

ACT I

SETTING: An upscale living room, hall up with doors to bathroom and bedroom, opposite two more bedrooms. Sliding doors to patio and pool, wet bar opposite and kitchen below. Closet and front door with peephole above.

AT RISE: **MICHELLE**, 26, in sexy dress, enters with a box, takes it to the bar and arranges tchotkes from it on the counter and shelves. **ANTON**, 28, enters from the sliders, wearing work gloves, carrying a large bucket.

ANTON

(off her look)

I was going to paint the porch.

MICHELLE

Why?

ANTON

Have you seen it?

MICHELLE

I'll talk to the landlord. You shouldn't have to do it.

ANTON

There's a first.

MICHELLE

Anyway, today's not a good day. He's coming over.

ANTON

What? When?

MICHELLE

Soon. Get rid of that bucket.

(He starts for the front door. She calls back as she exits.)

And don't leave it on the porch.

(He thinks, then opens the closet and carefully lifts the bucket to the top shelf, balancing it precariously. As he hears her coming, he closes the door, acts innocent. She arranges more knick knacks on the bar.)

ANTON

What are you doing?

MICHELLE

Just that little personal touch. What the hell is this?

(She pulls out a pigeon figurine.  
Anton grabs it away.)

ANTON

This was my mother's.

MICHELLE

So she didn't have any taste either.

(Anton simmers in silence as she futzes  
about with more arranging. Then;)

ANTON

Is he really falling for it?

MICHELLE

What man his age wouldn't? Flatter them, show interest, dangle  
the carrot. Well, the melons --

ANTON

-- blow it to hell by bringing him home to meet your husband.

MICHELLE

It's okay. I told him you're my brother. And you're gay.

(DOORBELL. As Anton reacts, Michelle  
crosses and lets in **RICHARD**, 60s.  
She gives him a hug and kiss.)

RICHARD

Michelle!

MICHELLE

Richard, darling. Come in. This is my brother, Anton.

RICHARD

A pleasure to finally meet you, young man. And this is a  
very nice place you have here.

MICHELLE

This? Oh, it's... adequate.

RICHARD

Adequate, but...?

MICHELLE

Small. Our house is huge, but we're having it remodeled. This is only temporary, but it's taking them simply forever because our place is so big. It seems so wrong to call it a house. It's more of a mansion.

(As Richard examines the bar, Anton gives her a look. She pulls him aside.)

Play along, I know what I'm doing.

(notices his wedding ring)

And get rid of that.

(Richard ducks behind the bar to check it out. Anton tries to remove the ring; can't. Michelle leans over the bar as Richard emerges, eye-level with her chest.)

RICHARD

Excellent construction.

MICHELLE

Thank you.

(Richard wanders, examines everything. Anton struggles with the ring but it won't budge. Michelle grabs his hand, tugs. It still won't move. Meanwhile;)

RICHARD

You can tell a lot about a person by their home. Their personality, their true character.

MICHELLE

Fascinating. What does this place say?

ANTON

Temporary --

(Michelle yanks the ring off.)

Ow!

MICHELLE

Naturally, we didn't bring many of our nice things here.

RICHARD

Surely, you didn't leave anything valuable behind, what with workmen all over the place. I'm assuming you have valuable --

MICHELLE

Oh, trinkets really. The Lalique and Limoge, a few Persian rugs. And the paintings. Two Vermeers, a Klee.

ANTON

Don't forget the Hockney.

MICHELLE

We only brought the important things with us. But, honestly, tell me. What does this place say about me?

RICHARD

It says stable. Well-to-do. Successful.

MICHELLE

I could say the same thing about your place.

RICHARD

A well-kept façade. If it did reflect me, it'd have a leaky roof and leakier plumbing. Nobody would want to move in.

MICHELLE

Oh, but I would, darling.

RICHARD

I know you would... Can you believe I met her at Gelson's? I'd just knocked half a bin of tomatoes onto the floor, and there she was, running to my rescue.

ANTON

She told me it was melons.

MICHELLE

It was romantic. So's Richard. And I like romance. I need romance. Need, need, need it... It's all I have left. After the... tragedy. Oh, Richie. With our parents gone, my brother and I are so alone.

RICHARD

Ssssh, it's all right. I felt the same when I lost my wife.

ANTON

She died?

RICHARD

Left me for a Brazilian hand model.

MICHELLE

If only mother's favorite color hadn't been red. And then customs lost their ashes on the way back from Pamplona. It's just the two of us, but there's only so much a brother can do, and -- oh, Richie! I don't want to be alone.

(Sobbing, she grabs Richard and pushes herself against him. He Holds her awkwardly, noticing Anton giving them a look.)

RICHARD  
May we be alone?

ANTON  
Please.

(Anton exits. Michelle kisses Richard. He holds her away.)

RICHARD  
Michelle...

MICHELLE  
Oh, Richard...

RICHARD  
No, Michelle... Not that I don't appreciate it. But, really. Look at you. Look at me. What do you see?

MICHELLE  
A perfect couple.

RICHARD  
That's flattering, but no. I see an attractive, vital young woman and an old, old man.

MICHELLE  
You're not old.

RICHARD  
You're too kind.

MICHELLE  
You're forgetting how I feel about you.

RICHARD  
You're forgetting my blood pressure.

MICHELLE  
I'll be gentle.

RICHARD  
Yes, but the medication puts a damper on certain things, if you get my drift.

MICHELLE

(starting to unbutton her blouse)

I can fix that.

RICHARD

(staring)

I've been thinking about them. Those. It... uh, what you said. About my sons.

MICHELLE

It's the truth. Which I know is never pleasant, but --

RICHARD

But, well... true. Which way's the bathroom?

MICHELLE

Poor baby. Are you having... problems?

RICHARD

No. But if a house reflects a person's character, their bathroom reveals their soul.

MICHELLE

First door on the left.

RICHARD

Right.

(He exits. Anton rushes in.)

ANTON

What the hell was that about?

MICHELLE

Bathrooms and souls.

(off his look)

We're ninety percent of the way there. He thinks we're rich, he thinks I love him --

ANTON

He thinks I'm gay.

MICHELLE

So he won't think you're shtupping me.

ANTON

Doesn't "brother" cover that?

MICHELLE

Not necessarily. You know, you could double our income if you'd seduce an old man or two.

ANTON

Sorry, I don't date anything that lives under a bridge. This was supposed to be over by now.

MICHELLE

It will be. He believes me. He doesn't trust his kids and he'll be ready to marry me in a second.

ANTON

You think he'll really --

MICHELLE

Oh yes. Men are always magically distracted by the twins.

(She thrusts her breasts out.)

ANTON

Richard hasn't actually... touched them, has he?

MICHELLE

Not on purpose, no.

ANTON

And he hasn't seen them. Has he?

(No answer.)

Oh, gross.

MICHELLE

Anton, you know how farsighted he is, he probably only saw two round blurs.

ANTON

You mean nearsighted?

MICHELLE

No. Anyway, why would it bother you?

ANTON

It's just disgusting in a generally abstract way.

MICHELLE

Amateur. You have to do whatever it takes for the scam.

ANTON

Without getting arrested.

MICHELLE

My mother showed me how to avoid that.

ANTON

So that's why she's in prison.

MICHELLE

Not her fault. Ooh. Seduction, swindle. Payoff.

(Excited, she grabs Anton, kisses him passionately. He tries to hold her back, but she's hot and bothered.)

Oh, Anton. I can smell the money. Can you? All those wonderful zeroes in the bank. All those numbers. All that interest. Oh. Oh god. Anton --

ANTON

Michelle!

(He tries to pull away but she holds on, as we hear Richard approach.)

Dear sweet sister. With gay brother...

MICHELLE

Sorry, sorry. You know how I get about money.

(As Richard enters, they fly apart. Anton poses "gay" to compensate.)

RICHARD

That bathtub is certainly impressive.

MICHELLE

Thank --

ANTON

Marble. Carrara. Corinthian leather on the banquette, and we're thinking of just getting the most fabulous window treatments. Chintz for days, and silk curtains. Come up and see it some time. Oh, honey, you'll absolutely plotz.

RICHARD

You'd do all that for a rental?

ANTON

We can afford it. And sis deserves the best.

MICHELLE

And, about the bathroom...?

RICHARD

It's very... serene. I've never seen one before that's sound-proofed liked that. It shows consideration for your guests. Ah, yes. Overall, nice place. I think it will work. It will definitely work. Oh, you are right about my boys. All they think I am is a check book. I have to show them there's more to life than that. The only way to neutralize that problem is marriage.

MICHELLE

Yes! Oh, yes. Richard.

RICHARD

You agree?

MICHELLE

Completely. Oh, this is a fabulous idea, darling.

RICHARD

(crossing to the door.)

Good. Dinner tonight, then?

MICHELLE

Splendid. An engagement party?

RICHARD

That's a bit premature. But if it works out, there just may be. I think you'll like my son, Michelle. And the other one swings your way, Anton. It's a double date.

ANTON & MICHELLE

Sorry?

RICHARD

It would be wonderful if you hit it off with my sons and all got married.

(to Anton:)

Or, well, whatever it is your people do. Yes, absolutely wonderful. See you this evening, then. Ta.

(Richard exits. They stare, agape.)

ANTON

Okay. What just happened here?

(A beat as she thinks about it, then:)

ANTON (cont'd)

Be right back --

MICHELLE

I need to... call someone.

ANTON

Right.

(Anton exits. Michelle takes out her cell, dials, speaks into it.)

MICHELLE

Hello. It's me. We've got a problem... Great. Isn't it a little early in the day for... Yeah, yeah. Whatever. You at home? I'm coming over... No -- I'll come there... Did I say it was an emergency...? No, you stay there. Got that...? I'll be there in -- Me. There. Not you here... See you soon.

(She hangs up, starts for her purse, but Anton enters from the hall, pocketing his cell. She plays casual.)

ANTON

Going somewhere?

MICHELLE

No. No, just... tidying up. For tonight.

ANTON

This will never work.

MICHELLE

Marry the old man, marry his son, what's the difference?

ANTON

About forty years. Aren't you forgetting one big detail?

MICHELLE

We'd have to get divorced either way.

ANTON

And there goes your health insurance --

MICHELLE

After this works, I can afford it. And it will work.

ANTON

That would make every tit flash worth it.

MICHELLE

And telling Richard you're gay?

ANTON

That would make every tit flash worth it.