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For Megan
Cast of Characters

GIRL
GUY
KIM
HANK
DONNA
LYLE
JULIA
DEWEY
JACKIE
ALEX
CLEO
PAUL

Setting

Primarily in a restaurant; briefly in a couple of apartments.

Time

Now.

Author’s Note

This play was originally written with the intention of having one actor play the role of Girl, another play the role of Guy, and ten actors play the rest of the roles. A fun option would be to cast the play using four actors total, with the ten named characters split between two quick-change artists.

Each date can be staged using the same two small dinner tables, with Guy and Girl facing away from each other.
Acknowledgments

Lake Braddock Theatre of Burke, Virginia presented the first staged reading of Check Please: Take 2 on June 23, 2006 at the International Thespian Festival in Lincoln, Nebraska. The cast was as follows:

GIRL ............................................. Jenny Fornoff
GUY................................................. Nathan Black
KIM .............................................. Stephanie Ramsey
HANK ............................................. Matt Tiemann
DONNA .......................................... Alison Stein
LYLE ............................................ Chris Deter
JULIA ............................................. Casey Stein
DEWEY .......................................... Will Noguchi
JACKIE ......................................... Danielle Schender
ALEX ............................................. Jason Wolf
CLEO ............................................. Izzy Salhani
PAUL ............................................. Andrew Bare

Director ........................................ R. L. Mirabal
Stage Manager ................................. Tami Grossman

Special thanks to the Lake Braddock Thespians and the Educational Theatre Association for their ongoing support of my writing.
CHECK PLEASE: TAKE 2
by Jonathan Rand

Prologue

(Split scene: GIRL and KIM are playing Scrabble; GUY and HANK are playing the latest Madden on Xbox. The guys are situated directly next to the girls, but in reality they are in different apartments in different parts of the city.)

(GUY and GIRL are only mildly focused on their respective games. KIM and HANK are a little more focused on their respective games, but try to pay a respectful amount of attention to the important conversation.)

(The scene—while occurring in two different locations—should move as quickly as it would if both pairs were in the same room.)

GIRL/GUY. We broke up.
KIM. Oh no!
GUY. Yeah.
HANK. That really sucks.
GIRL. It’s okay.
GUY. We both sort of saw it coming.
KIM. So what happened?
HANK. How’d you screw it up?
GIRL/GUY. I don’t know.
HANK/KIM. It had to be something
HANK. , man.
KIM. There’s always something.
GUY. I don’t know.
GIRL. I’m not sure.
GUY. (Simultaneous:) Maybe she got a little needy.
GIRL. (Simultaneous:) Maybe he got a little distant.
KIM. I am so sorry.
HANK. But you know what really sucks?
GUY. What?
HANK. The fact that you’re pouring your heart out and then I go and make it worse by throwing this 40-yard play-action pass. Annnnnd, touchdown.

(Beat. He clears his throat.)

Sorry.

GUY. It’s all right. I should stop moping anyway.

HANK. What are you gonna do?

GIRL. I think I’ll take a break.

GUY. What do you think I should do?

KIM. No no no. I think you should

HANK/KIM. get back in the game.

GUY. It’s not too soon for that?

HANK. It’s never too soon for that.

GIRL. Are you sure that’s a good idea?

KIM. (As she lays down her Scrabble tiles:) What’s a good idea is “quiz” with the “Q” on triple-letter score. A really, really good idea.

(Beat.)

(Innocently:) You were saying?

GUY. You seriously think I should start dating again.

HANK. Yes.

GIRL. Right away?

KIM. Rebounding is a crucial part of social health.

HANK. There’s no other option. You’ve got to find someone to distract you from her.

(Pause.)

GUY. All right.

GIRL/GUY. I’ll do it.

KIM. Excellent!

HANK. Sweet!

KIM. And even if it doesn’t work out, we learned a valuable lesson today.

GUY. What’s that?
KIM. Three times “Q” is 30.

HANK. After you obliterate someone 62 to 7, you lose the feeling in your thumbs.

GIRL. Thanks.

GUY. You’re a real pal.

(Beat.)

KIM/HANK. Rematch?

(Blackout.)

Scene 1

GUY. Hi!

DONNA. Hi!

GUY. It’s good to meet you.

DONNA. It’s good to meet you, too!

GUY. So on your listing it said you’re a doctor?

DONNA. Yes.

GUY. That’s really fantastic.

DONNA. (Modestly:) Thank you. It’s rewarding work. A lot of work, actually, but I feel like I’m making a difference, as cliché as that sounds. How about you? I’m sorry, I forget what you do.

GUY. I work at a—

(Donna’s cell phone starts ringing immediately after GUY begins to speak. It should be a distracting ring – preferably a well-known pop song.¹)

DONNA. Hold on one second.

(DONNA takes out her phone and opens it.)

Oh, I gotta take this. I’ll be really quick.

GUY. No problem.

DONNA. Thanks.

¹ In this play’s first staged reading in 2006, the chorus from Kelly Clarkson’s “Since U Been Gone” was the obvious choice.
(She hits the button to answer the call.)

Stac-ayyyyy! What’s up, girl? ... Yeah. ... You’re kidding ... Yeah. Yeah!! ... No no, tell me. (She is being told a knock-knock joke.) ...... Who’s there. ...... Mexican busboy who. ...... (She yelps.) That is funny. Offensive, but funny. Anyway, I can’t talk, but call me later, K? ... Nighty nighty!!

(She puts the phone down.)

Sorry, I hate her.

GUY. You do?

DONNA. Yeah, but it was important. So what were we talking about... Right! Doctor. Which was my dream job ever since I was four. I love the hospital staff, the interaction with patients—truly everything about it.

GUY. That’s great!

DONNA. What about you?

GUY. W —

(Donna’s phone rings.)

DONNA. Ugghhh, is that me again? I think it is. One sec.

(DONNA takes out her phone and opens it.)

Ohhh! (To GUY, as if he would have any clue:) It’s Gina!! Hold on hold on hold on.

(She hits the button to answer the call.)

Gina Bina Fo Fina!! What’s goin’ on, woman? ... Noooo! ... What?? That’s ridiculous ... Me? Oh I’m on a date. ... Yeah, it’s going all right. He’s decent-looking, I guess. ... Ehhh, kinda boring. I’m doing all the talking, he’s barely said anything. ... Yeah! Seriously, right? ... I know, I know. ... All right I’ll call you back when it’s over, (Obviously saying nearly the same thing as Gina and finding it amusing with her:) which should hopefully be soon! Exactly! ... Okay lata!!

(Beat.)

GUY. You know I could hear you, right?

DONNA. What? Were you listening in on my conversation?

GUY. Uh, yes, but um—

DONNA. I don’t mean to be rude...but that’s really rude.

GUY. You were talking right in front of me.
DONNA. We’re getting nowhere with this argument. Let’s move on.
GUY. Okay.
DONNA. Why don’t we order our food! I love the roast duck here. I get it delivered to the hospital all the time.
GUY. That sou—
(Donna’s phone rings.)
DONNA. Gosh, I should really turn that off!
GUY. (Jovially chuckling:) Yeah!
DONNA. (Laughing with him:) Right?
(DONNA takes out her phone and opens it.)
Ooooooooh.
(She holds up one finger to GUY as she answers it.)
Hi, Richie baby. … I’m goooood. Even better now that you called. … (She giggles flirtatiously.) Well you’ll just have to wait and find out, won’t you? … Fine, then. Okay, how about later tonight. … Sounds delicious. You better be ready for me. … Oh I’m definitely ready for you. … Ciao, sexy.
(She hangs up.)
So the roast duck…
GUY. Who’s Richard?
DONNA. My my, are we nosy.
GUY. No, I— I just figured since we’re on a date that you wouldn’t—
DONNA. Oh, I didn’t know I was dining with Miss Manners!
GUY. All right—
DONNA. (To the unseen patrons:) Hey everybody! I’m on a date with a celebrity!!
(Donna’s phone rings.)
DONNA. Uhp!, I think my phone’s at it again.
(She takes it out, opens it, and listens.)
GUY. Okay, can you please hang up the phone? We’re on a date and you’ve spent half the time shrieking with your friends and the other half setting up rendezvous—es. I have to say it’s really disrespectful.
(She hangs up.)
DONNA. (Quietly grave:) That was the hospital.

GUY. What?

DONNA. A ten-year-old girl needs a heart transplant.

(Pause.)

GUY. Oh no.

DONNA. So thank you. Thank you for completely disrespecting a child’s life.

GUY. I had no idea—

DONNA. No. No you didn’t have any idea.

GUY. I am so sorry. I feel terrible.

DONNA. AHHHH! Just kidding!! It’s Gina again. (To the phone:) GINNAAAAAAA!

(Blackout.)

Scene 2

GIRL. Hi!

LYLE. Hi!

GIRL. It’s nice to meet you.

LYLE. Likewise.

GIRL. All right—I have to ask right off the bat. Is it true what Cheryl told me—that you’re fluent in a bunch of different languages?

LYLE. Yes.

GIRL. That’s so cool.

LYLE. Thanks.

GIRL. Seriously?, everybody I know just knows English and maybe, like, eight words of Spanish or French.

LYLE. Really.

GIRL. Including me. Honestly, I basically forgot everything I learned in school. If I went to Mexico right now, I’d only be able to find a bathroom and a library.

LYLE. I’m sure you know more than you think. I get rusty all the time.

GIRL. So how many do you know?
LYLE. Oh. I’m not sure. I lost count a while back.

GIRL. Are you serious?

(LYLE nods modestly.)

I’m...genuinely impressed. Wait, so would it be strange on a date to ask you to speak in some different languages?

LYLE. I’d rather not.

GIRL. Aww, come on, please?

LYLE. I just—I don’t want it to look like I’m showing off.

GIRL. No-no-no-no-no-no! Just a few?

(Pause.)

LYLE. All right, I’ll give you a sampler.

(GIRL claps with delight.)

Let’s see... If I wanted to say “It’s a pleasure to meet you” in Latin, I would say: A post mortem in carpe diem ad summa cum laude.

GIRL. (Slightly quizzical:) Really? That sounds familiar.

LYLE. It’s a fairly common expression. I studied in Athens for three years.

GIRL. (Genuine:) Hey—you’d definitely know better than me. What else?

LYLE. Well there’s Italian. For instance, if I wanted to tell you, “You look beautiful in the color red,” I would say: Mille grazie Deniro e DiCaprio calzone.

(Beat.)

GIRL. Did you say “DiCaprio”?

LYLE. Yes. It means “color” or “hue.”

GIRL. Oh.

LYLE. Then in German, if I wanted to say, “Excuse me, waiter, my soup is cold,” I would say: Auf wiedersehen bratwurst lederhosen.

GIRL. Hold on a second.

LYLE. In French, “hold on a second” would be loosely translated as La louvre de beret à la baguette.

GIRL. Wait—

(Beat.)
LYLE. In Hebrew that’s *dreidel dreidel dreidel*.

GIRL. Stop! This is insulting. I mean if you were kidding that would be one thing, but it sounds like you’re honestly trying to convince me that you know all of those languages. Do you even know a single foreign language, or are you just a terrible liar?

(Pause. He is mortally offended. He says the following as if he were saying “How could you…”)

LYLE. ¡Taco!

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

(At the moment the scene begins, JULIA is in the middle of a hearty, uncontrollable laugh, and continues laughing for a good amount of time. It is quite an intricate string of boisterous sounds. She eventually lets the laughing subside.)

(Pause.)

GUY. (Serious:) No, my dog really died.

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

GIRL. Hi!

DEWEY. Hi!

GIRL. It’s good to meet you.

DEWEY. Yeah. Same here.

GIRL. So—tell me about yourself.

DEWEY. Well, I can sum it up easy: My greatest passion is doing anything and everything that lets me live on the edge. Life for me is all about intensity, going for broke, taking chances.

GIRL. That’s a good outlook.

DEWEY. It’s all about living to the Extreme. There’s a saying that I made up:

If it’s not Extreme
It’s not worth dream—ing about.
GIRL. I like it.

DEWEY. Yeah it took me a few months to get the rhyming perfect.

GIRL. Sure.

DEWEY. You know that Billy Joel song “Why Do I Go to Extremes”? It’s like he wrote that song for me. That’s how much I love to be Extreme.

GIRL. It’s a good song.

DEWEY. It’s my favorite word.

GIRL. Extreme?

DEWEY. Extreme!!

GIRL. So are you a snowboarder, or an off-road biker, or—?

DEWEY. Oh, no no. I’m way too busy with work to do anything like that.

GIRL. What do you do?

DEWEY. I’m an accountant.

GIRL. An accountant…

DEWEY. I know it doesn’t sound extreme, but trust me, it gets pret-ty Extreme.

GIRL. Really.

DEWEY. Oh yeah. Just look at tax returns. The W-9? The 1099? Talk about intense. And sure, we all know the Form 1040 is crazy, but the Form 1040-ES? Off the hizook.

GIRL. I didn’t know that.

DEWEY. I started this joke around the office that the “ES” in “1040-ES” stands for “Extreme Standard-Accounting-Procedure.”

GIRL. (Forcing something like a laugh:) Ahh.

DEWEY. I’m sort of known for my puns.

GIRL. That’s not really a pun.

DEWEY. (Barreling on:) But beyond accounting, I still like to stay Extreme in my spare time. Like, something that’s normal for most people? I like to take it up a notch.

GIRL. Really.

DEWEY. Yeah. Wanna see what I mean?
**GIRL.** Uh—

**DEWEY.** Here here, watch. *(He gets up.)* Now when most people walk, they go like this.

*(He walks normally.)*

But *this* is how I walk.

*(He walks – to the Extreme!)*

Or when most people read a menu, they read like this.

*(He reads the menu normally.)*

This is how I read a menu.

*(He reads the menu – to the Extreme!)*

Or when normal people floss, they do this.

*(He takes out dental floss, and flosses normally.)*

I floss like *this.*

*(He flosses – to the Extreme!)*

Kinda blows your mind, right?

*(Pause.)*

**GIRL.** Did you just floss on a date?

**DEWEY.** Oh man, that’s so rude of me. I wasn’t thinking. Here.

*(He offers her his used floss.)*

*(Blackout.)*

---

**Midlogue**

*(Split scene: GIRL and GUY are each talking on the phone. KIM and HANK are sitting center stage, talking on the phone to GIRL and GUY, respectively.)*

**GIRL/GUY.** I give up.

**KIM.** No you don’t.

**GUY.** It’s hopeless out there.

**HANK.** I’m sure it’s not that bad.

**GIRL.** I have zero optimism for the human race.

**GUY.** What if any of these people give birth?
KIM. You just have to keep trying.

HANK. Rebounding is important,

KIM. But the success rate is always low.

HANK. Everyone knows that if you wanna make an omelet, you gotta shoot for the moon.

(KIM turns to HANK. We now realize they’re in the same room.)

KIM. I think you got that wrong.

GUY. Wait a second… Is that Kim?

GIRL. Are you with my ex-boyfriend’s best friend?!

HANK. (Overlapping:) Ahhhh gotta go! I’ll talk to you later!

KIM. (Overlapping:) Oh look, I’ve got a call coming in!

HANK/KIM. KEEP TRYING!!

(They hang up.)

GIRL. (Overlapping:) Kim?

GUY. (Overlapping:) Hank?

(KIM and HANK drop their phones.)

HANK. Think they’ll be okay?

KIM. Yeah, they’re fine.

(They peck each other briefly on the lips.)

(They pick up their Xbox controllers. HANK hits unpause and they proceed with the game. They stare at the screen.)

HANK. All right Scrabble Queen — you just sit back and watch while I run back this kickoff for the game-winner…

(After a quick amount of button-pressing for them both, a whistle blows on the game.)

KIM. (Dripping with sarcasm, as if she’s serious:) Oh. What happened? So when I tackle you at your own ten-yard line, do you get points for that? I wasn’t aware you got points for that. That’s weird.

HANK. Shut up.

(Blackout.)
Scene 5

(Acronyms in this scene are displayed in all caps for ease of understanding. They should not necessarily be yelled or emphasized.)

GUY. Hi!
JACKIE. Hi!
GUY. Nice to meet you.
JACKIE. Same here!
GUY. So right off the bat, I have to be honest with you—this is the first time I’ve ever gone out with someone I met online.
JACKIE. Really? Oh, I do it all the time.
GUY. Yeah?
JACKIE. Sure. It’s the only way to date, IMHO.

(Beat.)

GUY. I’m sorry?
JACKIE. IMO, it’s the only way to date.
GUY. IMO?
JACKIE. Ahhhh, I didn’t realize! So if you’re a noob, then you don’t understand online lingo!! LOL!
GUY. Right, so I don’t—
JACKIE. That is so cute! LOL, ROFLMAO!
GUY. I’m—
JACKIE. OMG, you must be so lost right now. OMFG!
GUY. I really don’t follow you.
JACKIE. Anyway, anyway—gimme the 411 about yourself, shy-guy626! What do you do in your free time?
GUY. Well, ah… actually, I just started taking windsurfing lessons.
JACKIE. w00t?²
GUY. If you don’t mind me being honest, I’ve had a lot more free time for starting new hobbies after my ex-girlfriend and I broke up.
JACKIE. Uhhh, TMI!

² If this expression is too obscure, feel to use “Kewl!” instead.
GUY. What?

JACKIE. JK! JK! JK!

GUY. What’s “TMI”?

JACKIE. TMI! (She lays it out for him in plain English:) “T”... Okay? Then “M.” And then you finish it off with “I.” TMI.

(GUY decides to leave that confusing response behind.)

GUY. So—what about you? What do you like to do?

JACKIE. Oh, gosh... So many things. Well, I’d say I spend about half of my workday on MySpace, and the rest split between Facebook, LiveJournal, and Friendster.3 And when I’m lookin’ for luuuuv—JK, LOL—I spend my time on, you know, the usual places: Match.com, E-Harmony, J-Date.

GUY. J-Date?

JACKIE. Yep!

GUY. Isn’t that where Jewish singles meet other Jewish singles?

JACKIE. Yep!

GUY. Didn’t your profile say you were Catholic?

JACKIE. Yep!

GUY. Then why are you on J-Date?

JACKIE. Why are you on J-Date?

GUY. I’m not on J-Date.

JACKIE. Well, agree to disagree.

GUY. What?

JACKIE. Okay, so I have a few more FAQs for you, shyguy626. E.G.: Where do you see yourself in five years?

GUY. I’m sorry, I have to ask: Why are you calling me shyguy626?

JACKIE. It’s your SN. Why wouldn’t I call you shyguy626?

GUY. My— Ohh, my screen name. I don’t know... You wouldn’t want me to call you—uh...

JACKIE. CutiePatootie5!

GUY. Right, CutiePatootie5.

3 If any websites in this scene are out of date, please replace with current equivalent.
JACKIE. OMG, yes I would!

GUY. All right...

JACKIE. BTW, it is soooo adorable that you don’t understand what I’m saying. You are TCFW. It’s like I speak English and you speak Canadian.

GUY. Th—

JACKIE. I like it. You make me laugh. Winky face.

GUY. W—

JACKIE. OMG, you must be so confused; you’re like G2G, TTYL.

GUY. Okay stop for a second. I’ve gotta ask—because I’ve honestly never heard anyone use screen names… or those internet abbreviations… out loud: Is it normal for a person to do that?

(Pause. She is blindsided.)

GUY. What?

JACKIE. Frowny face.

GUY. Oh. I didn’t mean to offend you—

JACKIE. Frowny face with tears.

GUY. Look, could we just—

JACKIE. WTF.

GUY. I’m sorry? I don’t under—

JACKIE. W ... T ... F-ing ... F!

GUY. I honestly have no idea what that means.

(JACKIE turns away, offended.)

GUY. What? What’s wrong?

JACKIE. NOYB.

GUY. Can we talk about what’s wrong?

JACKIE. No. EOD.

GUY. I wish I knew what you were saying.

JACKIE. You know what? You are being so inappropriate?—I’m going to file a complaint to the website where we met, and then do everything in my power to get you blacklisted from online dating.

GUY. What? That’s not fair!
JACKIE. And that will prevent you from dating anyone like me EVER AGAIN!

(She runs off.)

(Pause.)

(He says matter-of-factly, without sarcasm:)

GUY. That’s upsetting. Sarcastic winky face.

(Blackout.)

**Scene 6**

(ALEX is dressed like a pirate. Some time elapses as GIRL doesn’t know what to say.)

GIRL. See, when the paper said you were into Living History, I thought that maybe meant you occasionally did Civil War reenactments. Not that you’d come to a date pretending to be a pirate.

ALEX. Pretendin’?!?

GIRL. Yes. Pretending.

ALEX. I be as real a sea-dog as you’ll ever meet!!

(Beat.)

GIRL. And do all real pirates shop at J. Crew?

(ALEX looks down at his jeans.)

ALEX. (Dejectedly:) Aarrrr…

(Blackout.)

**Scene 7**

GUY. Hi!

CLEO. Hi!

GUY. So on your listing it said that you’re a psychiatrist. Do you like it?

CLEO. Oh no. That was a typo.

GUY. Oh. You’re a psychologist?

CLEO. Psychic.
GUY. Ah.

CLEO. Yeah, I wanted to call the paper to fix that, but I forgot the phone number.

(Beat.)

GUY. So what’s it like?

CLEO. Oh man. The premonitory field can be rough. Like last week I read in the stars that I’m going to get a sunburn on July 8th?, so I had to cancel my trip to Cancun.

GUY. Oh.

CLEO. I know what you’re thinking: Sunburns are the worst!

GUY. Right.

CLEO. See how I knew what you were thinking?

GUY. So how did you first decide you’d become a psychic?

CLEO. I remember exactly when it hit me. I was a freshman in college, and I envisioned that I was going to fail a math exam. Then I took the exam, and I failed. Isn’t that amazing??

(Beat.)

GUY. Yes?

CLEO. That was the moment I knew I’d become a psychic. And then four years later? I became a psychic! There’s another prediction come true!

GUY. But all of those are actions you can control.

CLEO. How about I give you a free reading?!

(Over the next couple of lines, CLEO retrieves a few tools from her bag and places them on the table: tarot cards, chakra beads, and a Magic 8-Ball.)

GUY. Oh, that’s okay. I’m not interested.

CLEO. I insist! Hand me your right foot.

GUY. I’m sorry?

CLEO. Hand me your right foot. I read feet.

GUY. Don’t psychics —?

CLEO. I know in the movies everyone sees psychics read palms, but the real psychics read feet. Take off your shoe.
GUY. I don’t know if I feel comfortable with this.

(CLEO picks up the Magic 8-Ball and speaks to it.)

CLEO. Does he feel comfortable with this?

(She shakes the Magic 8-Ball and looks at the bottom for the answer.)

CLEO. “It is decidedly so.”

GUY. (Reluctantly:) All right…

(He begins to remove his shoe.)

CLEO. The feet have a spiritual connection to the earth. Because the feet touch the ground so frequently, they have the— (Instructing GUY:) your sock too — they have the closest and most powerful bond to the paranormal ether.

(GUY is ready.)

Okay.

(CLEO holds out her hand. GUY reluctantly moves his foot across the table. CLEO takes it without hesitation, and begins examining the sole of his foot with her fingers, looking very closely at its details. GUY is uncomfortable about the situation, but not ticklish. The audience’s focus should be on the interaction between CLEO and foot.)

Interesting. Verrry interesting. This crease between your heel and midsole tells me that you like sports. Is it true that you like sports?

GUY. I like sports.

CLEO. Yes. I see that right here. Sports…

(She moves her fingers to a different spot on the sole of his foot.)

Let’s see… Your history line here is right here below the lateral plantar nerves. Let’s have a look.

(She looks closely.)

Sometimes you have to—

(She presses her ear against the bottom of his foot.)

Okay, there we go. When you were a teenager did you attend a high school?

GUY. Yes.

CLEO. That sounds about right.
(She continues to examine his foot with her hands, working her way up to the toes.)

GUY. Listen, can I have my foot back? You haven’t really told me anything that’s not obvious.

CLEO. Oh, but here comes the big finale.

GUY. That’s okay, I’m fine.

CLEO. The main line is located in the middle of the big toe, but your line is remarkably faint.

(She lightly taps on it.)

I’m having trouble getting a read.

(She lightly touches the toe with the tip of her tongue. She leans back and tastes her lips slightly, with a serious, analytical look on her face. This is business as usual. After a few moments, she perks up.)

Ahhh, there we go. Are you ready? (Beat.) You have two sisters—one redhead and one blonde—you’re five-foot-eight⁴, you love movies, you consider yourself politically independent, and you’re a Virgo rising.

(She lets go of his foot.)

Okay! All done.

(GUY is flabbergasted.)

GUY. But— That’s amazing! Every last one of those things was completely true!! How did you know all of that?!

CLEO. Knowledge is feet.

GUY. Wow! What else do you know? Can you tell my future?

CLEO. But of course... When you die you will donate your organs, and after May 1st you can no longer purchase two large one-topping pizzas for the price of one.

(Pause.)

GUY. Can I have my wallet back?

(Beat.)

(CLEO looks at the bottom of her Magic 8-Ball.)

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⁴ Use the actor’s actual height.
CLEO. “All signs point to No.”

(Blackout.)

Scene 8

GIRL. Hi!

PAUL. Hi!

GIRL. So...tell me about yourself.

PAUL. Well, I work in hedge funds—

GIRL. Cool! That’s where you buy stocks at a low value and then sell it to banks? Wait, no. I have that completely wrong.

PAUL. Don’t worry about it.

GIRL. Sorry. I actually do know more about the market, it’s just that—honestly—I’m nervous. I’m so terrible at these things.

PAUL. What—dates?

GIRL. Yeah.

PAUL. Ahh, don’t worry about it. I try not to be too judgmental on dates. They’re set up to be so high-pressure.

GIRL. True.

PAUL. And it’s a wasteland out there, so maybe it’s easier to handle because I’m less optimistic than I used to be.

GIRL. That’s so refreshing to hear. I thought it was just me.

PAUL. No, it’s pretty awful.

GIRL. But you don’t seem the least bit flustered. How do you stay so calm?

PAUL. It helps to have a lot of first-hand experience with relationships.

GIRL. You’ve done a lot of dating?

PAUL. Yeah. Dating, marriage, blah blah blah.

GIRL. You’re divorced?

PAUL. No, no.

GIRL. It’s totally okay if you are. I dated a guy once who had multiple ex-wives.
PAUL. Oh, don’t worry about that. I don’t have any ex-wives—
GIRL. Okay.
PAUL. —I have wives.

(Pause.)
GIRL. I’m sorry, I thought I heard you say—
PAUL. I have wives.
GIRL. Oh.
PAUL. Two of ’em.
GIRL. Two wives.
PAUL. Yeah… I can tell you’re kind of disappointed about it…
GIRL. (Not terribly convincing:) Nooo…
PAUL. It’s okay to be disappointed! I’m disappointed with myself!
GIRL. Are you…
PAUL. I am. I mean, two wives is such a tiny number of wives.
GIRL. Excuse me?
PAUL. I know! It’s unbelievable. All my buddies are always making fun of me at the gym:

(He recounts each of the jabs with frustrated disdain.)
“Hey, look over there—it’s the guy with only two wives!”
“Maybe he wants a bite of my TWO-nafish sandwich.”
“He’s like a ballerina with his TWO-tu.”
“I’ll bet he likes the U.S. government, what with their bicam-
eral legislature.”
“Hey everybody! Get your camera! It’s TWO-pac Shakur!”
or, y’know,
“Peace.”

(He does an irritated impression of someone giving him the two-
finger peace sign.)

I mean, two wives? Two? You gotta admit, that pretty pathetic. I’m embarrassed to show my face in public.
GIRL. Uh huh.
PAUL. And y’know, I’m thinking that you... (Pause for effect.) ... you...might just be the perfect candidate for Numero Tres.

GIRL. I am...
PAUL. Absolutely!
GIRL. So you’re Mormon?
PAUL. Mormon? No... Not Mormon.
GIRL. So why do you have two wives?
PAUL. Why? Why not??
GIRL. Well isn’t polygamy illegal?
GIRL. Yes. Law.
PAUL. I mean, if everyone followed every itty bitty law, then you or I couldn’t—I dunno—commit credit card identity theft.
GIRL. YES!
PAUL. What I’m saying is, everyone breaks the speed limit, right? I’m just breaking the speed limit with a bunch of different cars, simultaneously.
GIRL. That doesn’t make any sense.
PAUL. Does the “Constitution” make sense?
GIRL. YES!
PAUL. So what do you think of my proposal? Be honest.
GIRL. Be honest?
PAUL. You wouldn’t have a lot of responsibilities! Harriet is in charge of the cooking and cleaning, and Naomi takes the kids to soccer games and drama⁵ practice, so all I’d need from you is to Tivo my favorite shows for me while I’m at work, and then when I get home, occasionally shave my back.
GIRL. ...
PAUL. (Inviting:) So...?

(Pause. GIRL decides to try a special angle.)

GIRL. All right, this is sounding like something I’d be interested in.

⁵ Rhymes with gamma.
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