM kisses DIANA's hand.

(Antidote working.) Ugh!

DIANA withdraws her hand.

DIANA: Tom?

TOM: What's going on?

DIANA: Gemma wants to ask you something. Ask Tom how he feels about you, Gem.

TOM: What's happening?

DIANA: Gem? Go on.

GEMMA: Tom?

TOM: What?

GEMMA: Well... how do you feel about me?

TOM: What?

GEMMA: Tell my mum how you feel.

TOM: About you?

GEMMA: Yes. Tom?

TOM: I don't feel anything about you. I don't know you, do I? If I did I probably wouldn't feel much, I suppose. Look... ask somebody else. Excuse me, I need to...

GEMMA bursts into tears and hurries to the door.

DIANA: Gemma!

She exits through the USL doorway.

TOM: What's wrong with her?

DIANA: *(What could've been.)* Oh, Tom!

DIANA hurries after GEMMA.

Gemma! Gem, darling!

DIANA exits through the USL doorway. TOM is bemused. He notices the stuffed camel sitting on his sun-lounger.

TOM: What the...!

Lights down.

Scene 5

The following morning. 10.30 a.m.

MARTIN sits in a chair on the SR terrace. He reads his book. He wears dark glasses and is having trouble with his stomach.

ABDUL-HAMID: *(Off. Street below.)* Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms. Gold bracelets, silver bracelets, amulets, talismans, lucky charms.

TOM enters through the USR doorway. He carries his drawing materials and a glass of water. He puts the glass on the table for MARTIN.

MARTIN: Oh thanks, Tom, very kind of you.

TOM crosses to the sun-lounger. He sits and looks through his work.

Yes, trip to the dentist first thing I think on return. *(Stomach.)*
Oh, don't know what this is though.

TOM: It's spicy food, it doesn't agree with you, you know that.

MARTIN: Yes, Tom, it is. You're right... as usual.

TOM: That and the booze.

MARTIN: True, Tom, and today I'm going to turn over a new leaf, I'm going to get myself back into shape, no more little indulgences.

TOM: Little!

MARTIN: Yes, Tom, just you... just you... *(Clutching stomach.)* Oh! Excuse me.

MARTIN hurriedly exits through the USR doorway. GEMMA enters through the USL doorway. She carries her book. She and Tom exchange a look. A fraction more lingering than previous exchanges. They look away. GEMMA sits in one of the chairs and reads her book. TOM resumes reviewing his work. He becomes despondent. He looks across to GEMMA. He considers for a moment before getting up and approaching the divide.

TOM: It's... Gemma, isn't it?

GEMMA: Sorry?

TOM: You, your name.

GEMMA: Yes.

TOM: Do you mind if I...? Can I ask you something?

GEMMA: What?

TOM: *(Showing his work.)* These.

GEMMA: Yes?

TOM: What do you think...? I'm too close to them.

GEMMA: You're asking me to give an opinion on your art?

TOM: No. Just a... Yes, a... Your opinion. Doesn't mean I'll...

GEMMA: Well, in my opinion, I think they're pretty... grotesque. But maybe that's the effect you were trying to achieve. I'm no expert on existential abstraction, or whatever you call it.

TOM: Abstract existentialism.

GEMMA: Sorry... if I've offended.

TOM returns to his lounge and continues to review his work. GEMMA resumes her reading. DIANA enters through the USL doorway. She wears her exercise outfit and carries her bag. GEMMA ignores her.

DIANA: Morning, Gem. Morning, Tom.

TOM half-heartedly raises a hand.

Well... *(To GEMMA.)* Any sign of the sultan this morning? Lovely day... again. Okay... I don't know about you, but I fancy a nice cup of tea before my morning exercise. Can I get you one, Gem? Gem?

GEMMA: No... thanks.

DIANA: Right. Right.

DIANA exits through the USL doorway. GEMMA looks across to TOM. She gets up and takes a step towards the divide.

GEMMA: Listen... I'm sorry, that was... rude. I shouldn't have been so... outspoken.

TOM: No, it's... I did ask... for it.

GEMMA: It's not that I think they're... grotesque. It's just... if I were you I'd probably want to get out of my head a bit and draw things more from... from life.

TOM: But that's not what I do.

GEMMA: I'm just saying... if I were you, but I'm not, so...

TOM: Yes.

GEMMA: Yes. *(Hesitates.)* Tom?

TOM: Hm?

GEMMA: What... what do remember about... about yesterday?

TOM: Yesterday? Why?

GEMMA: Do you remember being with anybody? Going out... exploring the markets? Having fun?

TOM: Me? *(Considers.)* No.

GEMMA: Ah. *(Hesitates.)* I had a wonderful day yesterday. I met a wonderful man who told me how besotted he was with me, who looked after me as if his life depended on it. He bought me things and told me how special I was and when we kissed we both just wanted the world to stop. That was my day yesterday.

TOM: Good. So where is he now, this...?

GEMMA: I woke up. It was just a dream.

TOM: Oh. You made it sound like it actually happened.

GEMMA: Well, anyway, sorry, don't mean to be rude. Just my opinion.

GEMMA crosses back to her chair. TOM briefly reviews his work again. He throws the pad down and stands. He looks over the edge of the terrace and then across to GEMMA. GEMMA notices. TOM looks away.

TOM: *(Awkwardly.)* Um... What... What are you doing today?

GEMMA: Me? I'm... reading my book.

TOM: Oh.

GEMMA: Why?

TOM: I... I just wondered... if you... if you wanted to...

GEMMA: What?

TOM: Have a... have a look round the... what do you call them?

GEMMA: The souks.

TOM: Yeah.

GEMMA: With... you?

TOM: Well... yes.

GEMMA: You and...?

TOM: Only if... if you...

GEMMA: Just to have a look around?

TOM: Yes. We could, if you wanted, have some... some breakfast maybe, if... if... you wanted to have some...

GEMMA: Okay.

TOM: Okay.

GEMMA: Okay.

TOM: Okay. I'll... meet you down in the foyer in five minutes.

GEMMA: Okay.

TOM crosses to USR doorway as MARTIN enters.

MARTIN: That's better.

TOM: I'm going out. Have a nice day.

TOM slaps MARTIN on the back affectionately as he passes.

MARTIN: *(Sunburn.)* Ah!

TOM: Sorry.

TOM exits through the USR doorway. MARTIN sits. GEMMA crosses to the USL doorway. DIANA enters with a cup of tea.

DIANA: Sure I can't entice you, Gem, darling?

GEMMA: No, I'm... I'm going out.

DIANA: Oh! Where?

GEMMA: Out.

DIANA: Alone?

GEMMA: No, with Tom.

DIANA: Tom! Have you...?

GEMMA: What?

DIANA: With the...?

DIANA points to her bag.

GEMMA: No, I haven't. He asked me, thank you. Have a nice day.

GEMMA exits through the USL doorway. DIANA takes the phial from her bag. She sees no evidence of it being used.

DIANA: Hm. *(To phial.)* And you... you are staying right there.

DIANA throws the phial back into her bag.

(To MARTIN.) Morning.

MARTIN: Oh... morning.

DIANA: Another lovely one. Doing anything fun today?

MARTIN: No, nothing fun today. Just sitting here... nursing my wounds.

DIANA: Ah. Kids have gone off together.

MARTIN: Have they!

DIANA: Well, it's good they're getting on... at last. Maybe a little holiday romance in the making. They better move fast, only two days to go. Better do my exercise before it heats up too

much. I never miss a day... try not to. Do you want to join me?

MARTIN: No... thanks.

DIANA starts her exercises. MARTIN holds his stomach again and exits through the USSR doorway. DIANA gives up on her exercise. She goes to her bag and checks her mobile. There are no messages. She throws the phone back into the bag. She moves about the terrace restlessly. She looks across to MARTIN's water glass. She wrestles with her conscience for a few seconds before taking the phial from her bag.

DIANA: *(To herself.)* Well... you're on holiday, aren't you, Di? There's no harm in it... just for a day... or two. And I've got the antidote at hand if things go... wrong.

DIANA hurriedly crosses to the USSR doorway. She briefly looks through. She then puts a couple of drops from the phial into MARTIN's water glass. She checks the glass and then hurries back to the SL terrace. She returns the phial to the bag.

You naughty boy! Spank! Spank!

She takes out her lipstick and a mirror. She stops before she applies it.

Well this isn't exactly necessary, is it?

She throws the lipstick back in the bag. MARTIN enters through the USSR doorway. DIANA continues with her exercise. MARTIN takes the water glass and crosses to the edge of his terrace to take in the view. MARTIN drinks.

V.O. YMSV: *(Off. Street below.)* Music of Marrakech: Gnawa, Arabic Berber, Raï –

MARTIN: *(Looking down at YMSV. Potion working.)* Ah!

DIANA: Oh no!

V.O. YMSV: *(Off. Street below.)* Rugs, djellabahs, Moroccan slippers, straw hats. All cheapest price. Hello, mister, you take a look?

MARTIN: Yes I will, yes I will! Wait there! Wait there!

MARTIN hurries through the USSR exit stopping to clutch his stomach on the way.

DIANA:

Oh! Wait! Oh!

DIANA hurries towards the USL doorway. She returns for her bag.

Oh! Diana! Diana!

She hurriedly exits through the USL doorway.

Lights down.

Curtain.