

PLAYMAKERS

presents

A
Brand New
Romantic
Comedy!

**SHORT
SQUEEZE**

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY JACK CALDWELL

Evening Performances:
May 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 1998
at 8:00PM

Matinee Performances:
May 10, 17, 1998
at 3:00PM

Call 893-1671 for Reservations

PLAYMAKERS

19 COVINGTON 98

SHORT SQUEEZE

a comedy in two acts

by

Jack Caldwell

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DEDICATION:

To my parents, John and Nancy,
to whom I owe everything,
and
to my son, Douglas,
for whom I do everything.

IN MEMORIUM

Mickey Segura, my friend and inspiration.

SPECIAL THANKS:

To Barbara Hewitt for all her love and support. To Debbie Breedlove, Elaine Caldwell, Riva J. Caldwell, Frank Levy, Jo Ann Robisheaux, Joy Segura, and Linda A. Wheatly for their helpful suggestions. To everyone at Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc. for getting me into theatre in the first place. And to Dr. Mel Berry of Nicholls State University, who taught me everything I know about acting.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

JAMES M. HARTFORD A high producing stockbroker in a branch office of Irwin, Dillard & Co., a national investment firm. Late 30's, divorced and raising two kids. Basically honest, a bit old fashioned.

ELIZABETH LAGARDE Hartford's sales assistant. Late 20's, good looking, dresses conservatively. More of a partner than secretary, especially after work. She has worked with Hartford for three years and been his lover for almost one. Intelligent, lives for today.

LOUIS SCHNEIDER Branch manager of the office. Middle-aged, sloppy dresser. Company man. Your basic "used-car salesman" type.

GUS LILJENSTEIN Legendary high producer and Hartford's mentor. Late 60's.

SIDNEY SMITH III Young, aggressive broker. Late 20's - early 30's. Known as the office "barracuda" - a broker willing to steal another's client. Kisses up to Schneider and Gus.

HILDA KLEIN Compliance officer from Irwin, Dillard's home office.

CRYSTAL MYERS Sales assistant at Irwin, Dillard & Co. and Elizabeth's friend. Early 20's. Sassy.

DR. A. EDWARD TRUDEAU One of Hartford's largest clients. Middle-aged, high strung.

LT. BARKER Head of the police hostage team.

DR. ZIMMERMAN Psychiatrist brought in by the police.

SETTING:

Office of James M. Hartford, a stockbroker for Irwin,
Dillard & Co., located in a small southern city.

TIME:

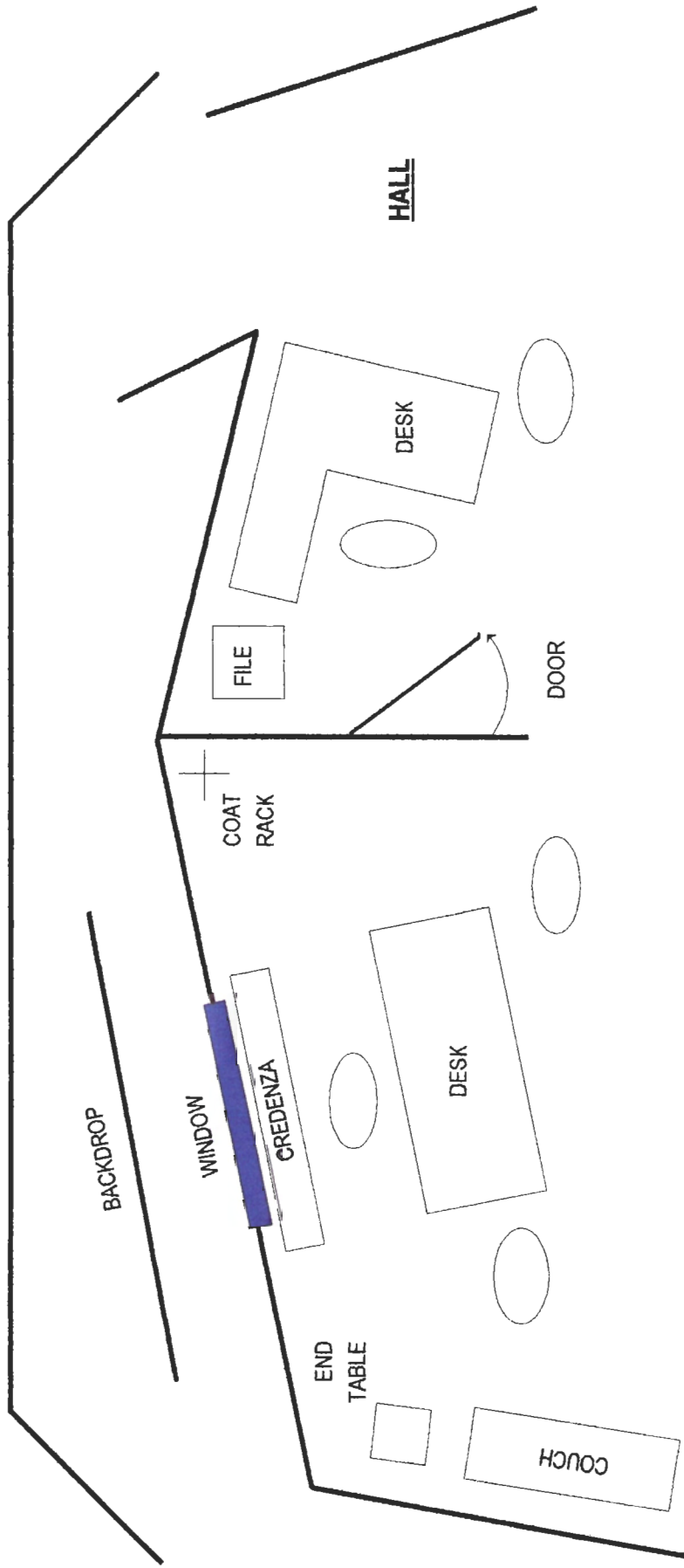
The present.

ACT I, Scene 1 A Friday morning.

ACT I, Scene 2 A few minutes later.

ACT II Later that afternoon.

SET DESIGN



OUTER OFFICE

INNER OFFICE

ACT I

SCENE 1

(Early Friday morning. The curtain is closed.)

VOICE OF RADIO ANNOUNCER #1

This is the Wall Street Radio Report. Walter Gottfried, former president and CEO of Amalgamated Wire, Inc., is scheduled to be arraigned in federal court today for embezzlement and flight to avoid prosecution. Meanwhile, brokerage firms across the country are still sifting through the fallout of the events at Amalgamated Wire, one of one of the worst frauds in securities history. Losses to investors could run into the millions of dollars. In other news, the stock market is expected to continue this week's gains. Stocks and bonds on the foreign exchanges were strong in overnight trading, reacting to comments made by the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers yesterday. Traders will be watching today's unemployment figures and the Federal Reserve Chairman's testimony to the Senate Finance Committee. This has been Phil Albright of the Wall Street Radio Report.

(Fade out.)

(The curtain opens. Seen is the well-appointed third-floor office of James M. Hartford, a stockbroker for Irwin, Dillard & Co. The office is divided in two: an inner office, stage right, and an outer office, left. There is a connecting door between. The inner office has a large desk in the center of it, facing front, with a window and credenza behind. The desk has an executive chair behind it and an armchair to each side. Against the wall, right, is a couch. A coat rack, with a suit jacket hanging from it, is to the left of the desk. The outer office has a secretarial desk and one armchair. There is a filing cabinet behind the desk. The outer office is open to the hall, left. JIM HARTFORD, in

shirt & tie, is seated at the desk in the inner office, on the phone. He is in his late 30's, honest and a bit old-fashioned.)

HARTFORD

(On phone.)

That's right, John. The tax-equivalent yield is more than 8% in your tax-bracket. And it's triple-A. Your bank can't touch that! So how many can I put you down for?... OK, great - ah, y'know John, we've got 50 of these left, so why not take another 5 and get them all?... OK, you've got 'em! That's 50,000 for your account at par. Thanks a lot, John! You going to be free tomorrow for golf?

(Checks daytimer.)

Tee time's 10:30... Un huh... New driver, eh? Well, it can't hurt! (Laughs) OK, buddy, see you tomorrow. My love to Grace. Bye!

(Hangs up, looks for account book.)

Damnit, where is it? It never fails: "The account book you need is always on the sales assistant's desk."

(He goes into outer office and walks behind the secretarial desk. Finds the book he is looking for on top of the filing cabinet and returns to his office. Opens the book to the correct page. He writes a buy ticket while dialing the phone.)

Yeah, give me Joe, please... Joe? It's Jim Hartford, we got the last of those Gas Tax bonds sold...

(ELIZABETH LAGARDE enters outer office L, sits at her desk. In her late 20's, she is beautiful, smart and conservatively dressed. She has a mind of her own.)

HARTFORD [Continued]

Yeah, right here. Ready? Account number 3-4-5-7-9-3-4. Client's name is Trapani. Money's in the money market account. Hold the bonds in street name... Got it? Good. Hey Joe, let me know if any more of those bonds show up. Thanks!

(Hangs up.)

Liz! That you?

(Elizabeth gets up and goes to connecting door.)

ELIZABETH

Morning Jim. How are we doing?

HARTFORD

Doing great, Liz. Sold 250,000 of these Gas Tax bonds, and I've got 5 minutes left to this power-block. Oh, I tried calling Trudeau this morning. He wasn't at home or at his office. Would you try again for me?

ELIZABETH

Of course, Jim. Do you want some coffee?

HARTFORD

(Taken aback a bit. This is not like her.)

Huh? What did you say, Liz?

ELIZABETH

Coffee. You know, the black stuff made from ground-up roasted coffee beans and hot water. Do you want some?

HARTFORD

Yeah, sure.

ELIZABETH

I'll call Trudeau first. Be right back.

HARTFORD

OK.

(Elizabeth returns to her desk, dials. Hartford shakes his head and gets back on the phone again, dials.)

HARTFORD [Continued]

Good morning, this is Jim Hartford calling for Mr. Durbin... No problem, Sally, just give him a message I called...

(Elizabeth hangs up, exits L)

It's about his Kansas Mining stock... Thank you, Sally -
bye...

(Hangs up and dials.)

Good morning, this is Jim Hartford calling for Rick Berry...
Thank you... Rick? Jim Hartford. Rick, I'd like to make
an appointment with you to discuss your company's 401-K
plan...

(Elizabeth enters L with two cups of
coffee, crosses to Hartford's desk.)

Would next Tuesday or Thursday be best?... OK, Thursday,
let's see... How about 10 o'clock?

(Nods as Elizabeth puts coffee on desk.)

Great, see you then.

(Hangs up. To Elizabeth:)

Finally got that appointment with Berry. The way he's been
dodging me you'd think I had fleas.

(Phone rings.)

Hello, Jim Hartford speaking.

(During this, Elizabeth closes office
door.)

May I help you? Oh, Mrs. McLaughlin, how are you?

(Rolls eyes.)

Oh, no ma'am, your dividend check goes out today. That's
right, every other Friday... Oh, yes ma'am, I'll see to it,
I'll make sure... Thank you, Mrs. McLaughlin, you have a
good weekend, too. Goodbye.

(Hangs up.)

HARTFORD [Continued]

That poor old lady. Got nothing better to do than check the
mail for her dividend checks. Man, do I need this! Thanks,
Liz

(Hartford sips coffee.)

ELIZABETH

No answer at Trudeau's. How's the coffee?

HARTFORD

Perfect. Far be it from me to look a gift horse in the mouth, but what's the occasion? Since when do you start bringing me coffee?

ELIZABETH

I thought you'd need a pick-me-up after last night.

(Takes his cup, puts it down with hers, sits on his lap and kisses him hard.)

HARTFORD

(Coming up for air.)

Liz, here?

ELIZABETH

The door's closed, sweetie.

(Kisses again.)

HARTFORD

But I thought we agreed to no fooling around at the office.

ELIZABETH

Don't get excited. I just want a little cuddling, that's all. You left me too soon last night.

HARTFORD

Hey, babysitters are expensive. There ought to be futures contracts on them. And you should have seen the way she looked at me when I got back home. She had that look on her face that said, "Hmm, a half hour late - I know what you've been up to!" Christ, she's only 12! What are they feeding kids these days?

ELIZABETH

Didn't you know? There's hormone supplements in soft drinks.

HARTFORD

So that's where you get it from!

ELIZABETH

Can't keep up with me? That's what you get for robbing the cradle, you dirty old man.

HARTFORD

(Grins.)

Have I told you lately that I love you?

ELIZABETH

Not in the last twelve hours.

(Kiss. Phone rings. Elizabeth picks it up while remaining in Hartford's lap.)

ELIZABETH [Continued]

Good morning, Mr. Hartford's office. May I help you? Oh, I'm so sorry, Mr. Hartford's unavailable right now. He's in a meeting. Yes, very important. May I have him call you? Very well. Thank you, bye.

(Hangs up. Back to fun.)

No big deal, just a mutual fund wholesaler. He'll call back. Do you know what tomorrow is?

HARTFORD

Saturday. I get to play golf.

ELIZABETH

Men! It's our anniversary. One year since we started going out together.

HARTFORD

Yeah, after two years of thinking about it.

ELIZABETH

You poor boy! Was it so bad, waiting for me?

HARTFORD

You tell me. You said "yes" right away.

(Hartford ducks as Elizabeth playfully swings at him.)

I'll bet you thought I forgot all about Saturday.

(Hartford points at daytimer.)

ELIZABETH

(Reads)

"Tavern Under the Oaks"? Oh, Jim! That's my favorite restaurant!

HARTFORD

The weekend's all ours, honey.

(Kisses. Phone rings. Elizabeth picks it up.)

ELIZABETH

Good morning, Mr. Hartford's office. May I help you?

(Hartford keeps necking.)

May I ask who's calling? Please hold...

(Puts phone on hold.)

It's your ex-wife.

(Smiles as she hands him the receiver.)

HARTFORD

Unbelievable. That woman's timing is un-freaking-believable. Divorced five years and she can still interrupt me while I'm having fun. Never was happy unless I was in the back yard and miserable.

(Presses hold button. Elizabeth continues to kiss him. Into phone:)

Hello, Charlotte... What's up?

ELIZABETH

(Stage whisper)

Something is.

HARTFORD

Hush! Oh, no, not you, Charlotte! You were saying?... What? You can't pick up the kids? Why not?...

(Elizabeth stops, gets up.)

HARTFORD [Continued]

Where?... Oh, well, we can't pass that up, can we?... Well, you explain it to them... Yeah, yeah. Just fouls up my weekend -- Aw, forget it! I'll handle it... Oh, come on. You know I've never talked bad about you in front of the kids! And you know why. I'm not going to mess them up... No, I didn't mean anything by that!

(Sighs.)

Look, Charlotte, you have a good time. I'll tell the kids you'll see them soon... Bye.

(Hangs up.)

Thanks for nothing!

ELIZABETH

What's wrong?

HARTFORD

Charlotte's not picking up the kids this weekend.

ELIZABETH

What? Why not?

HARTFORD

Her boyfriend cashed in his frequent flyer points for a free trip to Rio.

ELIZABETH

And she just ups and goes and to hell with the kids? But this was her weekend with Mike and Ashley. I can't believe it!

HARTFORD

(Gets up, walks around desk.)

I can. That woman could never think of anyone but herself. Been that way from the moment I met her.

ELIZABETH

(Moves beside him.)

So why did you marry her?

HARTFORD

(Small smile)

Eye trouble. I couldn't see past her big gazoombas.

(Elizabeth playfully hits him.)

HARTFORD [Continued]

Actually, we were in college together. She was pretty and vivacious -- everybody loved her. My folks thought she was great. My fraternity even made her our chapter's Sweetheart. That we were going to be married after we graduated was understood and expected. I think even then I knew deep inside that she was vain and self-centered. But I thought that I could change her. Boy, was I wrong.

(It dawns on him.)

Oh, man, how am I gonna explain this to the kids?

ELIZABETH

Tell Mike and Ashely the truth.

HARTFORD

I should.

ELIZABETH

But you won't.

(Hartford grunts, walks toward couch.)

Somebody's got to tell them about their mom.

HARTFORD

Not me. Let 'em figure it out for themselves.

(Turns.)

I'm not playing the heavy. Damn, this kills Saturday night. It's too late to get a babysitter now.

(Elizabeth walks to him, puts arm around his waist.)

ELIZABETH

It's OK, sweetie. Let's the four of us go to the movies.

HARTFORD

Yeah?

ELIZABETH

It'll be fun. As long as it's not "Ninja Turtles, Part 5."

HARTFORD

You're sure it's OK?

ELIZABETH

(Teases)

Of course. After all, it's the kids I really love.

HARTFORD

Yeah, right.

(An idea.)

You know, if you really like Mike and Ashley so much, we could make this permanent.

ELIZABETH

Nice try, Jim.

(Breaks, walks L.)

We talked about this last week. Everything's going so wonderfully. Why change things?

(Hartford takes a step to her.)

HARTFORD

OK, OK, I'm just old fashioned. Can't blame me for trying, can you?

ELIZABETH

No, it's just... Well, I don't know if I'm ready for the forever bit.

(Hartford hugs her from the back.)

Just give me some time. There's no hurry, is there?

HARTFORD

Sure, sure. And when some Adonis comes by, looking like a cross between Richard Gere and Mel Gibson...

(LOUIS SCHNEIDER enters the outer office L. Middle-aged, sloppy dresser -- seersucker pants, wrinkled shirt, loud tie.)

ELIZABETH

I drop you like a rock.

(Kiss. Schneider knocks on door.)

Party's over.

(She walks to door, opens it.)

Good morning, Mr. Schneider.

SCHNEIDER

Mornin' Lizzie, Jim.

(Crosses to Hartford. Shake hands.)

Got a couple of minutes?

ELIZABETH

(Smiles behind Schneider's back.)

Do you need me, Mr. Hartford?

HARTFORD

Ah, no Liz, not right now, thanks. We'll take care of that dictation later. Just call for Dr. Trudeau again.

(Elizabeth closes door, sits at her desk. Hartford sits at his desk.)

What's up, Big Lou?

SCHNEIDER

You got in touch with Trudeau yet?

HARTFORD

Not yet, Lou. But we're on it.

SCHNEIDER

Well, take care of it. The Compliance Department's on my butt. Their number two storm trooper, Hilda Klein, flew in last night. She's sitting in my office right now. She's gonna talk to you later.

(New subject.)

Do you think you can take some time next week to meet with the two new guys, Webber and Anthony?

(Hartford looks at daytimer.)

HARTFORD

Sure. Wednesday after market hours works for me.

SCHNEIDER

Thanks. They need all the help they can get. By the way, I talked to your buddy over at Voigt Brothers. I think he's gonna come over, and bring a couple of brokers with him. He's supposed to talk to the home office in a few weeks.

HARTFORD

He's a real good guy, Lou. I hope we can get him.

SCHNEIDER

Me too.

(Walks UL. Reads from paper. Grins.)

I was just lookin' at the commission runs, Jimmy. You're lookin' pretty good.

HARTFORD

(Knows something's up.)

Thanks, boss. But...?

(Schneider steps to desk.)

SCHNEIDER

Your numbers are kinda low on the Irwin Dillard funds. And I noticed you didn't sell any of that Q-Text Electronics stock that the Syndicate Department was pushing.

HARTFORD

(Heard this before.)

Oh, come on, Lou. My production's up this year. Besides, the funds are under performing and Q-Text's earnings looks shaky...

(GUS LILJENSTEIN enters the outer office L, waves at Elizabeth. In his late 60's and well-dressed, he is the type of man that would wear a suit to the supermarket. Kind to everyone. He is a legend in the firm. He goes R to the door and opens it, with the air of someone who is always welcome.)

SCHNEIDER

Look, Jimmy, the home office really wants us to push the in-house funds this quarter. And you know how the new issues work: "Scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." If you want allocation when the really good stuff comes out, you gotta sell some of the other ones, too. Besides, look at all the commission you're leavin' on the table...

(Gus enters.)

GUS

Not to mention the branch manager's bonuses. Good morning, gentlemen.

SCHNEIDER

Uh...

(Recovers)

Mornin' Gus! How's it hangin'? Haw!

(He shakes Gus' hand. Hartford stands and greets Gus. Glad to see his friend and mentor.)

HARTFORD

Morning Gus. Lou and I were just finishing.

(Gus holds up paper.)

GUS

Good! I have a research memo I'd like your opinion on.

SCHNEIDER

Well, I'll talk to you later, Jimmy.

(Starts toward door - stops.)

Say, Gus, any thoughts on what we talked about?

GUS

(Small smile.)

Still thinking, Lou.

SCHNEIDER

No reason for someone to be busting their butt at your age.

(Slaps Gus on the back.)

Good selling, men!

(Closes door as he leaves.)

SCHNEIDER [Continued]

Lookin' good, Lizzie.

(Exits L. Elizabeth buzzes Hartford on intercom.)

HARTFORD

Yes, Liz?

ELIZABETH

Sorry to interrupt you. I have to go down the hall for a few minutes.

HARTFORD

No problem, Liz. I'll mind the phones.

(Elizabeth rises and exits L. Hartford turns to Gus)

Gus, what was Big Lou talking about?

GUS

Our fearless leader wants me to retire.

(Gus sits on couch. Hartford sits in armchair L.)

HARTFORD

What? What the hell for?

GUS

For my health. And guess who gets to assign my accounts?

HARTFORD

Yeah. Why settle for branch manager's override when you can get all the commission? How the hell did he make manager?

GUS

Didn't you know? He's related to Dillard's wife.

HARTFORD

He is? Then what's he doing out here in the boonies?

GUS

They're grooming him for National Sales Manager, I hear.

HARTFORD

You've got to be kidding! That snake-oil salesman?

GUS

Who said you had to be smart to be a manager?

HARTFORD

But what about Quarterman? He's been doing a good job.

GUS

The word I get is that he wants to go into semi-retirement. He wants to start spending some of that fortune he's made over the years on that new wife of his. Trophy wives are very expensive, you know.

HARTFORD

Why, Gus, I've never known you to be so cynical.

(Gus laughs.)

But, Schneider as National Sales Manager...

GUS

Well, it will be your problem, not mine.

HARTFORD

(Surprised)

You're not really planning to retire, are you?

GUS

Of course not! Why do you think I have such a good marriage? At the office I keep out of Rosie's hair.

(Smiles.)

Jim, I love that woman, but there is no way I could spend 24-hours-a-day with her. It would put me in a home! She would want to drag me everywhere she went. I do not want to be one of those elderly gentlemen standing around holding his wife's handbag in the middle of the mall. No, they can put a monkey in as National Sales Manager, as far as I'm concerned. I've been around so long, they'll leave me alone. The only way I'm leaving here is feet first. There are benefits to being a legend -- if only I could convince Rosie of that.

HARTFORD

So how long has it been now, 30-35 years that you've been in the business?

GUS

Over 40, I'm afraid. I got out of the army right after Korea. Been here ever since.

HARTFORD

Y'know, Gus, I wouldn't have made it if it weren't for you. You taught me everything I know.

GUS

Well, someone had to shake out all that silly theory you picked up in business school and show you how the real world worked.

(Back to work.)

Anyway, let's look at this memo...

(Hartford joins Gus on couch.)

(SIDNEY SMITH enters the outer office L. Late 20's, sharp dresser. He's good-looking and he knows it. The office "barracuda" - a broker who goes after the others' clients. Kisses up to Schneider and Gus. He sees no one at Elizabeth's desk, looks around. Walks up to the desk and starts reading the papers on it. As if by a sixth sense, looks up and sees Elizabeth returning. He hurriedly sits down in armchair next to desk. Elizabeth enters L, unaware of Sidney's activity.)

SIDNEY

Good morning, Liz.

ELIZABETH

(Polite)

Good morning, Sid. Jim's in there with Mr. Liljenstein.

SIDNEY

Yeah, I know. I can wait.

(Leans over desk.)

Besides, I wanted to talk to you. How about Saturday night?

ELIZABETH

(Sweetly)

Sorry, Sidney. That's the night I wash my hair.

SIDNEY

Aw, c'mon, babe. How long are you gonna hold out?

ELIZABETH

(Gets back to work.)

Until a very hot place gets real cold.

SIDNEY

Aw, be nice. It'll be fun. I figure a little dinner, a little dancin', a little drinkin'...

(Eyebrows.)

(Hartford gets up, walks to desk RC, to use the intercom on the phone.)

ELIZABETH

(Looks at him. Smiles.)

A little sexual harassment.

SIDNEY

(Backs off.)

Hey! No way, Liz! C'mon, you know I ain't doing that! I just want us to be friends, you know? Jesus, you could get a guy in trouble!

(Sits chair L.)

ELIZABETH

I think you can handle that all by yourself, Sidney.

(Intercom buzzes.)

Yes, Mr. Hartford?

HARTFORD

Liz, any luck with Dr. Trudeau?

ELIZABETH

I'm afraid there's still no answer.

HARTFORD

Please keep trying, Liz. Thanks.

(Hartford hangs up intercom. Elizabeth gets on phone.)

GUS

Problem?

(Hartford sits in armchair L.)

HARTFORD

Yeah. Do you know Edward Trudeau, the plastic surgeon?

GUS

(Thinks)

Yes, I've heard of him. In fact, I remember he went to medical school with my daughter, Beverly. She said he could get pretty excitable at times. Is he a client of yours?

HARTFORD

Yeah. He bought Amalgamated Wire on margin a couple of weeks ago.

GUS

Amalgamated Wire! Let me guess, he got in just before it crashed.

HARTFORD

Yep.

GUS

And on margin! Why is it when clients pick losers they do it with borrowed money? It never fails!

HARTFORD

Tell me about it! He said his brother-in-law had a hot tip, so he loads up on the dog.

GUS

So when it acts like the Titanic...

HARTFORD

Right! Just about wipes out his portfolio. He had a \$50,000 margin call, but we couldn't get in touch with him. The Compliance Department ordered me to sell him out Wednesday.

GUS

Ouch! And of course your commission goes right out the window.

HARTFORD

Yeah. He still owes us mucho dinero, but I figure a couple of boob jobs and he'll have the money.

GUS

Who approved that kind of position? The home office?

HARTFORD

Nope. Our fearless leader did.

GUS

Lou? Is he taking any heat?

HARTFORD

He just told me Klien from the Compliance Department flew in last night. She's supposed to be in his office right now.

GUS

Did you try to talk this Dr. Trudeau out of doing the trade?

HARTFORD

I told him I thought Amalgamated Wire wasn't going anywhere, but he wasn't listening. I didn't want to put through the trade, but Trudeau might have pulled his account if I didn't do it. He was pretty set on buying it, and someone was gonna make the commission, so why not me? There was no way we could have known about the scandal. That came right out of left field a couple of days later.

GUS

Maybe you should have listened to yourself.

HARTFORD

Huh?

GUS

Sometimes you got to know when to fire your clients. It pays off in the long run. Well, let me get back to my desk.

(Gus stands up. Hartford follows.)

Jim, your hearing is better than mine. Is there someone out there with Elizabeth?

HARTFORD

Sidney, I think.

GUS

Oh joy. The Boy Wonder here to pick my brains again.

(Walks to door.)

HARTFORD

Maybe you ought to sell him a dog, Gus.

(Picks up account book from desk and follows.)

GUS

Who says I haven't? See you later.

(Opens door.)

Why, Sidney. Good morning.

SIDNEY

(Stands)

Good morning, Mr. Liljenstein! What a terrific looking tie you have on! How are you today?

(Gus shakes Sidney's hand.)

GUS

Fine, thank you.

SIDNEY

And Mrs. Liljenstein?

GUS

(Gives Hartford a look.)

She's fine, Sidney. Shopping to her heart's content.

SIDNEY

That's great!

(To Hartford.)

Morning, Jim.

HARTFORD

How you're doing, Sid?

SIDNEY

Doing great!

(Gus exits L - Sidney follows, talking at his back.)

SIDNEY [Continued]

You know, Mr. Liljenstein, I'd like to get your opinion on this stock I'm following. Would you mind?

(Exit L)

HARTFORD

Just like a puppy dog.

(Puts account book back with the others.)

(HILDA KLEIN enters L, carrying a briefcase. She is very strict and formal.)

KLEIN

Mr. James Hartford?

(Jim turns.)

My name is Hilda Klein. I'm from the Compliance Department.

HARTFORD

Yes, I'm Jim Hartford. How do you do, Ms. Klein?

(He offers his hand, but she does not take it. Awkward pause.)

Uh, this is my sales assistant, Elizabeth Lagarde.

ELIZABETH

Good morning, Ms. Klein.

KLEIN

Yes.

(To Hartford:)

I am here investigating the Trudeau affair. I would like to speak to you. When would it be convenient?

(She means now.)

HARTFORD

Right now is fine. Please step into my office. Liz, hold my calls, please.

(Hartford and Klein enter inner office. Hartford closes door. Klein sits in chair L, Hartford behind desk. Klein removes a file folder from her briefcase.)

Now, Ms. Klein, how may I help you?

KLEIN

First, just for the record, I'd like to review your background.

(Reads from file.)

Let's see... B.A. from Vanderbilt University, M.B.A. from the University of Chicago. You've been with Irwin, Dillard for the last 15 years. You hold the Series 7, 24 and 63, as well as your Life, Health and Variable Annuity insurance licenses. Made President's Council for the last three years. No previous complaints on file with either the Compliance Department, the N.A.S.D. or the SEC. Divorced for the last five years. You have custody of your two children, Michael and Ashley. Is this information correct?

HARTFORD

Yes.

KLEIN

Mr. Hartford, the home office is very concerned over this matter. Very concerned. As you know, Irwin, Dillard has an excellent record with the N.A.S.D. and the exchanges on compliance issues. And we intend to keep it that way.

(Reads from paper.)

Dr. Trudeau still owes the firm \$50,000. We wish to know what steps are being taken to collect this sum.

HARTFORD

We have been trying to contact Dr. Trudeau for over a week. He and his wife are apparently out of town. We have left messages at his office and on his answering machine at home.

KLEIN

I see. Do you foresee any problems collecting the funds?

HARTFORD

No, I don't. Dr. Trudeau is a very prominent physician in this town.

KLEIN

I hope so, for your sake. Mr. Hartford, you understand the firm's procedure in cases like this. We give the broker sufficient time to contact the client and satisfy the debt. However, if the broker is not successful in a reasonable period of time, we must deduct the loss from their commissions. Their net commissions.

HARTFORD

Hey, wait a minute! That's almost half of what I make!

KLEIN

Then I suggest you contact your client.

HARTFORD

(Polite cooperation is gone.)

Now look here, Ms. Klein! I know the rules as well as anybody. I went by the book. The firm OK'd Dr. Trudeau's trade. The way I see it, the firm ought to share in the loss. I can understand docking my gross commissions, but not my net!

KLEIN

I'm afraid I can't authorize that. You'll have to take that up with Mr. Irwin or Mr. Dillard.

(Thinks he doesn't have a chance.)

HARTFORD

(Thinks.)

I guess I'll talk to Bob next weekend when I see him.

KLEIN

(Off-balanced)

Oh? You're flying up to the home office to see Mr. Irwin?

HARTFORD

(Offhandedly)

Yeah, I'm invited to play in a member/guest tournament at his golf club. I've gotta bring my kids, though. His wife, Linda, insisted I bring them along and stay at their place. I guess that's to be expected -- after all, she's Ashley's godmother.

KLEIN

(At a loss for words.)

Ashley -- your daughter?

(Hartford nods.)

How nice.

(Suddenly very pleasant.)

Well, I'm sure everything will be taken care of. I suppose I've taken up enough of your time. I'll let you get back to work.

(Rises.)

Thank you very much.

(Extends hand - Hartford takes it.)

HARTFORD

Don't worry, we'll get in touch with Dr. Trudeau.

(Escorts her to the door.)

KLEIN

Yes, I'm sure you will.

(To Elizabeth:)

Good day, Miss Lagarde!

(Exits L)

ELIZABETH

Thank you, Ms. Klien.

(To Hartford:)

Any problems?

HARTFORD

With that brown-noising little weasel? Nothing I couldn't handle. The day I can't manage a bureaucrat is the day I retire.

(To himself.)

I just hope she doesn't find out there isn't a golf trip. Liz, I'm going to go down to the research library. I won't be long.

(CRYSTAL MYERS enters L carrying a coffee cup. In her early 20's, she's given to dressing in bright colors and short skirts - but still presentable, not slutty. Her exuberance is a counterpoint to Elizabeth's reserve.)

CRYSTAL

Morning Mr. Hartford.

HARTFORD

Good morning, Crystal.

(Hartford exits L. Crystal sits.)

CRYSTAL

Morning Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

Morning, Crystal. Got any big plans for the weekend?

CRYSTAL

I'm going to get Frank to do some chores around the house. You know, the fluorescent light in my kitchen has been burnt out for a month!

ELIZABETH

Why don't you change it?

CRYSTAL

What! Me climbing up some ladder with Mr. Macho lying on his big old fat backside on the couch? No way, girl! And he better change it if wants us to go to that big tractor pull Saturday night.

ELIZABETH

You said you liked it last year.

CRYSTAL

Yeah, some of those guys do look pretty cute in their jumpsuits. There's nothing like tight buns. You look awful tired, girl.

(Grins)

Getting any sleep?

ELIZABETH

(Embarrassed)

Crystal!

CRYSTAL

(Conspiratorially)

So tell me, Liz, how's everything going?

(Motions with head to where Hartford had exited.)

ELIZABETH

(Happily)

It's wonderful. Tomorrow makes one year since we started going out together.

(Sighs.)

We were going to go to Tavern Under the Oaks, but his ex-wife isn't taking the kids this weekend. So, we'll do something with them.

CRYSTAL

Oh, Liz, that's so disappointing!

ELIZABETH

If that woman was in front of me, I'd strangle her. But, you know, I think Jim was more disappointed than I was. He really wanted to make it a special night for me.

CRYSTAL

(Friendly jealousy)

Oh, you are so lucky! I would die for someone like Jim.

ELIZABETH

(Alarmed)

Crystal, keep it down!

(At that moment, Schneider walks down the hall, Sidney following, talking.)

SIDNEY

(To Schneider's back.)

Mr. Schneider, can I see you for a moment? I'm working on this presentation for a retirement plan seminar, and I just know if you look at it, you could make just great...

(Voice fades as they exit.)

ELIZABETH

(Lower voice)

You're the only one I've told. It's so hard keeping it quiet around here. You know how some people are. If they found out, things could get ugly for Jim.

CRYSTAL

(Gives Elizabeth a look.)

For Jim? And I suppose they would leave you alone?

ELIZABETH

(Confident)

No one's going to find out.

CRYSTAL

(Laughs)

Then you better get that look off your face.

ELIZABETH

What look?

CRYSTAL

That look that says "He's mine!" every time you're in the same room with him!

ELIZABETH

(Shocked)

Is it that obvious?

CRYSTAL

Uh huh.

ELIZABETH

(Embarrassed again)

Oh, no! I can't help it!

(Covers her face.)

CRYSTAL

Don't worry, Liz. All the people around here have eyes only for stock quotes.

(Sighs.)

If only I could feel that way!

ELIZABETH

(Looks up.)

Crystal, you're married!

CRYSTAL

Don't I know it. Maybe you can get Jim to give lessons to Frank. His idea of romance is a gift certificate from Fredrick's of Hollywood. I can't remember the last time we went out to a nice restaurant. I keep telling him, "Baby, bowling and McDonald's don't count!"

(Pause.)

So, are you going to marry Mr. Wonderful?

ELIZABETH

Oh, Crystal, don't you start.

CRYSTAL

(Surprised)

You mean he's popped the question? Good going, girl!

ELIZABETH

(Looks down.)

We've talked about it...

(Fidgets. Crystal frowns.)

I just don't know if I'm ready to be a stepmother, yet. I mean, I love Mike and Ashley, and they seem to like me, ... it's just such a big step...

CRYSTAL

Well, you better land him quick while you still got him on the hook. He's just the most eligible bachelor in town.

(Looks at watch.)

Coffee break's over! Back to the grindstone.

CRYSTAL [Continued]

(Sighs.)

Why can't I have someone nice to work for, like Jim or Mr. Gus? Those two new guys I'm working with -- Webber and Anthony? They're so clueless that they got lost flying to the home office for new broker training.

ELIZABETH

What? Got lost? How can you get lost on an airplane?

CRYSTAL

You didn't hear about that? Well, let me tell you, they figured out a way. I booked them on a direct flight, just one stopover. They didn't have to make any connections, just stay on the airplane. But, just like every other man you've ever known, they didn't pay attention to half of what I was saying. So the two geniuses got off the plane when it landed for the stopover.

ELIZABETH

No!

CRYSTAL

Yes! They walked on down to baggage claim as big as life and stood around, waiting and waiting. Finally they realized something's wrong when their luggage didn't show up. By that time, that plane was long gone. They couldn't catch another flight until the next morning. Of course, the main office goes nuts looking for them. By breakfast time, everybody at the conference had heard what happened. So when our two heroes walked in late to the first meeting, everyone gave 'em a standing ovation!

(Rises.)

Want to grab a salad across the street for lunch?

ELIZABETH

Sure.

(Phone rings.)

CRYSTAL

OK, see you at twelve.

(Exits L.)

ELIZABETH

(Into phone:)

Mr. Hartford's office. Oh, hi, Rhonda. You have a trade execution for me?...

(Hartford enters L)

Got it. Thanks!

(Hangs up.)

Jim, we bought GM at 40 and five-eighths.

HARTFORD

Thanks.

(He walks into office, Elizabeth follows, leaves door open. Hartford checks computer. Elizabeth stands in doorway.)

Hmm... Hey, It's up a point! Good pick, Liz.

ELIZABETH

Thanks. How about some of the commission?

HARTFORD

Wait until bonus time.

(Pause.)

You know, Liz, you should be doing this yourself.

(She laughs.)

No, really. You're a college graduate, and you know as much about this business as anybody. Certainly more than Sidney.

ELIZABETH

Faint praise never won a fair heart.

HARTFORD

So what do you think?

ELIZABETH

I don't think so.

(She puts up her hand as he begins to interrupt.)

ELIZABETH [Continued]

There's more to this job than having a sense of the markets. Jim, you have to sell yourself to your clients and prospects everyday.

(Hartford sits down.)

Look at the hours you put in. You're here at seven every morning and you seldom get home before six. And Saturday morning every other weekend.

HARTFORD

(Defensively)

C'mon, Liz. Being a broker is a 24-hour job. You know that.

ELIZABETH

I know that being a workaholic put Daddy in an early grave! And it's no guarantee that your clients are going to listen to you. I can't count the times you came up with a terrific proposal for someone, only to get shot down. Take Rev. Carlson. You worked two weeks on a financial plan, and what does he do? He buys an emu farm! No, thanks. I can't take the rejection.

(Sidney enters the outer office, overhears.)

HARTFORD

It doesn't happen that often.

ELIZABETH

(Smiles)

Besides, when I leave work, it stays at the office. Unlike some people I know. "Moneyline" on CNN, "Wall Street Week" on PBS. Jim, there's more to life than work.

HARTFORD

(Grins)

I guess I need someone to take my mind off business. Any suggestions?

ELIZABETH

(Gives him a sexy look.)

If your ex-wife was picking up your kids today like she was supposed to, I'd fix you. Remember the little red number?

HARTFORD

(Remembers)

Oh, God, yes! I hate that woman.

ELIZABETH

Learning patience will do you some good. Remember the old saying, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

HARTFORD

Yeah, it affects other parts of the body, too.

ELIZABETH

Promises, promises.

(Turns, jumps as she sees Sidney)

Oh! Sidney!

SIDNEY

(Sly grin)

Excuse me, Liz. I need to talk to Jim.

(Walks into inner office.)

Got a minute, Jim?

HARTFORD

(Trapped)

Uh, sure, Sid.

(Elizabeth exits into outer office.
Sidney closes door. Elizabeth listens
in.)

SIDNEY

So that's it. Gotta hand it to you, Jimbo. You've got good taste.

HARTFORD

What are you talking about?

(Sidney gestures towards the outer office.)

SIDNEY

Aw, come on! What do you think I'm talking about?

(Hartford, angry, takes a step to Sidney.)

HARTFORD

What the hell do you want?

SIDNEY

(Smoothly)

Cool it, Jimbo! I'm sure we can work something out.

(Crosses UL.)

After all, we don't want the head office to hear about this.

HARTFORD

What difference does that make?

SIDNEY

(Turns.)

Remember what happened to Clark Thompson's sales assistant? Violation of company rules. She was offered transfer or resignation.

HARTFORD

But she was involved with a broker at another firm!

SIDNEY

Yeah, but you never know.

(Big smile. A step to Hartford.)

Look, you both are my friends. I don't want anything to happen to you. Or to Liz.

(Pause.)

HARTFORD

What's the deal, Smith?

SIDNEY

(Turns.)

Well, I've been thinking. You've got so many accounts -- I don't see how you have the time to manage them all. So, I figure I can help. It's the least I can do for my good buddy. Say we split the commissions on... the Anderson accounts.

(Sidney sits on couch. Hartford stares at him. Pause.)

HARTFORD

Nice choice, Smith. Been reading Schneider's commission runs?

SIDNEY

(Playing the innocent.)

Moi? No, I happen to know the Andersons through my family. Know 'em pretty well, I'd say.

HARTFORD

Sure. And I'm the king of Siam.

SIDNEY

Just think it over. We'll talk about it later.

(Gets up, crosses to door, opens it - Elizabeth by this time is back at her desk.)

See you later, Liz.

(Exits L. Elizabeth rises, goes to door.)

HARTFORD

Damn, Damn, Damn!

ELIZABETH

Oh, God, Jim!

(Goes to him - embrace.)

I'm so sorry...

HARTFORD

It's not your fault, honey.

ELIZABETH

One little slip...

(She looks at him.)

What does he want?

HARTFORD

Blackmail. Wants to go joint on the Anderson accounts, for starters.

ELIZABETH

Those are some of your biggest accounts! Jim, you can't! You know that would only be the beginning.

(Thinks)

The hell with it. We'll ride it out. He can't hurt us.

HARTFORD

No, Liz, that won't work.

(Breaks, crosses UL.)

Look what would happen to your career if this got out. "She slept with her boss," they'll say.

ELIZABETH

(Turns away.)

You make it sound so cheap.

HARTFORD

(Turns to her.)

That's the way those vultures around here would see it. I'd survive, but you wouldn't. Even my friendship with Bob Irwin wouldn't stop the talking.

(Angry)

And that little bastard knows it! Damn him! Damn double standard! I won't let him do that to you!

(Elizabeth steps to him.)

ELIZABETH

You're not saying you're going to let him blackmail you, are you?

HARTFORD

Of course not! But we can't just ignore it, either. We've got to do something!

ELIZABETH

Yes, but what?

HARTFORD

I don't know!

(Hartford turns L.)

HARTFORD [Continued]

Jesus, what a day! First Charlotte, then Klein and now this! How much worse can it get?

(DR. A. EDWARD TRUDEAU breaks in, waving a gun.)

TRUDEAU

HARTFORD!!!

(Hartford and Elizabeth spin around, stare at the gun.)

ELIZABETH

(To Hartford:)

How's this?

(Blackout.)

ACT I

SCENE 2

(Scene: Hartford's office a few minutes later. Hartford and Elizabeth are standing UR with their hands up while Trudeau, next to desk, covers them with his gun. Trudeau is middle-aged and high strung. He is wearing an overcoat over his hospital scrubs. The door is closed.)

HARTFORD

(Trying to calm Trudeau down)

Now Ed, please put down that gun. You're scaring Miss Lagarde here.

(Trudeau is angry and nervous - waving the gun around.)

TRUDEAU

Keep your hands up, you thief! You too, Miss! Don't move, I'm warning you!

HARTFORD

But Ed, you can't get away with this. You stuck your gun in the receptionist's face. She must have called the police by now.

TRUDEAU

I'm sorry, but she wouldn't tell me where your office was!

HARTFORD

Well, you see, Ed, she's been trained to call us so we can meet you at the receptionist's desk. It's more professional that way.

TRUDEAU

Professional, ha! Professional thieves, all of you! I'm on to your game now, you sorry son-of-a-bitch, and you won't get away with it!

(Schneider enters the outer office slowly during this. Brushes against desk LC, knocking over some files. TRUDEAU hears, spins.)

TRUDEAU [Continued]

What's that? WHO'S OUT THERE??

(Schneider hits the deck.)

GET AWAY FROM HERE! I'M WARNING YOU!

(Schneider crawls on hands and knees -- exits L. Trudeau turns back to Hartford and Elizabeth.)

OK, OK. Uh... Hartford, move that chair around here.

(Hartford moves arm chair R in front of desk.)

Now sit! Miss, take this rope and tie him to the chair...

(He hands Elizabeth a rope from his coat pocket. Elizabeth ties up Hartford.)

That's it. Now move this other chair and sit down, please.

(Elizabeth does so. Hartford and she are back-to-back. Trudeau pockets the gun and pulls out second piece of rope)

HARTFORD

Ed...

TRUDEAU

Quiet, Hartford!

(He finishes tying her up)

All right, now what did you want to say?

HARTFORD

Ed, this is between you and me. Please, why don't you let Miss Lagarde go?

ELIZABETH & TRUDEAU

(Together)

NO!

HARTFORD & TRUDEAU

(Together)

What did you say?

(Both look at her.)

ELIZABETH

(Bravely)

Dr. Trudeau, I won't leave without Mr. Hartford.

HARTFORD

(Trying to get her out of there.)

Liz, for God's sake!

ELIZABETH

(Turns to Hartford, passionately)

I won't leave you!

HARTFORD

Stop talking stupid!

ELIZABETH

(Offended)

How dare you!

TRUDEAU

QUIET! STOP ARGUING!

(They shut up.)

No one is going anywhere! If the SWAT Team comes, I need hostages!

ELIZABETH

(Puzzled)

SWAT Team?

HARTFORD

SWAT Team? Ed, this town's way too small for a SWAT Team.

VOICE ON LOUDSPEAKER FROM
OUTSIDE

ALL RIGHT IN THERE! GIVE YOURSELVES UP! THIS IS THE SWAT
TEAM!

HARTFORD

Oh, God...

TRUDEAU

(Excited)

You see! You see!

(Moves toward window.)

They'll never take me alive!

(Opens the window and calls out.)

STAY BACK, COPPERS!

(Leaves window open.)

HARTFORD

(Amazed. To Elizabeth)

Who does he think he is -- John Dillinger?

(Turns head to Trudeau.)

Ed! Calm down! There is no SWAT Team!

(Trudeau turns to him.)

Just look out the window... CAREFULLY, YOU IDIOT!

(Trudeau ducks. Now he peers carefully over the sill.)

ELIZABETH

Jim?

HARTFORD

(To Elizabeth - explains)

The last thing I need is a dead client.

(To Trudeau - the voice of reason)

Now Ed, do you see any armored cars?

TRUDEAU

No.

HARTFORD

Any helicopters?

TRUDEAU

No.

HARTFORD

Any hordes of sharpshooters dressed like ninja warriors?

TRUDEAU

No.

HARTFORD

It's just Police Chief Dailey trying to scare you. So stop worrying. Let's calm down and talk about this...

TRUDEAU

(Over the top again)

What's there to talk about?? You stole my money!

HARTFORD

(Had enough)

Like hell I did! You told me to buy Amalgamated Wire in your margin account!

(Trudeau moves C)

TRUDEAU

You should have told me not to!

HARTFORD

I tried! You said your brother-in-law had a tip!

TRUDEAU

What does he know? He's an idiot!

HARTFORD

That's not my problem!

TRUDEAU

You should have told me the stock was falling!

HARTFORD

I couldn't! The stock crashed because the Wall Street Journal reported that the CEO raided the company's treasury and ran off with the auditor, who, as it turns out, was also his mistress! But the Journal comes out in the morning, before the market opens. The stock opened down 30 points!

(Trudeau crosses UL.)

TRUDEAU

And then, you sold me out, just before it gained back five points!

HARTFORD

I had to! You didn't meet your Reg-T margin call!

(Tries to explain.)

Ed, you bought the stock on margin. That means you borrowed money from us to buy that stock. You put up the rest of your portfolio as collateral. When you buy stock on margin and it goes down, you've got to put up more money. That's what we call a margin call. That's the law. We tried to call you for days, but we couldn't get in touch with you. Where the hell were you?

TRUDEAU

If you must know, Trixie and I were on a Caribbean cruise. Medical convention. God, was that depressing! On a boat in the middle of the ocean with a thousand plastic surgeons right after the FDA report on silicon implants!

HARTFORD

Well, we couldn't get in touch with you, so we had to sell you out. According to federal securities law, if the client fails to put up more money, we have to close the position. We had no choice!

TRUDEAU

(Turns to Hartford)

I don't care! You did it too soon!

HARTFORD

I didn't know they caught them in Buenos Aries! And found their Swiss bank account! That didn't come out until the next day!

TRUDEAU

BUT I'M BROKE!

(Begins to sob.)

You don't understand! After the FDA report, my business has dried up! All that's left is liposuction work. What is that to an artist like me? Besides, that would barely cover my malpractice insurance premiums!

(Schneider enters the outer office slowly, keeping the desk between him and the door.)

HARTFORD

(Calming down)

Ed, I'm sure we can work something out...

SCHNEIDER

Listen up in there! This is Lou Schneider, the branch manager! Don't shoot! Dr. Trudeau, is that you?

TRUDEAU

Yes, what do you want?

SCHNEIDER

Dr. Trudeau, I know you're upset. Heck, all of us here at Irwin Dillard are. We know you've lost a great deal of money. But this is not the answer. That's what the courts are for.

(Pause.)

Of course, you know that Irwin, Dillard & Co. is in no way responsible for the actions of Mr. Hartford. But we'll be glad to help you make sure that justice is done. So, please put down your weapon and let us work together...

TRUDEAU

AARRGG!!

(Shoots at ceiling. Schneider yelps, hurriedly exits L.)

HARTFORD

(To Elizabeth)

If we ever get out of here, remind me to kill Schneider.

ELIZABETH

Why is it that nothing he does surprises me?

(Phone rings.)

HARTFORD

(To Trudeau)

That'll be for you.

(Trudeau crosses to desk, picks up phone.)

TRUDEAU

Yes?... What? No, this is not Jim Hartford! Just get...

What?... NO, I DON'T KNOW WHERE IBM IS TRADING!

(He slams down the receiver.)

ELIZABETH

(To Hartford)

Mr. Marcello.

(Phone rings again.)

TRUDEAU

(Picks up phone, yells)

What is it now??.. Oh, yes, is this the police?...

(Calms down a bit.)

Lt. Barker? Fine. My name is Dr. A. Edward Trudeau. I have come here to get my money back! These thieves have -- what's that?... No, just a warning shot into the ceiling. No one has been hurt -- yet!... My demands?... No, I just want my money! That's all!... How much? \$250,000! That's

what they stole from me, those -- What? What do you mean?
A check will be fine... No, not in small bills! I'm no
crook!... What? Oh, I am holding James M. Hartford and his
secretary...

ELIZABETH
(Corrects him)

Sales assistant.

TRUDEAU

Oh, sorry.

(To phone)

Sales assistant... ah -

(Looks at Elizabeth.)

ELIZABETH

Elizabeth Lagarde.

TRUDEAU
(To phone)

Elizabeth Lagarde. Now, I want no police in the building,
you got that?

(Triumphantly)

I have a gun and a bomb!

HARTFORD

A bomb?

(Looks around.)

SCHNEIDER
(Offstage)

A BOMB??

(Sound of feet running.)

ELIZABETH
(Looking around.)

What bomb?

HARTFORD

I don't see one.

(To Trudeau)

Ed, do you have a bomb?

TRUDEAU

(To Hartford, hand on phone.)

Quiet!

(Back into phone)

I will call you later if I require anything. Oh, oh, by the way, I want a large pepperoni pizza with extra cheese! And a 2-liter bottle of Diet Coke! That's all. Goodbye!

(Hangs up. To Hartford)

Of course, I don't have a bomb! I'm a plastic surgeon, not a terrorist!

ELIZABETH

Could have fooled me.

HARTFORD

Then why..?

TRUDEAU

Don't you know anything? You got to keep the police off balance! They might throw tear gas in here!

(Suddenly, there is the sound of a machine gun going off outside. Trudeau screams and hits the desk behind the desk. Hartford and Elizabeth also scream and shut their eyes. The gunfire stops. No one is hurt. Everyone looks around)

ELIZABETH

Jim, are you all right??

HARTFORD

Yeah, and you?

(Elizabeth nods.)

What the hell was that??

(Looks at window - amazed.)

All that shooting and they missed the window?

(Trudeau rises up to the window slowly. Yells to police.)

TRUDEAU

ARE YOU CRAZY OUT THERE??

VOICE ON LOUDSPEAKER FROM
OUTSIDE

SORRY ABOUT THAT! OFFICER "DOOFUS" HERE WAS PLAYING WITH
HIS M-16, AND IT WENT OFF! IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!

TRUDEAU

WELL, BE MORE CAREFUL NEXT TIME! SOMEBODY COULD GET HURT!

(Turns into room.)

Sheesh! You'd think with all the taxes we pay, Chief Dailey
could train those clowns!

HARTFORD

So now what?

TRUDEAU

I get what I came for! Give me my \$250,000!

HARTFORD

Ed, I don't have \$250,000 in cash. In fact, I don't have
\$250,000, period.

ELIZABETH

(Sarcastically)

Leading me down the garden path, I see.

HARTFORD

(To Elizabeth)

Oh, hush. You get divorced and see what happens.

(To Trudeau)

Ed, you made the trade. You borrowed the money. I'm sorry.
There's nothing I can do.

TRUDEAU

Sorry doesn't cut it! You...

(Phone rings. Trudeau crosses back to
desk and answers phone.)

Yes?... What? Last trade on GM? Look, I'm not a... OK,
OK, wait a minute...

(Puts down gun. Looks at computer
screen.)

Hmm, let's see... 41 and seven-eighths, I think... Oh, uh, thank you.

(Hangs up.)

HARTFORD

(To Elizabeth)

Up 1 and a quarter. That's my girl!

TRUDEAU

(Interested)

Is this what you do all day?

HARTFORD

Some of it.

TRUDEAU

This computer screen is fascinating! It's much better than the one on my PC back at the office.

HARTFORD

It should be, for what we're paying for it. That's real-time stuff, Ed.

TRUDEAU

(Looks up.)

Really? Can you get news and research? Oh! I see! Press the "news" button... Wow! This is great...!

(Phone rings.)

Hello?... IBM? Uh, wait a minute...

(Fiddles with keyboard. To himself:)

Let's see, "I-B-M", press "enter"... Got it!

(Into the phone:)

73 and a quarter, unchanged... OK, bye!

(Hangs up.)

HARTFORD

(To himself)

I don't believe it.

TRUDEAU

(Getting into it.)

Ha! The price just changed!

(Looks up.)

Just as it happens?

ELIZABETH

That's right.

TRUDEAU

This is so neat.

(Phone rings.)

Hello... No, I'm sorry. Mr. Hartford is -- "tied up" at the moment.

(Smiles at his own joke.)

May I help you?

HARTFORD

(Shocked - to Elizabeth)

He's taking over my job!

TRUDEAU

Woolworth? Let's see... "W"....?

ELIZABETH

No! Woolworth is "Z."

(Hartford gives her a look.)

TRUDEAU

Thanks!

(Works keyboard. To phone:)

Uh, Woolworth is at 15... Wal-Mart?

(Looks at Elizabeth.)

ELIZABETH

"W-M-T."

HARTFORD

Hey! Just whose side are you on?

ELIZABETH

Just being helpful.

(Winks.)

TRUDEAU

(On phone)

Wal-Mart is at 24 and a half... K-Mart?

(To Elizabeth)

"K-M-T"?

ELIZABETH

"K-M."

TRUDEAU

(Nods, works keyboard again. On phone:)

K-Mart's at 13 and three-eights. OK, bye.

(Hangs up. To Elizabeth:)

How can you remember all that?

ELIZABETH

It's like a language. There's a symbol guide right on the desk.

TRUDEAU

(Looks down.)

Oh, I see. Thank you, Miss Lagarde.

ELIZABETH

My friends call me Liz.

TRUDEAU

(Smiles.)

OK, Liz.

HARTFORD

(Annoyed)

And we're just one big happy family, aren't we?

TRUDEAU

Quiet, Hartford! I'm not done with you!

(Opens symbol guide.)

ELIZABETH

(Sotto voice)

If you let him calm down, we might get out of this mess.

(Phone rings -- Trudeau answers.)

TRUDEAU

Hello... Yes, this is Mr. Hartford's office. Who?...
Larry Durbin?...

(Hartford starts.)

Sorry, Mr. Durbin, he's not available...

HARTFORD

Durbin?? Ed! Ed, let me have that phone!

(Trudeau shakes his head.)

Let me have it! I gotta talk to him!

TRUDEAU

(Hand over the receiver. To Hartford:)
You've got to be kidding!

HARTFORD

C'mon, please! This is important! Really!

TRUDEAU

(Looks at him, thinks)
Well, all right.

(To phone)

Hold on.

(To Hartford)

No funny business!

(Trudeau comes around to the front of the desk. He puts the phone under Hartford's chin.)

HARTFORD

Hello, Larry? How are you doing? No, no, I'm doing fine... No, I've haven't replaced Liz, just someone answering the phone. Look, thanks for returning my call. I was looking at your portfolio and I think we should unload the Kansas Mining stock. Gold is going nowhere... Well, yeah, if the world was coming to an end... It is? Really?... Saddam Hussein is the Antichrist?

(Rolls eyes.)

You got that from reading Nostradamus? No kidding. Well, in that case, you want to double up?... Sure, we'll get another thousand shares -- huh? Hey, who's on the line?... Lt. Barker, this is Jim Hartford. Would you please get off the line? I'm talking to a client!

(Tries to put on his best face.)

Larry, don't worry, I'll take care of that trade for you...
Oh, no, nothing to do with me! They're, ah, just checking
the lines. You know, the Emergency Broadcast System. I'm
putting in your order right now! Let me go. Talk to you
later. Bye!...

HARTFORD [Continued]

(Changes gears.)

Lieutenant, I'm fine! Just let me put in this trade...

(Trudeau takes phone from him.)

TRUDEAU

(Into phone)

Listening in to my calls, huh? You better stop pushing your
luck, Barker, or you'll be sorry!

(Hangs up.)

HARTFORD

Can I have the phone back?

TRUDEAU

No!

HARTFORD

Ed, I've got to put through this trade!

(Trudeau, after a pause, puts the phone
under Hartford's chin again.)

TRUDEAU

There! Happy?

HARTFORD

Uh, Ed?

TRUDEAU

What is it now??

HARTFORD

I can't dial.

TRUDEAU

(Groans.)

What's the number?

HARTFORD

"2-4-5."

(Trudeau dials. Hartford waits --)

Oh, hell, I forgot! The police must have evacuated the building! Ed, we'll need to call the home office. Just hang up and hit the #3 speed-dial key.

(Trudeau does so.)

Hello? This is Jim Hartford. Give me the trading desk, please?... No, I can't dial it myself! And I better not get the voice mail!... Trading desk? This is Jim Hartford. I've got a buy order... Uh, no, I can't send you a wire. We're, uh, down right now... OK, I need to buy 1,000 shares of Kansas Mining, symbol "K-M-X-C", that's "king" "mike" "x-ray" "charlie", at the market, unsolicited. Account number -- oh, hell!

(To Trudeau)

Ed, please look behind Liz's desk and get the "C-D" book? It's on top of the filing cabinet.

(To phone)

Hang on, trading...

(Trudeau grumbles. Makes a big production going into the outer office, like a commando movie. Opens the door and jumps out, gun in both hands in front of him. Jumps and spins left and right as he works his way to the hall L. Looks around. Works his way back around the desk to the filing cabinet. Grabs a book and starts to move back towards the inner office, when he checks the book.)

TRUDEAU

Damn!

(Trudeau returns the book to the top of the cabinet and gets the correct one. He then dives through the open door into the inner office. He shuts the door and brings the book to Hartford.)

HARTFORD

Thanks, Ed. Just open it for Liz. Honey, can you give me the account number?

ELIZABETH

A few more pages, please.

(Reads from account book)

"4-4-8- 9-7-1-9."

HARTFORD

(Into phone)

"4-4-8-9-7-1-9." Thank you, trading. Bye.

(Trudeau takes and hangs up phone, puts account book on desk.)

Thank you, Ed.

TRUDEAU

Just don't forget who's in charge here! And what's this "honey" bit? Liz is your girlfriend?

HARTFORD

"Honey?" Who said "honey?" Did I say "honey?"

(Both Elizabeth and Trudeau nod.)

Sorry, Liz. It kinda slipped out.

ELIZABETH

It's OK. Now we're even.

TRUDEAU

What is this, some kind of deep dark secret? I thought you were divorced. Liz, you aren't married, are you?

(Sidney sneaks into the outer office. Goes over to the desk. Looks for and finds Hartford's account books. Moves over to the filing cabinet and begins to read them.)

HARTFORD

No, she's not. It's long story, Ed, and it's personal, if you don't mind.

TRUDEAU

Well, excuse me.

(Trudeau looks for something else to do.
Turns to computer.)

How do you get research on this thing?

ELIZABETH

(Slyly)

It's kind of complicated. If you untie me, I can show you.

(Hartford looks at her anxiously.)

TRUDEAU

(Considers this)

Well, I guess that would be all right.

(Gets up and starts toward her.)

(Crystal enters L, sees Sidney.)

CRYSTAL

(Yells)

Sidney! What the hell are you doing??

(Sidney jumps, dropping the book.
Trudeau starts, grabs gun from desk.)

TRUDEAU

What the hell!

(To door)

FREEZE!!

(Crystal and Sidney throw their hands
into the air. Trudeau runs to the door
and pulls it open, waving the gun.)

YOU OUT THERE! GET IN HERE!

SIDNEY

(Scared almost out of his wits.)

Don't shoot me! Don't shoot me! Please God, don't shoot
me!

(He and Crystal march into the inner
office with their hands in the air.
Trudeau waves the gun towards the
couch.)

TRUDEAU

Over to the couch! Now!

(They cross L to the couch, Crystal looking at Elizabeth. Sidney only has eyes for the gun.)

CRYSTAL

Liz, are you all right?

ELIZABETH

Crystal, what are you and Sidney doing here? Have you lost your minds?

HARTFORD

Are you nuts? What's going on? What were you yelling about?

TRUDEAU

Quiet, everyone! Now, who are you?

CRYSTAL

Crystal Myers. I'm a sales assistant here.

TRUDEAU

And you?

SIDNEY

M-my name is S-Sidney Smith III. I'm a stockbroker.

TRUDEAU

(His face darkens.)

Another thief!

(Thinks)

"Smith." Hey, you related to the Smiths in town?

SIDNEY

My dad's Sidney Smith Jr., the attorney.

TRUDEAU

I know him...

SIDNEY

You do, sir? That's great...

TRUDEAU

That bastard sued me for malpractice once. I won, but it cost me a bundle in legal fees! Your daddy has to be the most crooked lawyer I've ever met - and that's saying a lot!

Why did you come up here? What were you up to? And you, Miss Myers...

CRYSTAL

Mrs. Myers.

TRUDEAU

Mrs. Myers. Why were you yelling? What was going on out there?

CRYSTAL

(Gives Sidney a look of disgust)

I saw this rat creeping up here. "Where's he going?" I think to myself. I can't imagine Sidney doing something brave. Sneaky, but not brave. So I says to myself, "I'd better go and see what he's up to." It was better than hanging around outside. If the cops aren't trying to look up your dress, they're spraying bullets all over the place! So, I followed Sidney in here.

(Sidney squirms.)

I caught him looking through Mr. Hartford's account books!

SIDNEY

(Desperately)

That's a lie!

(Crystal hits his shoulder.)

Ow!

ELIZABETH

(Shocked)

You slime!

HARTFORD

(Disgusted)

I knew you were dirt, Smith, but this is a new low. Couldn't you wait until I was dead?

TRUDEAU

(Puzzled)

Excuse me. What are account books?

ELIZABETH

(To Trudeau)

Remember that book Jim asked you to bring in? That's one of them. Those books are where we record all of our client

data, along with their investments and financial information.

(Glares at Sidney.)

They're highly confidential.

TRUDEAU

(To Sidney, offended)

He's his father's son, all right.

SIDNEY

You got me all wrong! I swear! I was just coming up here to see if I could help!

(No answer.)

Who are you gonna believe, her or me?

(Looks from face to face. Everyone is stone-faced.)

TRUDEAU

You, Crystal, come here.

(Crystal gets up, hands still raised.)

Untie Liz here. Just Liz.

(She does so.)

Liz, you stay put. Now, Crystal, go tie up young Smith there.

(Gestures at Sidney.)

CRYSTAL

With pleasure!

(Crosses to couch. Proceeds with her task with relish.)

SIDNEY

Ow! Not so tight! That hurts!

(The more he complains, the tighter Crystal binds him.)

TRUDEAU

(After she finishes)

All right, now sit down! And be careful! I'm a dangerous man!

(Everyone sits still.)

HARTFORD

What now, Ed?

TRUDEAU

How the hell should I know? You think I do this for a living?

(He scratches his head.)

What am I going to do with you?

(Knock on the door. Trudeau spins.)

WHO'S THERE?

(Trudeau yanks the door open. There stands Gus, hat on head, holding a pizza box, with a bottle of soda under his arm. Everyone is amazed.)

GUS

(Tipping his hat.)

Someone order a pizza?

(Curtin.)

ACT II

(Scene: Hartford's office later that afternoon. The curtain is closed.)

VOICE OF RADIO ANNOUNCER #2

This is Jessica MacKenzie, reporting from outside the offices of Irwin, Dillard & Co., where the standoff continues. For the last five hours, police have been trying to convince Dr. A. Edward Trudeau, a well-respected plastic surgeon in our community, to release his hostages and surrender. The scene here in the street is quiet, except for the hordes of print and television reporters just outside the police lines. Chief of Police Daily reports little progress. We can only wonder what the situation is like up there in the third-story office of James M. Hartford, where the doctor is holed up with his captives...

(Fade out)

(The curtain opens. There is a noticeable lack of tension in the room. Everyone looks tired and bored. Hartford, behind the desk, is on the phone. Trudeau, near window, is covering him. His overcoat is on the back of the executive chair. Elizabeth and Gus are sitting in armchairs, L and R of desk, playing 5-card draw poker with Hartford. Gus has his coat off and tie loose; Elizabeth's jacket is on the back of her chair. There is a pile of paperclips in front of the three card players, the pile in front of Gus noticeably larger than the others. Crystal is sitting in armchair from outer office, C, doing needlework. Sidney is sitting on the couch, miserable, head in his hands. His coat is on the couch. There is an empty pizza box next to him. The Diet Coke bottle is on the desk. Scattered about the office are styrofoam coffee cups and soft drink cans. A TV set has been rolled in, UR.)

ELIZABETH

Raise you five.

(Puts paperclips onto pile.)

HARTFORD

(Into phone)

I'm all right, son, don't worry... Yes, she is. She's right here. She's fine, too.

GUS

I see your five and raise you five.

HARTFORD

Excuse me, son. Uh.. too rich for my blood.

(Throws in cards. Into phone)

Now I'm counting on you to take care of your little sister, OK?...

ELIZABETH

OK, five and raise you ten.

HARTFORD

What? A what?... All right, I'll see what I can do...

(Trudeau gestures with gun.)

I've got to go now, Mike. You mind the policeman, all right? Don't worry, I'll be with you and Ashley soon, I promise. I love you, son. Bye.

(Hangs up.)

GUS

Very well. Call.

(Puts ten paperclips into the pot.)

ELIZABETH

Three queens!

HARTFORD

Ouch.

GUS

Hmm... That beats my three eights...

(Elizabeth grins, starts to take pot.)

...but not with my pair of deuces.

ELIZABETH

A full house? Oh no, not again!

GUS

(As he takes the pot.)

Another hand, anyone?

ELIZABETH

No, thanks. You've taken advantage of me long enough.

(Trudeau looks out the window.)

TRUDEAU

Holy mackerel! Look at that! I think there's more reporters down there than police!

ELIZABETH

(To Hartford, concerned)

Are the kids all right?

(Gus sits on the couch. Sidney notices and gets up to sit on the floor in front of the desk.)

HARTFORD

Yeah, they're OK. They're with the police. Mike got a kick out of riding through town in a police car with the siren on. He asked me if I can get him a real policeman's baton.

(Crosses to sit next to Gus on the couch.)

GUS

Whatever for?

HARTFORD

Who knows?

TRUDEAU

(Still at window)

Hey! I think that's Geraldo Riviera!

ELIZABETH

And Ashley?

HARTFORD

Well, she's a little scared, but I think the phone call helped. I hope.

ELIZABETH

I hope so, too. I'm so worried about them.

HARTFORD

(Smiles)

They asked about you. I told them that you're OK.

(Elizabeth smiles. Gus notices.)

ELIZABETH

That's sweet of them.

CRYSTAL

You are so good with your kids, Mr. Hartford. Now my Frank, he can't even handle changing a diaper! You should see him with his niece!

ELIZABETH

He may change when you get kids of your own, Crystal.

CRYSTAL

Ha! That would be something! Every night, he comes home from work, plops his big old self in front of the TV and puts on ESPN! And do I even get a kiss hello? That would be too much work! "Oh, baby, I'm so tired!" he says. But he's not too tired to go play softball at night with those fool friends of his, and drag me out there with him to boot! Do I even get a choice on whether or not I want to go? Oh, no! "Oh, baby, all the other wives and girlfriends will be there." So you get a dozen women sitting on these broken-down bleachers watching these over-grown kids try to put themselves into the hospital. I can't tell you how much fun that is!

TRUDEAU

(Turns from the window)

Turn on the TV! Hurry!

(Gus reaches out and turns on TV.)

Quiet, everybody!

(Trudeau sits at desk.)

TV ANNOUNCER

...And here we are live in front of the Irwin, Dillard & Co. office, where inside a doctor, a well-known plastic surgeon, a man charged with healing people, a leader of his community, has become a raving lunatic, threatening the lives of his stockbroker and four other people. What made him do it? How will it end - in surrender, with the near certainty of jail and disgrace, or in violence and blood?

Stay tuned as "HARD EDITION" brings you the incredible drama of... "THE BOOB MAN AND THE BROKER!" We'll be right back after these messages...

(During this, Trudeau's demeanor changes slowly from excitement to disappointment to horror. Meanwhile, Sidney's eyes get bigger and bigger.)

TRUDEAU

(In pain)

TURN IT OFF!!

TV COMMERCIAL

Mom, have you ever had one of those days where you just didn't feel, you know, fresh?...

(Gus turns off TV. Trudeau sits and takes a photo out of his wallet, glumly looks at the photo. Elizabeth puts her book on the desk, crosses to Hartford and sits on one arm of the couch. Crystal goes back to her needlework.)

SIDNEY

(Moaning)

I'm gonna die, I'm gonna die, I'm gonna die...

GUS

(To Sidney)

Come here son, sit over here.

(Indicates a place on the couch.)

(Sidney gets up and shuffles over. The others show no pity.)

TRUDEAU

What have I done? What have I done? Oh, my darling, I've let you down. How can you ever forgive me?

GUS

(Kindly)

Who's the picture of, Doctor?

TRUDEAU

(Glances up at the voice.)

My wife, Trixie. The love of my life. My greatest creation.

(The others are puzzled at this last remark.)

GUS

May I see her picture, Doctor?

TRUDEAU

Certainly.

(Trudeau rises, walks over to R of desk and hands Gus the photo with pride. He, Sidney, Hartford and Elizabeth look at it together. Their eyes bulge. Sidney's mouth drops open.)

SIDNEY

(Incoherent)

Humma, humma, humma...

(Hartford gives a low whistle.)

ELIZABETH

Do you always keep "before-and- after" pictures of your wife?

TRUDEAU

We use it for promotional purposes.

HARTFORD

Hard to believe that's the same woman.

TRUDEAU

(With pride)

Six separate operations. We've increased Trixie's bust by three cup sizes.

TRUDEAU [Continues]

(Exults)

My masterpiece! It's as if I'm Michelangelo and she's my David!

(Pause.)

In a manner of speaking.

GUS

She's... incredible, Doctor.

(Crystal walks over, takes photo.)

CRYSTAL

Lord sakes! That woman has enough boobies for the entire county!

SIDNEY

(Low voice, awe struck)

There's nothing wrong with the rest of her, either.

(Closes eyes.)

I can die now, I have seen perfection.

CRYSTAL

And what's that she's wearing? Dental floss? If Frank ever saw me in a bathing suit like that, I swear he'd have a fit!

(Thinks)

Maybe I should get me one of those.

(Hands the photo to Trudeau.)

(LT. BARKER and DR. ZIMMERMAN enter the outer office. Barker is the head of the hostage team, while Zimmerman is a psychiatrist brought in by the police. Barker knocks on door.)

BARKER

Hey, fruitcake! The shrink wants to talk to you again!

TRUDEAU

Not again!

(Trudeau moves angrily moves to door, gun out.)

ZIMMERMAN

Lieutenant Barker, please. My work is hard enough without you antagonizing the subject.

BARKER

Don't you worry about me, Doc. You just get that moron outta there.

TRUDEAU

(Through door)

Go away, Zimmerman! I don't want to talk to you any more!

ZIMMERMAN

But Edward, we were making such progress on your mother fixation.

TRUDEAU

I DON'T HAVE A MOTHER FIXATION, YOU QUACK!!

ZIMMERMAN

(To himself)

Hmm... denial. We're finally getting somewhere.

BARKER

Look, Trudeau, you talk some more with the Doc, here. You cooperate with us, we cooperate with you. Got it?

(Sotto voice)

What a nut-burger.

TRUDEAU

All right, Barker, all right! But not at the door this time! Tell Zimmerman to get on the inter-office phone.

(Trudeau walks back to desk. Elizabeth and Crystal return to the armchairs. Zimmerman and Barker cross to Elizabeth's desk; Zimmerman picks up phone.)

ZIMMERMAN

Let's see now...

(Presses some buttons. The phone in the inner office buzzes. Trudeau picks it up.)

Can you hear me, Edward?

TRUDEAU

(On phone)

Yes, yes, go on...

(Barker sits in armchair.)

SIDNEY

(To Gus)

I think I'm going to lay down for a while, Gus.

(Gets up and lies down on the floor near the desk, arm over his face.)

HARTFORD

Gus, I still don't understand why you came up here.

GUS

I told you. I overheard Chief Dailey and Lt. Barker discussing how to get at Dr. Trudeau in here. They couldn't decide whether to spike the pizza with sleeping tablets or put a tear gas bomb in the box. After watching them turn the street into a shooting gallery, I thought that this would be a good idea.

HARTFORD

Thanks, but you've had better ones. But why did it have to be you...?

GUS

Well, I've never told you this... You know Rosie and I have been blessed with a beautiful and intelligent daughter. Beverly's a doctor, working in the children's ward at the hospital. No one could be a prouder father than I am. Still, what father doesn't wish for a son? Jim, Rosie and I think of you as the son we never had.

HARTFORD

I... I didn't know. Wow.

GUS

So now I'm going to act like a father.

(Looks at ELIZABETH.)

You know, Elizabeth is a lovely girl. She'd make some man a wonderful wife. Don't you think so?

HARTFORD

(Gives him a look)

Gus, I have a father. He's a big enough pain in the neck -- I sure don't need two of 'em.

(Pause.)

OK, she's great. So what are you saying?

GUS

(Smiles and shakes his head)

Jim, Jim, you think just because I am old I don't have eyes?

(Hartford reddens.)

I am happy for you! How long has it been going on?

HARTFORD
(Surrenders)

A year tomorrow.

GUS
A year! And no ring! What are you waiting for?

(Frowns.)

Jim, you are not taking advantage of Elizabeth, are you?

HARTFORD
Hey, "Dad," if it was up to me...

GUS
Ah, I see. The little ones, yes?

HARTFORD
(Nods)
Yeah. Look, I can understand that being a step-parent isn't a piece of cake. It's damn tough. So who can blame her for being skittish?

GUS
(Looks over at Elizabeth.)
She's one of the good ones, Jim. One of those who gives as much love as they receive. She's like my Rosie.

(Looks back at Hartford.)

I have seen how she looks at you. She is very much in love.

(Smiles.)

And so are you. You are a very lucky man, Jim. Give her time. Her fears will go away.

HARTFORD
(Touched, almost unable to speak.)
Thank you, Gus.

(Pause.)

Does this mean I can borrow the car?

TRUDEAU
Persecution complex? I don't have a persecution complex, you idiot! I just want my money!

ZIMMERMAN

(Covers reciever, to Barker)

Lieutenant, the subject is exhibiting transference. This may take some time.

BARKER

What the hell does dressing up in women's clothing have to do with anything?

ZIMMERMAN

(Puzzled)

Women's clothing...?

(Gets it)

Not transvestitism! Transference!

BARKER

Whatever.

ZIMMERMAN

Lieutenant, please, let me explain. Transference is when the subject...

BARKER

(Cuts him off)

Look, Doc, I don't care if he thinks he's the Tasmanian Devil! We don't have all day! Get him to release those people in there and give up! Or we're gonna have to go in after him.

ZIMMERMAN

Very well.

(To Trudeau)

Edward, the police are getting insistent. You must let those people out. Please.

TRUDEAU

(Thinks)

All right. As a sign of good faith, I'll release one hostage. And only one! Got it?

(At this, Sidney sits up, waves hand.)

SIDNEY

Me! Me! Me!

TRUDEAU

Sit down!

ZIMMERMAN

(Covers receiver, to Barker)

He offers to release one hostage now. What do I tell him?

BARKER

It's a start. Tell him OK.

ZIMMERMAN

(To phone)

Edward, we appreciate your cooperation. We accept your offer. Please send out the hostage; there will be no trouble.

(Trudeau looks around. Points at Elizabeth.)

TRUDEAU

You can go, Liz.

ELIZABETH

(Looks at Hartford)

No, thank you, Doctor.

HARTFORD

Liz!

ELIZABETH

Trying to get rid of me, eh? No way, buster, I'm here for the duration.

SIDNEY

See! She doesn't want to go! Pick me! Pick me!
PLEEAASSEE!!

TRUDEAU

Shut up!

(To Gus)

You, Mr. Liljenstein.

GUS

If it is all right with you, I would rather not. Not while there are ladies still remaining.

TRUDEAU

This is ridiculous!

(Sidney begins to say something, stops at Trudeau's glare. Trudeau points at Crystal.)

OK, Crystal, get up. And don't tell me "no"!

(Crystal rises. Looks at others uncertainly.)

CRYSTAL

Liz?

(Elizabeth nods. Crystal turns to Trudeau as she puts away her needlework.)

All right, but you better not hurt any of my friends! If you have to shoot someone, shoot Sidney.

SIDNEY

NOOO!!

CRYSTAL

Just teasing, you big coward.

(Turns to Elizabeth.)

You going to be OK?

(Hugs. Crosses R to Hartford.)

Mr. Hartford, promise me you'll take care of Elizabeth.

(Hugs him.)

HARTFORD

It's "Jim", and don't worry. I will.

CRYSTAL

I'd try talking some sense into her, but she's so in love with you, she can't see straight.

(Stops)

Whoops! Guess I let the cat out of the bag, didn't I?

HARTFORD

(Glances at ELIZABETH, grins)
I'm afraid that cat's long gone, Crystal.

(Crystal hugs Gus. Sniffs.)

CRYSTAL

Bye, Mr. Gus. Be careful. You're like another grandpa to me.

GUS

Thank you, my dear.

(Sidney stands.)

SIDNEY

How about me?

(Crystal holds out her arms.)

CRYSTAL

Oh, I haven't forgotten about you, Sid.

(They embrace. She knees him. Sidney goes down like a rock, gasping.)

That's for what you were gonna do to Liz and Jim! She told me all about it! And if I ever see you sniffing around them again, you'll be singing soprano! Got it?

SIDNEY

(Rolling on floor, in a high pitched voice)

Got it.

CRYSTAL

Good!

(Turns and walks to door. Trudeau carefully lets her out.)

BARKER

Are you all right, lady?

(Crystal nods.)

I'm Lt. Barker. Please come with me. We gotta ask you some questions.

CRYSTAL

The hell with you, where's Katie Curric??

(Crystal exits L; Barker follows her out.)

TRUDEAU
(Back to phone)

Now are you happy?

ZIMMERMAN
Such hostility! Edward, we will get nowhere without confronting the causes of your anger and learning how to overcome the damage they have done to your psyche. I really think we should talk more about your pre-school childhood.

TRUDEAU
I told you to leave my mother out of this!

ZIMMERMAN
(To himself)
Classic case of toilet-training trauma.

(To Trudeau)
Well, what do you wish to discuss?

TRUDEAU
Nothing! Besides, it's time for another bathroom break. You know the drill.

ZIMMERMAN
(Sighs)
Yes, Edward. We will clear the floor.

TRUDEAU
Good! Remember, I can blow up my bomb by remote control!

(Hangs up. To the room)
All right! Who needs to go?

(Zimmerman exits L.)

ELIZABETH
No thanks.

GUS
I'm fine.

TRUDEAU
(To Sidney)
How about you?

SIDNEY

(Still in agony)

Oh, I'll just lie here for awhile, if that's all right with you.

TRUDEAU

(Pulls gun)

Let's go, Hartford.

HARTFORD

Here we go again.

(Hartford rises. The two of them go to the door. Trudeau carefully opens it and looks around - sees nothing. He closes it and they slowly exit L.)

SIDNEY

(Trying to get up)

He's gone! This is our chance! Let's get out of here!

GUS

One move towards that door, Sidney, and I will punch you in the nose. And don't think I won't. Even at my age, I can still knock you flatter than Twiggy's chest. I will not let you threaten Jim's safety.

ELIZABETH

That goes double for me!

SIDNEY

Please, you've got to let me go! I just can't die! Not after I just had my biggest score ever in the market!

(Sidney crawls to couch, climbs up. Gus helps him.)

GUS

Really, Sidney? What was that?

SIDNEY

Amalgamated Wire! I shorted 10,000 shares last week. Made a cool quarter-million dollars!

(Elizabeth is surprised.)

GUS

(Thoughtfully)

I did not know you had the capital for such a trade, Sidney.

SIDNEY

I didn't. I talked my family into backing me up. Short term loan. (Sobs) And now I may never enjoy it! I was gonna buy this brand-new Corvette. Man, it was loaded! Candy-apple red, leather seats, CD player, the works! The babes I could have landed with that car! (Breaks down)

ELIZABETH

What a goal in life.

GUS

(Pats him on back.)

There, there, Sidney. Everything will be all right. We will be out of this soon.

ELIZABETH

(To Gus)

Why are you so nice to him?

GUS

Why not? It's easier than being angry.

(To Sidney)

Or being wicked.

SIDNEY

But I wasn't gonna tell anybody about Jim and Liz! Honest! I was bluffing!

ELIZABETH

Oh, give me a break! Shut up, Sidney, just shut up before... before...

(Looks, finds letter opener on desk.)

Before I turn you into a gelding!

(Sidney recoils in terror.)

GUS

Life lesson, Sidney. Never mess around with a woman in love.

(Shakes his head at Elizabeth.)

Elizabeth!

(Elizabeth throws letter opener back on desk.)

ELIZABETH

Oh, I was just kidding. And even if I weren't, no jury would ever convict me.

(Sits in armchair C. Gus gets up, crosses to her)

GUS

Why are you so angry, child? What was Sidney going to do?

ELIZABETH

He found out about Jim and me. We've been... going out together. Sid threatened to tell the home office about us. He was trying to blackmail Jim into sharing the Anderson accounts with him.

(Sidney looks guilty.)

GUS

Just to keep quiet? I don't understand.

ELIZABETH

Oh, Gus, you're so sweet, you can't see anyone else being mean. Jim was concerned that if it got out that we were... er... Well, you know... That it could hurt my career. And you know it would!

GUS

(Grave - thinks)

Ah, now I see.

(Sighs.)

I'm afraid I am a bit naive, my dear.

ELIZABETH

Oh, no! You're one of the best people in the whole world! Don't you change one bit!

(She hugs him. Hartford and Trudeau reenter. Trudeau closes door)

HARTFORD

Trying to steal my woman, eh?

GUS

At my age, you take what you can get. Have fun?

HARTFORD

I think the doctor and I are going to start going steady. We're going to tell our folks about it next week.

(To Trudeau)

Now what, Ed?

TRUDEAU
(Dialing phone.)

Just a minute.

(Into phone)

This is Dr. Trudeau. I want some coffee.

(Looks up.)

Anyone else?

HARTFORD

No thanks.

(Sidney shakes head.)

GUS

Yes, please. Regular.

ELIZABETH

Decaf, if you have it. One Sweet-N-Low.

TRUDEAU
(On phone)

Three coffees: one regular, one black. One decaf with a Sweet-N-Low --

GUS

--and a bagel.

TRUDEAU

--and a bagel...

(Listens. To Gus)

You want something on that?

GUS

Hmm... Where are they getting it from?

TRUDEAU
(Into phone)

Where are we getting this from?...

(To Gus)

Meyer's Deli, across the street.

GUS

Cream cheese, please.

ELIZABETH

Is it good?

GUS

Oh, the cream cheese is wonderful there.

ELIZABETH

The hell with the diet. I'll take a cream cheese bagel, too.

TRUDEAU

(Into phone)

Two cream cheese bagels --

HARTFORD

You know, I could go for a chicken salad sandwich.

GUS

Good choice.

TRUDEAU

-- AND a chicken salad sandwich --

HARTFORD

On wheat.

TRUDEAU

-- On wheat.

(To others)

Anything else?

(Hartford looks around. Others shake their heads.)

HARTFORD

Nah, that will do it.

TRUDEAU

(Back to phone)

OK, read that back to me... Three coffees, one black, one regular, one decaf with a Sweet-N-Low... Two cream cheese bagels... And one chicken salad sandwich --

HARTFORD

On wheat.

TRUDEAU

(Starting to lose it)

-- On wheat!

ELIZABETH

I've changed my mind. I'll have a chicken salad on wheat, too.

TRUDEAU

(Yells)

WILL YOU MAKE UP YOUR MINDS???

(Back into phone)

Make that two chicken salad sandwiches on wheat! And cancel one of the bagels!... No, that's one bagel and two sandwiches!... Yes, we want the cream cheese! Read the whole order back to me... OK, that's it. And don't send it up with that quack! Use the branch manager, whatshisname... Yeah, Schneider. Thank you... What's that? She is?

(Goes to window.)

Yes, put her on... Hello, Trixie... Yes, I can see you. I'm fine, dear...

HARTFORD

(To Gus)

You look awfully pensive, Gus. You OK?

GUS

Oh, just thinking about something Sidney mentioned.

HARTFORD

Yeah?

(Looks at Sidney.)

The only thing I'd like to see come out of Smith's mouth is his teeth, right after I give him a knuckle sandwich!

(Sidney recoils.)

GUS

Yes, Elizabeth told me about Sidney's "proposition." Actually, I was thinking of something else. Did you know that Sidney shorted Amalgamated Wire last week?

HARTFORD

What? You've got to be kidding!

TRUDEAU

(Still on phone while looking out of the window.)

Oh, no, Trixie! Please don't cry! Don't worry, please. I'll be fine, I promise. I'll be out just after we straighten out this little matter. I don't think it will take much longer...

(Breaks a little.)

I love you too, pumpkin... Bye... Yes, Barker, I'm still here...

(Sees something out of the window.)

Hey! Hey! Barker! You tell your men to watch how they handle my wife!... That's no excuse! You just watch yourselves!

(Slams the phone down.)

HARTFORD

What was that all about?

TRUDEAU

Damn cop escorting Trixie from the squad car tries to look down her top! (Sits down) You wouldn't believe how often that happens!

SIDNEY

I would.

HARTFORD

Ed, this has been going on for hours. Don't you think it's about time you called it off?

TRUDEAU

I can't! It's too late now, anyway. The police, the press, the publicity - I'm finished! But, if I'm going to go to jail, I want to go knowing I got my money back.

HARTFORD

Ed, I keep telling you. There's nothing I can do. It's not my fault!

TRUDEAU

You could have said "no." I thought I was your friend. You could have protected me.

(Hartford looks away, guiltily.)

GUS

Dr. Trudeau, this whole matter is not doing you or your wife any good.

TRUDEAU

I know! I know! But what else can I do?

(Sidney jumps up.)

SIDNEY

Please! You gotta let me out of here! I can't stand it any more!

TRUDEAU

Shut up and sit down, Smith.

SIDNEY

L-L-Look, Trudeau, you b-better let me out of here, right now, or I'll have my dad sue you for everything you got!

(Trudeau looks at him for a second, then bursts out laughing.)

TRUDEAU

How on earth did someone as stupid as you get to be a stockbroker? Why do you think I'm here, you moron? I'm flat broke! But, I'll tell you what, Smith, you just go ahead and sue me. Knock yourself out.

(Laughs again.)

GUS

Come on, Sidney, sit down. It will be all right.

SIDNEY

Shut up, old man! I'm sick of you! I'm sick of all of you! Look, Dr. Trudeau, this has nothing to do with me! It's all his fault!

(Points at Hartford. There is a pause.)

TRUDEAU

You're right. I guess that makes you expendable.

SIDNEY

NOOO!

(Calms down.)

Look, Doc, I've got an idea. Let me go and I'll get my dad to represent you. Then we'll file suit against Hartford. We'll take him for everything he's got!

ELIZABETH

Sidney!

SIDNEY

And her, too! She's his sales assistant, she must have been in on it.

TRUDEAU

"We'll"? What's all this "we'll" stuff? Do you actually think that after suing me for malpractice and costing me over \$30,000 in defending myself, not to mention the increase in my insurance premiums, that I would hire your daddy to defend me? Do I look like a complete idiot?

(A beat. Turns to Hartford.)

Don't answer that!

SIDNEY

Please let me go. Please. Please!

(Breaks down.)

(Schneider and Zimmerman slowly enters the outer office, with coffee and food.)

SCHNEIDER

Hey in there! It's me, Lou Schneider! All I have is your stuff! Don't do nothing stupid!

(Trudeau opens door.)

TRUDEAU

Come in! And no funny business!

(Sees Zimmerman)

Hold it! Who are you?

ZIMMERMAN

It's just Dr. Zimmerman, Edward. I'm glad we finally get to meet. The telephone is so impersonal, isn't it?

TRUDEAU

What are YOU doing here, you quack?

ZIMMERMAN

Now, now, Edward. I'm only here to help.

TRUDEAU

All right, all right! Get in here!

(He closes door. Schneider crosses to desk, puts down packages.)

SCHNEIDER

Hey, everybody. How's it going?

HARTFORD

You got here pretty quick, Lou.

SCHNEIDER

Yeah, well, all this stuff was pre-made, just sittin' in the cooler. Just packed it up and brought it on over. Hey, don't I get a tip? Haw!

TRUDEAU

(To Schneider)

Taste it.

SCHNEIDER

Huh?

TRUDEAU

Do you think I'm stupid? Taste the coffee!

(Points gun.)

SCHNEIDER

Ooh kaaay.

(Drinks from first cup.)

Coffee regular.

(Schneider drinks from second cup - spits.)

UGH!

(Everyone starts.)

TRUDEAU

(Excited)

What! What!

SCHNEIDER

Sweet-N-Low! Yuk!

(Everyone sighs in relief. Schneider drinks from last cup.)

Black. Pretty good.

TRUDEAU

All right, smart ass! Put it down and back away.

(To Elizabeth)

Liz, please pass out the food and coffee.

(Elizabeth gets coffee for herself and Gus.)

ELIZABETH

Here you go, Gus.

GUS

Thank you. And you, too, Lou.

(Trudeau gets his own cup. Elizabeth hands out food.)

HARTFORD

(Sarcastically)

Hey, Big Lou. Been meaning to thank you for all the support.

SCHNEIDER

Uh... You know how it is, Jimmy. Nothing personal. You understand.

HARTFORD

I'm sure my lawyer will, too.

SCHNEIDER

Lawyer? Whoa, Jimmy, let's not jump to conclusions!

(Turns to Trudeau.)

You ready to leave yet, Doc?

TRUDEAU

Not until I get satisfaction!

HARTFORD

(While eating.)

Oh, come on, Ed. You've been singing that song all day! Enough's enough! I'm sorry for what's happened, that you lost money, but I keep telling you it's not our fault. Hell, if it's anyone's fault, it's your brother-in-law's! Him and his hot tip!

TRUDEAU

(Defensively)

He told me it was for real. Got it from a broker friend of his at his club.

HARTFORD

Did he tell you who the broker was?

TRUDEAU

No, he just told me it was really hot stuff. He would have bought some too, if he had the cash.

(To himself)

The bastard always was lucky.

GUS

(Thoughtfully)

What club does your brother-in-law belong to, Doctor?

TRUDEAU

The DYB, the Downtown Young Businessmen's Club. He has lunch there every Tuesday. Why do you ask?

SCHNEIDER

Hey, Sidney! That's your club!

(Everyone turns.)

SIDNEY

Who, me?

SCHNEIDER

Yeah, you took me to lunch there about six months ago.

SIDNEY

So it's my club, so what?

GUS

The DYB Club. Something about their membership... Ah! They only allow one representative of each occupation, don't they?

SIDNEY

Uh...

ZIMMERMAN

That's right! That's what they said when I applied and they turned me down. They already had a psychiatrist -

(Pause. To himself)

Well, they said they had a psychiatrist...

SIDNEY

What are you saying? I didn't do anything!

ZIMMERMAN

(Apprehensively)

Mr. Smith, the DYB does have a psychiatrist in it, doesn't it?

TRUDEAU

Wait a minute! Let me get this straight. You're saying that the only stockbroker in the DYB is him?

(Points at Sidney.)

HARTFORD

That's right.

TRUDEAU

(Dawns on him.)

Then that means...?

HARTFORD

Yep. Allow me you introduce you to your "hot tip."

SIDNEY

(Screams)

NO! PLEASE!

GUS

Calm down, Sidney. No one's going to hurt you.

TRUDEAU

Says who??

GUS

(Stern)

Says me.

(Trudeau looks him in the eye, then backs down.)

SCHNEIDER

Wait. Hold on a second. Sid here was shorting Amalgamated Wire. He wouldn't be recommending it.

GUS

Oh, he might. Right, Sidney?

SCHNEIDER

Huh?

TRUDEAU

I don't get it.

ZIMMERMAN

Neither do I. What is this "shorting"?

HARTFORD

It's a broker term. It's a way to make money when a stock's price goes down. Normally when you invest, you want to buy low and sell high. But when you short a stock, you want to sell high and buy low.

(Explains)

Let's say you find a stock you know is going to fall --

TRUDEAU

(Bitterly)

Like Amalgamated Wire.

HARTFORD

...Uh, yeah. Well, you put up capital, which could be money or securities, as collateral to borrow the stock. Then you sell it. Now, you don't own the stock, and the proceeds of the sale have to stay in the account. And you have to pay interest on the value of what you borrowed for as long as you hold the position. If you guess wrong and the price of the stock goes up, you lose money when you close the position by buying back the stock you "shorted." But, if you're right and the price goes down --

ZIMMERMAN

Then you make money.

(To Gus)

But why would he be recommending it? Wouldn't that make the stock price go up?

ELIZABETH

I can answer that. When you buy stock, you want to buy it at the bottom. But when you short stock, you want to do it at the top.

HARTFORD

How many shares did he short?

ELIZABETH

Ten thousand shares.

HARTFORD

(Whistles)

Nice score, Smith. Where the hell did you get that kind of money?

ELIZABETH

His family loaned it to him.

HARTFORD

(To Elizabeth)

Coincidence?

ELIZABETH

Fat chance. Let's see. Dr. Trudeau, you bought your stock two weeks ago yesterday...

TRUDEAU

Yes.

HARTFORD

On a Thursday.

(Turns to Sidney.)

Smith, exactly when did you short Amalgamated Wire?

(Sidney says nothing.)

SCHNEIDER

(Answers for him.)

He shorted it Monday last week. I remember approving it.

HARTFORD

Two business days later.

TRUDEAU

You mean I was set up?

HARTFORD

Not directly. Smith was probably hoping to rope in your brother-in-law or somebody else at the club. But it's still market manipulation -- a federal offense. A real big no-no!

SCHNEIDER

(To Sidney)

You little asshole! I'm supposed to watch out for stuff like that! I could lose my job for this!

SIDNEY

Now wait a minute!

(Pause.)

I'm not admitting to anything that was said or not said at the club. I shorted the stock because it looked overvalued.

(Turns to Gus.)

You said so yourself! Remember?

(Back to Schneider)

But I didn't know anything about the embezzlement at Amalgamated Wire!

HARTFORD

That's probably true. If he did, he would have had every one of his clients shorting the stock. So, instead of making a couple of grand, Wonder Boy here lucks out and hits the jackpot.

ELIZABETH

So what do we do?

GUS

Well, for one thing, I think we can drop the charade, Dr. Trudeau.

(Gets up, moves to Trudeau.)

TRUDEAU

What are you doing? Stay back!

(Trudeau points gun. Everyone else starts.)

ELIZABETH

Gus! No!

HARTFORD

Are you nuts??

(Grabs Gus' arm.)

GUS

Let me go, Jim. Dr. Trudeau isn't going to shoot me. Are you, doctor?

HARTFORD

Damn right, he's not!

(Pulls Gus back, gets between him and Trudeau.)

ELIZABETH

(Screams)

JIM, NO!!

GUS

Jim, Elizabeth, calm down. Doctor...?

(Trudeau's face collapses. He puts the gun on the desk and falls into the armchair C, hands covering his face. Hartford grabs the gun.)

ZIMMERMAN

(To Gus)

How did you do that?

GUS

Jim, check the gun.

HARTFORD

What?

(Does so.)

What the hell? Blanks! There are blanks in this gun!

SIDNEY

WHAT?? Let me see!

SCHNEIDER

I'll be damned!

ELIZABETH

(To Gus)

How did you know?

GUS

I must be the only one in here who can see. Look up at the ceiling.

(Everyone else, except for Trudeau, looks up.)

The police told me Dr. Trudeau fired a shot into the ceiling. But when I came in, there was no sign of a bullet hole.

SCHNEIDER

Hey, he's right! There ain't!

GUS

I was in the Army during Korea. A gun of that caliber would make a hole this big.

(Demonstrates.)

So when I see no hole, I think, "blanks."

(Hartford hands the gun to Gus.)

SIDNEY

Why didn't you say anything??

GUS

I wanted to find out why a fine, intelligent man like the doctor here would do something so stupid.

SCHNEIDER

But what about the bomb?

GUS

A bomb? Oh, really, Lou! That one is older than me. Besides, how would a plastic surgeon make a bomb?

HARTFORD

You're something else, Gus.

SIDNEY

Let's stop wasting time! I'll call the police!

(Moves to desk. Gus puts hand on phone.)

GUS

Not yet, Sidney. Or would you like to talk to the SEC right now?

(Sidney freezes, sits down.)

I thought so.

ZIMMERMAN

So, what happens now?

GUS

I think we can work out a way to even the score.

(Turns to Hartford.)

Jim...?

HARTFORD

I think I know what you're thinking. Lou, come over here. You, too, Dr. Zimmerman. No, not you, Smith.

(They hold a whispered conference with Elizabeth.)

TRUDEAU

(Looks up)

What's going on? Why don't you get it over with?

GUS

You'll see.

(The group breaks.)

SCHNEIDER

OK, everybody, here's the deal. Smith, after you pay back your loans, plus interest, you transfer the balance in your account to Dr. Trudeau's.

SIDNEY

(Aghast)

WHAT??

SCHNEIDER

SHUT UP! We can call the Feds right now!

(To Trudeau)

Doc, it won't cover all of your losses, but you'll get something. In turn, Jim, Liz and I won't press charges.

ELIZABETH

And neither will Sidney. Will you, Sidney?

SIDNEY
(A beaten man)

No.

HARTFORD
Gus, this sounds about right?

GUS
Perfectly, my friends.

TRUDEAU
You mean I can go?

HARTFORD
I don't think so, Ed. The police will still want to charge you. But I think you can get off with temporary insanity with our testimony and Dr. Zimmerman's.

ZIMMERMAN
I think I can assure you of that.

TRUDEAU
(Almost in tears)
I have a life again! Oh, thank you! Thank you!

SCHNEIDER
(Remembers)
Hey, what about that Klein bitch? She might screw everything up.

HARTFORD
Oh, I wouldn't worry about that, Lou. She'll be no trouble. She's so proud of the firm's record, she wouldn't want this to get out.

SCHNEIDER
OK, if you say so. C'mon, Doc, Sid. Get your stuff together. We got some papers to sign.

(Sidney gets his coat from the couch as Trudeau gets his overcoat from the executive chair. They all then exit L.)

HARTFORD
(To Trudeau as he leaves)
Oh, Ed? One more thing --

TRUDEAU
(Turns)
Yes?

HARTFORD

You're fired!

(Trudeau exits.)

GUS

Better late than never.

(Hartford and Elizabeth embrace.)

And Sidney better have his resume ready. He won't be here much longer, if I don't miss my guess.

(Hands gun to Zimmerman.)

ELIZABETH

Oh, darling! I was so worried! I thought I was going to lose you!

HARTFORD

It's all over now, honey. It's all over.

(Hugs. Barker walks in from L.)

BARKER

All right, Doc, how's it -- Hey! Where is everybody?

(Draws gun.)

ZIMMERMAN

That won't be necessary, Lieutenant. Dr. Trudeau is in Mr. Schneider's office. He's going to give himself up. I have his weapon and there was no bomb.

BARKER

Well, how about that.

(He holsters his gun.)

I guess you folks better come with me so I can take your statements.

HARTFORD

That's all right, Lieutenant. We won't be pressing charges.

BARKER

(Aghast)

WHAT?? Not press charges!

(The others nod.)

We got every cop in town and half of the Sheriff's department surrounding this place! You can't walk three feet outside without tripping over some damn-fool reporter! I even heard the Lt. Governor herself was flying down here! And you're not gonna press charges? ARE ALL YOU PEOPLE OUT OF YOUR GODDAMNED MINDS???

ZIMMERMAN

Now, now, Lieutenant, calm down. Come, I'll walk you down to Mr. Schneider's office. It will give us a chance to talk.

(To the others.)

Goodbye, all.

(Zimmerman and Barker exit L. As they exit...)

So, Lieutenant, I'd like to talk to you about this gun fixation of yours. How long have you been sexually frustrated...?

(Exits. Gus gets coat and hat from coat rack.)

GUS

Well, I'd best be going. I think I've scared Rosie enough for one day.

ELIZABETH

Oh, Gus, how can we ever thank you?

(Kisses him.)

GUS

(Grins)

You just did, my dear.

(Shakes Hartford's hand)

I will see you on Monday.

(Starts to leave.)

Oh, by the way, about that other problem? No one would say much about a broker sleeping with his sales assistant, if he was married to that sales assistant. Good night, my friends.

(Exits L.)

HARTFORD

Man's got a point.

ELIZABETH

Jim, today taught me how short life can be. If anything had happened to you!... I want you, Jim. I want all of you. I want us to be together forever. So, if your proposal is still good, the answer is "yes."

(They kiss.)

HARTFORD

First thing Monday morning we put in your papers. We're going to need a new sales assistant.

ELIZABETH

New sales assistant? What for?

HARTFORD

I want you to get your broker's license. I want you to be my partner as well as my wife. Joint accounts. It's going to be "Hartford & Hartford" from now on.

ELIZABETH

(Laughs)

What's wrong with "Hartford & Lagarde"?

HARTFORD

Anything you want.

ELIZABETH

Crystal as our sales assistant?

HARTFORD

(Rolls eyes.)

We'll talk.

(Kiss.)

ELIZABETH

Well, we better go talk to the children.

HARTFORD

Good idea. You'll be the best stepmother they ever had.

(Holding hands, they start to exit.
Phone rings. Elizabeth Looks at watch.)

ELIZABETH

It's 5:00. That will be Mr. Urbanski calling for the market final.

HARTFORD

Five o'clock? Damn! It feels like we've been here a month.

(Hartford crosses back to the desk and reaches for the phone. Suddenly, he stops and looks at Elizabeth, who has an impatient look on her face. After a beat, he grins. Hartford disconnects the phone, cutting off the ringing. He then turns, opens the window, and throws the phone out of the window. Hartford then crosses to back to Elizabeth with a satisfied look on his face. They kiss and exit L, arm in arm.)

VOICE ON LOUDSPEAKER FROM
OUTSIDE

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?? WAIT, PUT DOWN THAT GUN, YOU FOOL!
DON'T...! LOOK OUT!! TAKE COVER!!

(Machine gun fire again as curtain drops.)

(Curtain - End)

APENDEXFURNITURE & PROPERTY LISTACT I Scene 1

On stage:

Outer office: Secretarial desk. On it: Typewriter or computer (with printer), phone, calender pad, in/out box, rolodex, papers.
 Secretarial chair.
 Wastebasket.
 Filing cabinet. On it: Account books (small loose-leaf binders) (6).
 Chair.

Inner office: Executive desk. On it: Computer, phone, pen set, nameplate, day-timer, letter opener, S&P stock guide, rolodex, papers.
 Executive chair.
 Credenza. On it: Calculator, in/out box, photos.
 Chairs (2).
 Wastebasket.
 Couch or love seat.
 End table. On it: Lamp.
 Coat rack. On it: Wooden hangers (2).
 Briefcase near coat rack.

Pre-set: Hartford's coat on coat rack.

Off stage: Coffee mugs (2). (Elizabeth)
 Computer printouts. (Schneider)
 Papers. (Gus)
 Papers. (Sidney)
 Briefcase. In it: File. (Klein)
 Paper. (Hartford)
 Coffee mug. (Crystal)
 Rope. (Trudeau)

Personal: Trudeau: Gun with blanks, wallet with photos.

Morning.

Window closed. Blinds up.

Curtain closed.

ACT I, Scene 2

Strike: Nothing.

Off stage: Pizza box, 2-liter bottle of Diet Coke. (Gus)

Personal: Trudeau: Gun, rope.
 Crystal: Shoulder bag. In it: Needlework.
 Gus: Overcoat and hat.

Door closed.

ACT II

Strike: Nothing.

Set:

Inner office: TV on cart, DR.
 Move chairs L & R of desk.
 Move armchair from outer office to C.
 Trudeau's overcoat on back of executive
 chair.
 Gus' overcoat, coat and hat on coat rack.
 Elizabeth's jacket on back of chair, L of
 desk.
 Sid's coat, pizza box on couch.
 Diet Coke bottle on desk.
 Playing cards and papercups on desk.
 Styrofoam cups, soda cans scattered
 throughout office.

Off stage: Bag food, bag of coffee cups (3). (Schneider)

Personal: Elizabeth: Book.
 Crystal: Needlework, shoulder bag.
 Trudeau: Wallet. In it: Photos.
 Barker: Gun.
 Zimmerman: Notebook, pen.

Late afternoon.
 Window closed.
 Door closed.
 Curtain closed.

COSTUME PLOT

HARTFORD - Act I, Scene 1
 Dark blue or gray suit.
 Red tie.
 White button-down shirt.
 Black dress shoes.
 Watch.

ELIZABETH - Act I, Scene 1
 Woman's business suit.
 Silk blouse.
 Purse.
 Small earrings.
 Watch.

SCHNEIDER - Act I, Scene 1
 Rumpled seersucker suit.
 Loud tie.
 Wrinkled white button-down shirt.
 Wedding ring.
 Watch.

GUS - Act I, Scene 1
 3-button suit.
 Tie.
 French cuffs on shirt.
 Suspenders.
 Wedding ring.
 Watch.
 Act I, Scene 2
 Overcoat.
 Hat.

SIDNEY - Act I, Scene 1
 Double-breasted suit.
 Modern tie.
 Loafers.
 Watch.

KLEIN - Act I, Scene 1
 Severe woman's suit.
 White blouse.
 Low-heeled shoes.
 Watch.

CRYSTAL - Act I, Scene 1
 Bright flowery dress, above knee.
 High heels.
 Large earrings.

Wedding ring.
Watch.
Act I, Scene 2
Shoulder bag.

TRUDEAU - Act I, Scene 1
Green doctor's scrubs.
Sneakers.
Wedding ring.
Watch.
Wallet.
Overcoat.

BARKER - Act II
Blue police uniform.
Gun belt.
Black shoes.
Policeman's hat.

ZIMMERMAN - Act II
(if male): (if female):
Blue sportcoat. Coat.
Gray slacks. Dark shirt.
Striped shirt. Striped blouse.
Tie. Shoulder bag.
Watch. Watch.

EFFECTS PLOTACT I, Scene 1

- Cue 1: Beginning of play.
Lights & radio recording #1. (Page I-1)
- Cue 2: RADIO VOICE #1: "...Senate Finance Committee."
Fade recording & open curtain. (Page I-1)
- Cue 3: HARTFORD: "...you'd think I had fleas."
Phone rings. (Page I-4)
- Cue 4: ELIZABETH: "Not in the last twelve hours."
Phone rings. (Page I-6)
- Cue 5: HARTFORD: "The weekend's all ours, honey."
Phone rings. (Page I-7)
- Cue 6: SCHNEIDER: "Lookin' good, Lizzie."
Intercom buzzes. (Page I-14)
- Cue 7: ELIZABETH: "handle that all by yourself,
Sidney."
Intercom buzzes. (Page I-17)
- Cue 8: ELIZABETH: "Sure."
Phone rings. (Page I-29)
- Cue 9: ELIZABETH: "I think it just did."
Blackout. (Page I-36)

ACT I, Scene 2

- Cue 10: HARTFORD: "...too small for a SWAT team."
SWAT team recording #1 (Page I-39)
- Cue 11: ELIZABETH: "...nothing he does surprises me?"
Phone rings. (Page I-43)
- Cue 12: ELIZABETH: "Mr. Marcello."
Phone rings. (Page I-44)
- Cue 13: TRUDEAU: "...throw tear gas in here!"
Machine gun recording. (Page I-45)
- Cue 14: TRUDEAU: "Are you crazy out there??"
SWAT team recording #2 (Page I-46)
- Cue 15: TRUDEAU: "Sorry doesn't cut it! You..."

- Phone rings. (Page I-47)
- Cue 16: TRUDEAU: "Wow! This is great!"
Phone rings. (Page I-48)
- Cue 17: TRUDEAU: "This is so neat."
Phone rings. (Page I-48)
- Cue 18: ELIZABETH: "...we might get out of this mess."
Phone rings. (Page I-50)
- Cue 19: GUS: "Somebody order a pizza?"
Blackout & curtain. (Page I-59)
- ACT II
- Cue 20: Beginning of Act II.
Lights & radio recording #2. (Page II-1)
- Cue 21: RADIO VOICE #2: "...holed up with his
captives."
Fade recording & open curtain. (Page II-1)
- Cue 22: TRUDEAU: "Quiet, everybody!"
TV announcer recording. (Page II-4)
- Cue 23: TV COMMERCIAL: "...didn't feel, you know,
fresh?"
Turn off TV recording. (Page II-5)
- Cue 24: ZIMMERMAN: "Let's see now..."
Intercom buzzes. (Page II-8)
- Cue 25: HARTFORD: "Good idea."
Phone rings. (Page II-41)
- Cue 26: HARTFORD: "...leave the job at the office."
SWAT team recording #3 & machine gun
recording.
Blackout & curtain. (Page II-41)

GLOSSARY OF INVESTMENT TERMS

ACCOUNT BOOK	A loose-leaf binder or binders in which a record of each client's purchases and sales of securities is kept. Clients are arranged in the book in alphabetical order.
CEO	Stands for Chief Executive Officer, the person who runs a corporation.
COMMISSIONS	How stockbrokers get paid. Gross commission is the total amount generated by sales activities. Net commission is the amount actually paid to the broker, usually between 30-45%. The brokerage firm keeps the difference.
COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT	This is the department within a brokerage firm responsible for making sure all securities laws and regulations are being followed.
401-K PLAN	A type of employer-sponsored retirement plan.
IN-HOUSE FUNDS	Mutual funds managed by the same brokerage firm that sells them.
MARGIN	Refers to buying securities with borrowed funds. When one puts stocks and bonds on margin, they are using those securities as collateral against the loan.
NASD	Stands for the National Association of Securities Dealers, the self-regulatory body of the securities business. The federal government has given the NASD the power to license, set up sales procedures and enforce rules of fair trading in the securities business. It is subject to the overview of the SEC.
OVERRIDE	In many brokerage firms, the branch manager receives a portion of the

	commission earned by the brokers in the branch office.
PAR	Maturity value of a bond.
POINTS	Most stocks on US stock exchanges are traded in one-eighths of a point. An $1/8$ equals 12.5¢, a point equals \$1.00. Therefore, a stock quoted at "52 $3/8$ " is worth \$52.625 per share.
REG. T MARGIN CALL	A requirement that the client put up more collateral in their margin account.
SALES ASSISTANT	Brokerage industry term for a secretary who works with a stockbroker. A Registered Sales Assistant has earned a license from the NASD permitting that person to engage in limited securities transactions (the placing of securities trades, for example).
SEC	The Securities Exchange Commission, the branch of the federal government that oversees the securities business.
SERIES 7	Each license issued by the NASD is referred to by the name of the test required to be taken to earn that license. To get the General Securities License, prospective brokers must pass the Series 7. In many states, the Series 63 (the "Blue Sky" test) must also be successfully taken. The Series 24 is the Securities Principal test; this is a requirement for branch officers and other top people in a brokerage firm, though many brokers take it as well.
SHORT SELLING	A method for making money on a stock that is declining in price. The customer borrows the stock he or she wishes to "short" by putting up margin (collateral) consisting

of cash or fully paid-for securities. The customer then sells the stock. The client must pay interest on the amount borrowed until the position is "closed" by buying back the stock. If the client buys back the stock at a price lower than it was shorted, he or she will make a profit; the reverse, of course, would be a loss.

STREET NAME

Securities that are held in the customer's account, rather than issued in certificate form and mailed to the client.

SYNDICATE DEPARTMENT

This is the department within a brokerage firm responsible for the handling of new issues of stocks or bonds.