

Playing Mathilde

by

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Characters

Harold Carter

Nina Carter

Tommy Robbins/Mathilde Lapierre

Place – The living room in the Carter residence.

Time – Midweek at 8.00 p.m. Present day.

Nina Carter enters with schoolbooks and sits. She is dressed casually for a quiet evening in – studying. She reviews her exercise books with contempt.

Nina French! Boring. Mathematics, boring! English, boring! German, excruciatingly boring! Why can't I just do art? I'm an artist! All I want to do is paint. Can't they understand that? Why do I have to study these other boring, boring subjects?

Harold Carter enters fastening his cufflinks. He is dressed formally with his old school tie thrown over his shoulder.

Harold Because you're seventeen years old and you have some

very important exams coming up, young lady.

Nina I hate exams.

Harold We all hated exams, but we all had to do them and, like me, I expect you to get A, A, A, A, A in every subject.

Nina I will not.

Harold Yes you will. I'm responsible for you now and as a father I have a duty to see that you complete your education to the highest standard and to give you the best possible start in life.

Nina mimics his words as he speaks them.

I'm serious.

Nina I know.

Harold Look, Nina, have you seen my old school tie? I had it, but now I can't find it anywhere.

Nina Is it red with green stripes?

Harold Yes.

Nina points to the tie on Harold's shoulder.

Hmm? Oh, yes, right. And your room is an absolute mess. I want you to tidy it before Mme Lapierre arrives tomorrow. Isn't that her job, as an au pair, to tidy my room? Isn't that what you're paying her for?

Nina

Harold No, your room is your own responsibility.

Nina I still don't understand why we need an au pair. None of my friends have au pairs.

Harold I've told you, I need some help in the house here now – now you're concentrating on your studies and the fact that she's from France will be beneficial for your French too. Besides it would be good for me to have some female company again.

Nina Dad!

Harold What? It's been two years since your mother – passed away. I can't grieve forever, can I? I think I'm ready now to enjoy the 'charms' of a beautiful woman once more.

Nina No, Dad. Anyway, Madame Lapierre is too young for you.

Harold She's twenty seven years old, apparently.
Nina Exactly, she's too young for you. You're forty four. You're too old, Dad. Sorry.
Harold Nonsense. Women love the mature man.
Nina You're too mature for her.

Harold takes off his glasses.

Harold Without my glasses I could be thirty-nine.
Nina Yes, but you can't see without your glasses.
Harold Of course I can. See.

He walks across the room confidently but then bumps into some furniture.

Nina Ow!
See. All right then, if you can have a young woman about the house, it's only fair that I can have a young man – sometimes.
Harold No! No boyfriends. They interfere with your studies. I've told you that you can see Tommy Robbins on Saturdays until nine o'clock, which I think is very generous of me. The rest of the time you are either at school or home here studying.
Nina But –
Harold That's final. Okay, I think I'm just about ready. How do I look?
Nina Good. Your tie's a bit crooked.

Nina straightens it.

Harold An old school reunion. It's been a long time. Everyone will have changed a lot, including me. It will be very strange.
Nina Yes. That's better. So you won't return until tomorrow afternoon, you say?
Harold Right. I'll meet Mme Lapierre on the four-thirty train. I hope I remember some of my old school French. It's a bit rusty.
Nina She speaks good English, doesn't she?

Harold Yes, but we both need to practise our French, don't we?
Nina (*Passing items*) Portefeuille. (*English. Wallet*)
Harold Portefeuille.
Nina Les clefs de la voiture. (*English. Car keys*)
Harold Les clefs de la voiture.
Nina Portable. (*English. Mobile phone*)
Harold Portable.
Nina Les clefs de la maison. (*English. House keys*)
Harold Les clefs de la maison. Right.
Nina Don't drink too much and don't smoke too many big cigars. You know they make you ill.
Harold Yes, yes, yes. Study. No television. And don't be late for school tomorrow.
Nina I won't.
Harold That's me, I'm ready. Here I go.
Nina A bientôt, monsieur.
Harold Precisely. Wish me luck.
Nina Bon chance.

Harold kisses Nina on the forehead and exits. Nina follows.

(Calling after him) Bye, Dad.

We hear the car door closing. The car start up and pull away. Nina re-enters the room.

Party!

She picks up the hi-fi remote control and turns some music on – loud. She dances to it. Doorbell rings. She turns the music off and composes herself. She then goes to answer the door. She re-enters the room followed by Tommy.

Tommy You're sure he's not coming back tonight?
Nina No, not until tomorrow, don't worry. He's got an old school reunion in some hotel. He's staying there tonight.

Tommy Good.
Tommy holds out a bottle.

Nina What is it?
Tommy Whisky.
Nina Whisky!
Tommy Yes. We need glasses.
Nina Okay, I'll get a couple.

Nina exits. Tommy takes the top off the bottle and sniffs it.

Tommy Ah.
Nina re-enters with two glasses. She hands a glass to Tommy. Tommy pours and hands a glass to Nina.

Voila.

Tommy raises his glass.

Nina Cheers.
Cheers.

They drink.

Tommy Oh.
You like that?
Nina I think so.
Tommy Come here.

Nina does so.

Nina What?
Tommy kisses Nina passionately. Nina pulls away.

Tommy What? Your dad's gone, hasn't he?
Nina I know. Let's just enjoy the freedom.
Tommy I am.

Tommy goes to kiss her again. Nina resists him.

Nina Let's talk.
Tommy Talk?
Nina Conversation, you know.
Tommy Okay. Look.

Tommy takes out three small juggling balls for his pocket and juggles them.

Nina How about that?
Very good. Conversation?
Tommy Yes.

Tommy puts the balls away. He notices the stuffed doll on the sofa.

Hello Mandy. How's Mandy?

Nina picks up the doll.

Nina Mandy's very well, thank you.
Tommy Hello.
Nina *(In Mandy voice)* Hello Tommy.
Tommy *(In a silly voice)* Hello.

Pause.

Nina I've got an au pair coming tomorrow, a genuine French au pair. Her name's Mme Lapierre. Mathilde.
Tommy Why?
Nina To help with the housework and with my French apparently.

Tommy But you're good at French.
Nina I know, but Dad thinks I could be better.
Tommy Dads eh!
Nina Yeah.

Slight pause.

Tommy Here, do you want to see my new knife?
Nina Knife!
Tommy I bought it from Lewis Brown today. Fifteen pounds.

Tommy takes out a knife from his pocket and opens the blade.

Nina What do you think?
(Unimpressed) It's lovely, Tommy. Why do you need a knife?
Tommy Hunting.
Nina Hunting! Hunting what?
Tommy I don't know. Rabbits.
Nina Rabbits?
Tommy Fish.
Nina We live in the middle of the city, Tommy. There are no rabbits or fish here.
Tommy You don't like it?
Nina I don't find knives very beautiful. Sorry.

Putting the knife away.

Tommy Well, perhaps not beautiful, but you never know when you might need one.

Slight pause.

Here, I know a good game. I fill up your glass to the top, like so and then mine.

Tommy fills both the glasses with whisky.

Nina *(Warily)* Yes.
Tommy And then what you have to do is this.

Tommy gives Nina her glass.

You stand on one leg, right.

He demonstrates.

You put the other leg here. Then you put your arms out like this. Then close your eyes. And then you have to drink the whole glass in one go and then try to stand still. The first to lose their balance loses. Which means you have to drink another entire glass.

Nina I don't like drinking games.
Tommy That's only because you know you'd lose.
Nina No.
Tommy Yes.
Nina No, I'd win.
Tommy You'd lose.
Nina I'll win.
Tommy You'll lose. Lose, lose, lose, lose, lose.
Nina Okay then. After three.
Tommy After three.

They both get into position.

Together One, two, three. Drink.

They drink. They stand still for a moment, but then Tommy loses his balance and puts his foot down.

Nina Yes! I win!
Tommy You had your eyes open. You cheated.

Nina No I didn't. You lost. Drink, drink, drink, drink.
Tommy All right, I'll drink, I'll drink.

Tommy pours another glass of whisky for himself and drinks it. He suffers visibly from the effect of this.

Nina Again?
Tommy No. No.
Nina Champion!

The telephone suddenly rings.

Tommy Oh God, it's probably Dad. Okay, okay, you're not here. You're not to make a sound. You're not here.
Nina I'm not here.
Tommy No sound. Sshhh right?
Nina Right. Sshhh.
Tommy Promise?
Nina Yes. Sshhh.

Nina answers the phone.

Nina Hello Dad... Yes I'm fine, is something wrong?... Ah, that's nice. Where are you?... Yes, everything's fine, fine, quiet...

Tommy pulls faces at Nina much to her annoyance.

No, I'm not watching T.V. , I'm studying.

Nina gestures wildly to Tommy to stop his stupidity. Tommy belches. He finds this very amusing. Nina doesn't.

What? That noise. It's the cat. The cat from next door. I let it in. It wanted some food, so I fed it. I think it's just been sick on the floor... Yes, I'll clean it up.

Tommy does a cat impersonation and claws at Nina's legs. She puts her foot on Tommy's fingers. He squeals with pain.

Yes, it's that cat again. I just stood on his tail by accident...
Yes, okay Dad, don't worry... No. No. All right, have fun.
Bye, bye.

Nina hangs up the phone.

(To Tommy) I'll kill you. I will. You were supposed to be quiet.
You promised.
Tommy I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I just couldn't help it.
Nina Yes you could. That was stupid. You're so stupid. I hate you.
You can be so annoying.
Tommy Sorry.
Nina No you're not.

Nina sits sulkily.

Tommy I am, honestly.

Tommy picks up Mandy.

Nina *(In Mandy voice)* Honestly. I am.
(Taking Mandy) Give me that.

Pause. Tommy throws a cushion at Nina playfully. Nina throws it back.

Nina I hate you.
Tommy No you don't.
Nina Yes I do.
Tommy Don't.
Nina Do.

Slight pause.

Tommy Don't.
ina Do.

Pause.

Tommy Nini. (*Pronounced Nee-nee*)
Nina What?

Slight pause.

What?
Tommy I was thinking...tonight...now we're alone...that...you might want to...you know...with me, tonight.

Nina Tommy –

Tommy Don't worry, here, I've brought some protection for us –

Tommy pulls out a packet of condoms from his pocket. They fall out on to the floor.

for me.

Slight pause.

Nina No, not tonight, Tommy. Not tonight.

Tommy When? We've been going out for almost six months now, Nini.

Nina After the exams, Tommy.

Tommy is disappointed but resigned.

Tommy Okay.

Slight pause. Nina picks up one of the condoms. She makes to give it to Tommy but keeps it herself.

Nina I promise.

Slight pause.

Well, what shall we do now?
Tommy Let's go out. Let's go to the cinema.

Nina I can't.

Tommy I've got some money. I'll pay.

Nina It's not that. Dad might call again. I've got to be here, don't I?

Tommy Oh yes, I forgot. All right, how about some music?

Nina Okay.

Tommy What have you got?

Tommy looks through the CD's.

Nina There's nothing there. It's just my dad's old rubbish. I'll get mine from upstairs.

Tommy takes one out.

Tommy Wait, this is a good one.

Nina What is it?

Tommy An old classic. You'll like this one.

Tommy puts the CD on. He sings along to it performing in a caricature fashion embarrassing, yet amusing Nina.

Nina You're mad, Tommy.

He takes her and dances with her. He then falls to his knees and grabs her around her thighs.

Tommy! You're crazy. Stop it. Crazy boy. Enough!

She pushes him away and turns off the music.

Tommy Aw, I was enjoying that.

Nina I wasn't. I'll get some of my music. Some good music.

Nina exits upstairs. Tommy looks about the room and notices a trilby hat hanging up. He puts it on. This suggests to him several impersonations.

Tommy The name's Bond, James Bond 007.

He sings the James Bond theme tune. He then imitates Frank Sinatra. He sings the beginning of New York, New York, in a Sinatra style. He then imitates Humphrey Bogart.

Of all the gin joints in all the towns you had to step into this one.

He then pretends to be a gangster meeting his rival.

No, no, please, don't shoot me. Please, don't shoot, please.

Imitating sound of a machine gun.

Help, help. They got me, they got me.

He falls on the sofa as if shot. There is the sound of a car returning in the driveway. Tommy immediately gets up. He goes to the window to investigate.

Nini? Nini? *(Calling)* NINI!

Nina enters with a CD.

Nina What is it?

Tommy A car.

Nina What?

Tommy Your dad, I think he's back.

Nina Dad! He can't be.

Nina goes to look.

Tommy My God, he is! Oh my God, Jesus!
I'll go.

Tommy moves towards the door. Nina stops him.

Nina No, he'll see you.

Tommy The window.

Nina No, he'll see you there too.

Tommy Then what are we going to do?

Nina Go into my room and hide.

Tommy Where?

Nina Under the bed.

Tommy Under your bed?

Nina Yes, hurry! Hurry!

Tommy exits upstairs. Nina sits on the sofa and pretends to read her schoolbook. Harold enters.

Dad? You're back.

Harold Yes.

Nina But why?

Harold I had a phone call. The hotel, there was a fire.

Nina A fire! In the hotel!

Harold Yes, started in the kitchens apparently.

Nina How terrible. But what about the old school reunion?

Harold Postponed. It's been rescheduled for next Thursday.

Nina Thursday, I see.

Harold Oh well, c'est la vie, as they say.

Nina Yes.

Harold Never mind, a good excuse for an early night. Hard at study?

Nina Oh, yes, yes.

Harold Good, good.

Nina yawns dramatically. Harold then notices the whisky bottle and the two glasses.

Nina What's that?
Harold What's what?
Nina That.
Nina Ah –
Harold Are you drinking, Nina?
Nina Ah – yes, just a little.
Harold Nina!

Harold goes to the bottle. He sniffs it.

Nina It's whisky! You're drinking whisky, Nina?
Harold A small drop, Dad, very small.
Nina Nina! And who with? There are two glasses.
Harold Er, yes it's – it's – Madame Lapierre.
Nina What?
Harold Mme Lapierre.
Nina Mme Lapierre?
Harold Yes. She's arrived.
Nina Here?
Harold Yes.
Nina Mme Lapierre?
Harold Yes.
Nina When?
Harold Just after you called me.
Nina But –
Harold She's arrived early.
Nina Extremely early.
Harold Yes.
Nina An entire day early.
Harold Yes. She got the train times confused. We've been talking – a little. She's very nice. She brought some whisky – from France.
Nina We've just been having a little drink.
Harold I see. My goodness. She's here?

Nina Yes, yes she is. She's here.
Harold Well, where is she?
Nina Who? Oh Mme Lapierre?
Harold Yes, where is she?
Nina Upstairs, getting unpacked.
Harold I see. Did you show her to her room?
Nina Yes, yes..
Harold Good. Well, well, well, well, well.
Nina Well, well.
Harold This is unexpected.
Nina Yes, yes it is.
Harold Well, I'll just put the car in the garage and then I'll be ready to meet her.
Nina Right, Dad, you do that.
Harold What a surprise eh?
Nina Yes.

Harold exits.

Oh God! Oh God!

Nina calls upstairs.

(Calling) Tommy! Tommy! Tommy come here!

Tommy appears.

Tommy Has he gone?
Nina No.
Tommy No!
Nina No, he's putting the car in the garage.
Tommy What –
Nina I've told him Mme Lapierre has arrived.
Tommy Who?
Nina Mme Lapierre, the French au pair. The woman who's coming here tomorrow, remember?

Tommy She's arrived?
Nina No!
Tommy No? But –
Nina Dad saw the whisky glasses. I couldn't tell him you were here, could I? So you will have to pretend to be Mme Lapierre.

Tommy What –
Nina You can do it Tommy.
Tommy Me, pretend to be Mme Lapierre?
Nina I know you can do it.
Tommy But –
Nina You want to be an actor don't you, Tommy?
Tommy Yes, but –
Nina Here's your big chance.
Tommy I –
Nina Don't argue, we've no choice – if you love me.
Tommy Yes, but –
Nina No buts. Now listen, go upstairs to my dad's room – listen, Tommy.
Tommy Your dad's room?
Nina Yes, look in his wardrobe, there's still some of Mum's old clothes in there and a wig that she used to wear. Put them on. Then go into my room and put on some make-up. Try to be convincing.

Tommy I can't.
Nina You must. Listen, there's a bag under my bed. Put your clothes in that. And when you're ready, come downstairs.

Tommy It won't work.
Nina We've no choice. Hurry!
Tommy This is crazy. Crazy!

Nina kisses Tommy briefly.

Nina Hurry!
Tommy But –
Nina GO!

Tommy exits.

Oh God!

She pours a glass of whisky and drinks. Harold re-enters.

Harold She's not come down yet?
Nina Not yet, Dad.
Harold Ah. Well?
Nina Well?
Harold Tell me, what's she like? What kind of a woman is she? Is she attractive?
Nina Yes, she's – interesting.
Harold Not attractive?
Nina Yes, yes she is – in a different way. You know. She's very – sweet, a lovely woman.
Harold Yes.
Nina Oh yes. You'll like her, Dad. She's got a great sense of humour. Very funny.
Harold Good, that's important.
Nina It is.
Harold She drinks.
Nina She's French.
Harold Yes, of course. *(Calling upstairs)* Bonjour, Mme Lapierre.
Nina She'll be down in a minute, Dad, I'm sure.
Harold You know, I'm actually a little nervous.
Nina So am I – for you. It's important to make the right first impression.
Harold Yes, first impressions are everything.
Nina Everything.
Harold Well, since it's here, you don't think she'll mind if I have a little drop of her whisky do you?
Nina No, you do that, Dad. I'm sure he'll – she'll be delighted. *(To herself)* Oh God!
Harold What?
Nina Nothing.

Harold examines the bottle.

Harold There's no label on this bottle.
Nina Yes, Mme Lapierre was explaining, in France the better the quality of the whisky the smaller the label, this whisky is apparently so good it doesn't need a label at all.
Harold Really?
Nina Yes.
Harold Fascinating.

Harold pours himself a glass and drinks. He pulls a tortured face.

Nina Good, isn't it?
Harold Excellent. You've only had a little drop you say?
Nina That much.
Harold Good. You know I don't approve, especially at your age. I'll make an exception though, just this once. But you shouldn't drink, especially spirits, they're very bad for you.

He takes another drink and pulls another tortured face.

Nina I can't wait to see her.
Harold *(To herself)* Neither can I.
Nina What's she wearing?
Harold Wearing?
Harold Yes, her clothes. Are they elegant and chic? I always imagine French women to be elegant and chic for some reason.
Nina You know Dad, I really didn't notice.
Harold You didn't notice. That's not like you Nina, not to notice what people are wearing. You're always so observant when it comes to clothes – especially mine.
Nina I know. I was just looking at her face. Her face, that's all.
Harold Why, is there something wrong with her face?
Nina No, not at all, it's just – interesting, that's all.
Harold I see. What about me? How do I look?

Nina Good. But you're right, Dad, you do look younger without your glasses.
Harold My glasses?
Nina Yes.

Nina removes Harold's glasses and puts them in Harold's top pocket.

Harold Yes, there we are. You're right, thirty nine.
Harold Thank you. I think I'll have another little glass. Just a little one.
Nina Good.

Harold pours himself another glass and drinks.

Harold Oh yes, it's good stuff this French whisky. *(Calling)* Mme Lapierre do come down. I'm trying some of your lovely French whisky. I hope you don't mind. It's very good. Mme Lapierre?
Tommy *(Off. In Mme Lapierre voice)* Coming. Just a petit minute.
Nina *(To herself)* Oh God!
Harold Have you been practising your French with her?
Nina What?
Harold Your French.
Nina Oh yes, a little, but she speaks excellent English.
Harold Yes, perhaps, but I want you to practise your French with her. After all that's one of the reasons why she's here.
Nina Yes, of course.
Harold Oh dear and the house is a complete mess. I wanted to tidy it before she arrived. What will she think?

There is a sudden crash of someone falling and the sound of breaking glass from upstairs.

Good God! What's that?

Harold calls upstairs.

(Calling) Mme Lapierre? Mme Lapierre, are you all right? Mme Lapierre?

Tommy *(Off)* Oui, oui, tout va très bien...ça va...c'est juste un petit accident.

Harold *(Calling)* Do you want any assistance? Is there anything I can do? *(To Nina)* Maybe I should go and see if she needs any help.

Nina stops him.

Nina No, Dad, I'm sure Mme Lapierre can manage on her own. Relax, sit down and have another little drop of her whisky.

Nina pours out a glass of whisky for Harold.

Harold Well, all right, but just a little one. Enough!

Nina looks off to see if Tommy is on his way. She takes a secretive gulp from the bottle. Harold practises his French.

Mme Lapierre, enchanté. Je m'appelle Harold Carter. Comment allez vous, madame? Très bien. Moi? Je suis très bien aussi.

Danke.

Nina Merci.

Harold De rien.

Nina No, Dad, thank you in French is merci.

Harold Yes, yes, of course, merci. Of course it is.

Nina Otherwise it's very good, Dad.

Harold Merci.

Nina De rien.

Enter Tommy. He wears a knee length dress and tights, but no shoes. He also wears Harold's late wife's wig. He has put on make-up and earrings.

Tommy Enjoying my whisky, monsieur?

Harold Mme Lapierre, at last, I –

Harold stares at Tommy.

Tommy Is something wrong, monsieur?

Harold No, no. I just expected you to be different.

Tommy Different, monsieur?

Harold Yes. Shorter perhaps, more petite.

Tommy If you do not like my height, monsieur, I can leave now.

Harold No, please madame, your height is perfect.

Tommy Bien.

Harold Well then, formal introductions I suppose. Je suis Harold Carter et cette ma – daughter –

Nina Fille.

Harold Fille, Nina, who you've already met and shared a drink with.

Not that I approve of your giving whisky to my daughter, Mme Lapierre. Tut, tut, tut.

Tommy Oh, tut, tut, tut, tut, tut to you monsieur. Nina, une belle nom et une belle fille. Congratulations Monsieur Carter.

Harold Harold, please.

Tommy 'Arold.

Harold Harold – Ha, Ha, Harold.

Tommy 'A, 'A, 'Arold.

Harold No, it's Ha, Ha –

Nina Dad, she's supposed to be teaching me French, not you teaching her English.

Harold Quite right. Sorry Mathilde – may I call you Mathilde?

Tommy Monsieur, you may call me whatever you please.

Harold Enchanté. Do we kiss?

Tommy Kiss! No monsieur, we certainly do not kiss. It is much too soon to kiss. In France on one's first meeting one shakes hands.

Harold Right.

They shake hands.

Tommy You have strong hands for a woman, Mathilde and good arms.

Tommy Yes, monsieur, I used to lift weights.

Harold Weights?
Tommy You know, monsieur, weightlifting.

He demonstrates.

Harold I see, well that explains it. And your perfume, it's very – powerful too.
Tommy Merci, monsieur.
Nina And very expensive – apparently.
Tommy Yes, très cher.
Harold I've smelt the scent before, it's very familiar. Don't you have the same perfume, Nina?
Nina Had, yes.
Harold That's a coincidence, isn't it?
Nina Yes.
Harold You know that dress is very familiar. I'm sure that my late wife, Veronica, had something similar, didn't she Nina?
Nina Perhaps.
Harold Yes, the same, I'm sure.
Tommy Another coincidence.
Harold Well, well.
Tommy Well, well, well.
Harold Quite a coincidence, don't you think so Nina?
Nina Yes, yes, quite a coincidence.
Harold Now, Mathilde, no time like the present, I want you to have a little conversation with Nina, in French.
Nina Dad!
Harold Before you go to bed. Just a little one. *(To Tommy)* She's very good, the best in her class – apparently.
Nina No I'm not.
Harold *(To Nina)* Yes you are, don't be modest, Nina. *(To Tommy)* But I want you to be very strict, Mathilde, and correct her on the slightest mistake.
Tommy I'll do my best.
Nina Dad, can't it wait until tomorrow?
Harold Two minutes. Well, ask Mathilde a question. Go on, this is your

chance to learn from a genuine French person. She's shy. Go on. Avez-vous fait bon voyage? *(English. Did you have a pleasant journey.)*
Tommy Oui, merci.

Slight pause.

Nina Vous êtes partie d'où ce matin? *(English. Where did you come from today?)*
Tommy Je viens ici en Angleterre aujourd'hui. *(English. I come here to England today.)*
Nina Combien de temps allez-vous rester chez nous? *(English. How long are you staying here with us?)*
Tommy Vous avez une très jolie maison, oui. *(English. You have a very nice house, yes.)*
Nina Quel temps fait-il en France en ce moment? *(English. What is the weather like in France at the moment?)*
Tommy Le temps en France est dix heures. *(English. The time in France is ten o'clock.)*
Nina Vous avez d'autres amis en Angleterre? *(English. Have you any other friends in England?)*
Tommy Non, c'est ma première fois en Angleterre. *(English. No this is my first time in England.)*
Nina Voulez-vous quelque chose à manger ou à boire? *(English. Would you like anything to eat or drink?)*
Tommy Oui, j'adore bien manger et beaucoup boire. *(English. Yes, I enjoy eating very much and I also like to drink.)*
Harold Bravo! Bravo! Excellent Nina. Well, Mathilde, she's good isn't she, not bad. The accent perhaps not fully there yet, but – be honest.
Tommy Oui, oui, very good indeed. She made a few petit erreurs, mais très petit. And her accent, well, c'est bon.
Harold *(To Nina)* Do you hear that Nina, very encouraging.
Nina Very.
Harold I think you're going to be very good for her, Mathilde.
Tommy Je pense aussi, 'Arold.

Harold Yes, well, Nina, time for bed.
Nina But –
Harold It's nearly ten thirty and you have school tomorrow, young lady.
(To Tommy) She never wants to go to bed.
Tommy Oui, oui, I understand. I must go too.
Harold To bed, already?
Tommy Non, home.

Tommy fetches his bag.

Harold Home, what do you mean?
Tommy It's late.
Harold Yes, but you're staying here, with us, aren't you?
Tommy I am?
Harold Yes, of course.
Tommy Well, then I must go to bed too. Do I sleep with Nina?
Harold No, you have your own room, the room Nina showed you to.
Tommy Ah, oui. Bonsoir.
Harold No, wait, wait, let us have a little glass of your whisky together to celebrate your arrival.
Tommy Non, non.
Harold I insist.
Tommy I mustn't.
Harold You must, you must, I do insist.

Harold pulls Tommy back into the room.

Nina, say good night now to Mme Lapierre. Nina, come along now. *(To Tommy)* She's terrible, once she starts talking she can't stop, just like her mother. I think she likes you.
Tommy Ah oui.
Harold Come on Nina, say goodnight – en Français.

Nina goes to Tommy.

Nina Bonsoir, Mme Lapierre.

Tommy Er –
She kisses him three times on the cheeks and takes the opportunity to tuck in an article of clothing that hangs out from the bag.

Nina A demain.
Tommy J'espere non. Qu'est ce que je fais? *(English. I hope not. What do I do?)*
Nina Pour l'instant, détends toi. Je vais revenir. Continue le jeu. Tu te débrouilles très bien. Tu es très convaincant. *(English. Be cool for the moment. I'll return. Just play along. You're doing great. You're very convincing.)*
Harold Good night, Nina.
Nina Good night, Dad.

Harold kisses Nina on the forehead. Nina gathers her books.

Tommy Bonsoir.
 Bonsoir.

Nina exits. Tommy grins at Harold. Slight pause.

Harold Well.
Tommy Well, well.
Harold Well, well, well.
Tommy Well, well, well, well – well.
Harold Welcome Mathilde. I hope your stay here is a happy one.
Tommy I hope so too.

Slight pause.

Harold Yes, you are very different to how I imagined you to be, Mathilde.
Tommy I hope you are not disappointed, monsieur.
Harold Disappointed, no. In fact I'm quite pleasantly surprised.
Tommy Yes.

Harold Yes, yes I am. What about me?
Tommy You, monsieur?
Harold Harold, please. Am I different to how you imagined me to be?
Tommy No 'Arold, you are exactly the man I imagined you to be.
Harold I am? And are you disappointed by what you see?
Tommy I am neither happy nor sad, monsieur.
Harold A diplomatic answer. You know I usually wear glasses.
Tommy Good.
Harold You like a man in glasses?
Tommy Non, je deteste a man in glasses.
Harold Ah.

Slight pause.

Well, it's good to have a woman in the house again, a real woman.
Tommy Oui.
Harold As you know my wife, my late wife, Veronica, died almost two years ago and well... I think you know what I mean.
Tommy I do?
Harold Well – please sit down, make yourself at home. After all it is your home now for a while, isn't it Mathilde? Please.

Tommy sits. Harold takes the whisky bottle.

Tommy Top up?
Well I –

Harold fills Tommy's glass and then his own.

Harold A very interesting whisky. French you say?
Tommy Er – yes, monsieur, the best.
Harold (*Knowingly*) No label.
Tommy I am sorry, monsieur.
Harold Sorry? No, no, I am honoured.
Tommy Oui?

Harold Yes. You know, Mathilde, I didn't actually know that the French made whisky.
Tommy There are many things you do not know, monsieur.
Harold True, true. Yes, well, as I was saying it's been almost two years since my dear late wife, Veronica, died – next month it will be exactly two years and well there is a rightful amount of time one should spend in grieving for the dead and after that it's time to move on, be bold to new beginnings as they say. What I'm saying is, I dearly loved Veronica, I loved her with my heart and with my soul and if it was in my power to bring her back to life I would, like that. But, alas, such things are not within our power and the living have to keep on living. Do you understand me, Mathilde?
Tommy Yes, I think so.
Harold So what I'm really saying is, two years is quite sufficient a time to grieve for Veronica and now my eyes are once more open to a woman's charms. I am ready to embrace love once again, to experience happiness in the arms of a beautiful woman.
Tommy That's nice.
Harold Not just any woman mind you, Mathilde. I'm quite particular.
Tommy I am happy to hear that, monsieur.
Harold Veronica will not be easy to replace. This woman needs to be quite special. A woman who can look after me, the steady running of the household and to be a good influence on Nina, that's very important. Of course this woman will be rewarded with all the comforts I can provide; a loving, faithful husband who thinks only of her continuing happiness and one who is not against taking her out for a good dinner every now and again; an annual holiday in the sun and the occasional gift or two of expensive jewellery.
Tommy I see. Have you tried the internet, monsieur?
Harold The internet?
Tommy Yes, to meet a woman. I have heard that people often find their perfect partner that way.
Harold I – I don't have a computer.
Tommy Then I suggest you invest in one, Monsieur Carter. You will not

regret it.

Harold No, no, I'm very sceptical of such things.

Tommy Well you shouldn't be, monsieur, they are very easy to operate.

Harold Perhaps, perhaps, but – well, tell me more about you, Mathilde.

Tommy Moi?

Harold Yes, I want to know everything – all.

Tommy There is little to know, monsieur.

Harold Surely not.

Tommy Believe me, monsieur, I am a simple girl, very simple. If only you knew.

Harold Come, come, Mathilde, nobody is simple. Everyone is interesting in their own unique way.

Tommy Not me, monsieur. There is nothing interesting about me at all.

Harold I don't believe that, Mathilde.

Tommy Trust me, monsieur.

Harold Harold, please. You are interesting to me, Mathilde, very interesting.

Tommy You do not know me, 'Arold.

Harold I think I do, Mathilde, I think I do. You know you do remind me so much of Veronica.

Tommy Oui, monsieur.

Harold Yes. Your hair, Mathilde, it reminds me so much of hers.

Tommy I can assure you, Monsieur Carter, that my hair is all mine.

Harold Of course. But with that dress, you could easily be Veronica.

Tommy Perhaps I could easily be Veronica, monsieur, but I do not wish to be Veronica, I want to be Mathilde.

Harold Yes, yes, I know, I know, it's just a remarkable coincidence, that's all.

Tommy So you have said, monsieur. Well now, bedtime.

Harold No, not just yet. Look, Mathilde, I've got some brandy, some excellent French brandy, special reserve. Do you like brandy, madame?

Tommy Brandy?

Harold You must like brandy. Of course you do, you're French. You'll love it, it's very expensive. I want you to have some.

Tommy Well, I er –

Harold Just a little one, madame.

Harold pats Tommy on the bottom playfully. Tommy jumps.

Tommy Oh, monsieur.

Harold Now, please, please, sit down, sit down. I'll get the brandy.

Harold exits to fetch the brandy.

Tommy *(To himself)* What am I doing? I must be mad. This is crazy, crazy! I have to get out of here. And why am I still talking like this? *(Dropping his accent)* I have to go, now. Soon he's going to try and kiss me, I know it. I don't want him to kiss me. Oh God, what a thought. Shoes, shoes.

Tommy goes to his bag. He takes out his trainers and puts them on, struggling. Nina puts her head round the door. She is wearing her dressing gown.

Nina Pssst!

Tommy Nini!

Nina Where is he?

Tommy He's getting some brandy.

Nina You're doing very well. Very convincing. He believes you're Mme Lapierre. I think he likes you.

Tommy I know, that's the problem. Help me, what do I do?

Nina Have some brandy with him and then pretend to go to bed upstairs and then when Dad has gone to his bed you must leave. Simple.

Tommy I want to go home now.

Nina No, you can't do that, not yet.

Tommy This is stupid. Look at me, dressed up like this.

Nina I know, but I'm very impressed. Very impressed.

Tommy But what if he tries to kiss me?

Nina Kiss you! Dad! Not dad.

Tommy I think he wants to.

Nina Then you must be strong, resist. You must think like a woman.
Don't worry, he'll probably fall asleep after another drink.
Tommy You think so?
Nina Knowing Dad, yes.
Tommy But how will you explain it to him when the real Mme Lapierre arrives tomorrow?
Nina Don't worry, I've been thinking about that. I have a plan.
Tommy Yes, what is it?
Nina I'll explain later, no time now. Kiss me.

Nina kisses Tommy on the lips. Harold enters with two glasses of brandy.

Harold Nina! What are you doing?
Nina Sorry Dad, I'm just giving Mathilde a final goodnight kiss.
Harold Bed!
Nina Goodnight. *(To Tommy)* Good luck.

Nina exits.

Harold A naughty girl. Perhaps she takes after her father.
Tommy *(To himself)* Oh God.

Harold notices Tommy's shoes.

Harold Are you going somewhere?
Tommy Monsieur?

Harold indicates to Tommy's shoes.

Oh, no monsieur, my feet were cold.
Harold I see. A very modern style.
Tommy Oui.
Harold Here we are.

He gives a glass to Tommy.

It's a brandy to be savoured lastingly and lovingly. Ah, that beautiful aroma.

Tommy drinks it back in one. He belches.

Tommy Pardon, monsieur.
Harold I must say, you do like your alcohol, don't you? Well, there's plenty here. Sit down, sit down. Some more brandy.
Tommy Non, monsieur.

Tommy puts his hand over the glass but Harold pours regardless.

Harold No, Nina actually takes after her mother. She has her mother's beauty and intelligence, although she has benefited from some brains on my side of the family too. I won't be modest.
Tommy She is very beautiful.
Harold Thank you. Yes, Veronica was a very beautiful and intelligent woman. I could always talk to Veronica, I could always tell her everything. There are not many husbands who can tell their wives everything. That's the beauty of true love, one can always say what one thinks. And, if I may say so, Mathilde, I think that you are a very beautiful woman too.
Tommy Merci. I try.
Harold No, no, very beautiful. You have never been married?
Tommy Non.
Harold Are you single, now?
Tommy Non, monsieur, I have a boyfriend.
Harold I see. Is it serious?
Tommy Non, it is not serious.
Harold Then you are free?
Tommy Well, he wants to marry me.
Harold Then it's serious?
Tommy For him, yes.
Harold What's his name?
Tommy His name – his name, his name is Pierre.
Harold Pierre, very French. Do you love him?

Tommy No, monsieur, I do not love him.
Harold I understand.
Tommy Well, well, Monsieur Carter, it is very late. I'm very tired and I must go to bed. Bonsoir.
Harold Please, please forgive me. I'm not usually so forward.
Tommy No?
Harold I realise I must be frightening you a little.
Tommy A little, monsieur.
Harold It's only because I haven't had the company of such a beautiful woman in such a long time. Two years, it's a long time Mathilde.
Tommy Not quite two years, you still have another month of serious grieving to do, monsieur.
Harold No, I have finished grieving now. No, I feel fresh and alive, virile and positive.
Tommy You do!
Harold Yes, I feel the blood in my veins, strength in my body, the passion in my heart – I'm alive, damn it, Mathilde, I'm alive again and you have fired me up with your youth, your beauty, your energy.
Tommy I think we have both had too much to drink, monsieur. We must both go to bed. Now.
Harold Yes, yes, to bed – together.
Tommy No, separately, alone.
Harold I can't. I want you.
Tommy Monsieur!
Harold Mathilde, if only you knew –
Tommy If only you knew, monsieur.
Harold How much I see in you, how much I've been desiring for so long.
Tommy This is madness, monsieur. Get away from me, get away.
Harold No, I must have you.
Tommy Tomorrow, I promise.
Harold Tonight.
Tommy Help!
Harold Sshhh! You'll wake Nina.

Tommy NINA, WAKE UP!
Harold Sshhh! It's just your clothes, your hair, you remind me so much of my wife.
Tommy Your wife would not be happy Monsieur Carter to see you chasing after another woman like this.
Harold Veronica would be happy to see me come alive again. You bring me to life, Mathilde.
Tommy What do you want from me, Monsieur Carter?
Harold Just a kiss – please.
Tommy A kiss! Oh God, I knew it. What kind of a woman do you think I am, Monsieur Carter? We have only just met.
Harold One kiss, one little innocent goodnight kiss, that's all.
Tommy *(To himself)* Think like a woman.
Harold Please.
Tommy Non, impossible.
Harold Mathilde.
Tommy Non, absolument, non!
Harold Are you frightened you might like it, Mathilde?
Tommy Non, I will hate it, monsieur.
Harold Do you not find me attractive, Mathilde?
Tommy You are not my type, monsieur.
Harold Perhaps you will change your mind with a kiss, Mathilde.
Tommy I know it will not stop with a kiss, monsieur, you will not be satisfied. You will want more, more.
Harold I am a man, Mathilde. You must understand what a man desires.
Tommy Yes I do, monsieur, and you will not have it.

Harold seizes Tommy.

Harold Got you, my beauty.

He kisses him passionately on the neck.

Tommy Non, non. Monsieur! Monsieur! MONSIEUR!

Tommy pushes Harold away, but Harold is not to be defeated. He seizes Tommy's breasts.

Harold Oh yes.
Tommy Monsieur!

Harold pulls his hands away in alarm. He touches them again.

Harold Your breasts Mathilde, they do not seem quite right – for a woman.
Tommy Non? What is wrong with my breasts, monsieur?
Harold They're soft, too soft.
Tommy Soft?
Harold For a woman.
Tommy Nonsense, they are parfait.

Harold feels Tommy's breasts again.

Harold No, not right, not right at all.
Tommy Monsieur, I am insulted, monsieur.
Harold What's this?

Harold pulls the stuffing from Tommy's breasts.

Tommy Monsieur, how dare you.
Harold And wait, what's this, your face –

Harold feels Tommy's face.

Tommy It's rough, rough, like a – like a –
Harold A man, you think I am a man?
Tommy Who are you?
Harold *(In deep man's voice)* Yes, you're right, I am a man.
Tommy What?
Harold I'm a man, I'm a man, I'M A MAN!
Tommy But, I – I – I –

Tommy runs to his bag and takes his knife. He opens it and holds it towards Harold.

Tommy What? I don't understand. Who are you? Who are you?
Harold Bernard.
Tommy I'm sorry?
Harold I'm Bernard.
Tommy Bernard? Bernard who?
Harold It doesn't matter. Just Bernard, okay.
Tommy But –
Harold Bernard, Bernard, Bernard. That's all you need to know.
Tommy I'm –
Harold Shut up!
Tommy What do you want – Bernard?
Harold Your money. Give me your money.
Tommy My money?
Harold You heard me.

Enter Nina. She sees the situation and screams. Tommy turns.

Harold You, shut up. Stay there.
Nina It's all right, stay there Nina.
Harold What's going on?
Nina This is Bernard.
Harold Who?
Nina Bernard.
Harold Bernard?
Tommy Hi.
Nina Hi. I don't understand.
Harold It seems Bernard has been pretending to be Mathilde, our new French au pair.
Nina Really.
Harold Yes.
Nina I see. What does Bernard want?
Harold My money, apparently.

Nina Does he?
Tommy Yes, and your jewellery too, young lady.
Nina My jewellery?
Harold I think you'd better give him what you've got, Nina.
Tommy He's right, you'd better give me what you've got.
Nina Okay Bernard, here's my watch and my bracelet. Do you want
My ring too?
Tommy No you can keep that.
Nina Thank you.
Tommy *(To Harold)* You, your wallet.

Harold takes out his wallet.

Nina Are you sure you know what you're doing, Bernard?
Tommy Bernard always knows what he is doing. Give it me.

Harold passes his wallet to Tommy.

Nina Oh God.
Harold You'll never get away with it, young man.
Tommy Bernard gets away with everything.

Tommy seizes some portable valuables from the room.

I'm going to take this and this and this.

The final item is Mandy, the stuffed doll.

Nina Not that, not Mandy. You can't take her.
Harold You can't take Mandy.
Tommy Shut up! If I want to take Mandy, I'll take Mandy. I'm Bernard.
Nina You'd better bring her back – in one piece.
Harold I don't think Bernard will be returning here, Nina.
Nina I'll find him, don't you worry, Dad, he won't get far.
Tommy *(To Nina)* He tried to kiss me – no, in fact he did, he did kiss
me.

Harold I'm sorry, I didn't know you were – Bernard. I thought you
were Mathilde.
Tommy That's no excuse. It was our first evening, our first evening
together and you tried to kiss me. You were much too fast.
Nina He's right, Dad, you shouldn't have tried to kiss him. It was
partly your fault.
Tommy Yes.
Harold Look, I'm sorry, I'm very confused. Who are you again?
Tommy I'm Bernard.
Harold Yes, yes, Bernard. But why did you dress up as Mme Lapierre?
And how did you know we were having a French au pair called
Mathilde coming to stay here with us?

Slight pause as Tommy thinks.

Tommy Bernard knows everything. It's Bernard's business to know
everything.
Harold I see.
Tommy All right, enough talking, I'm going. I'll get my bag.

Tommy fetches his bag.

Don't try to follow me. I will use this knife if I have to. I will.
Well, thank you for a pleasant evening – 'Arold.

Tommy turns to go. Harold moves to stop him.

Harold Now wait a damn minute you –

*Tommy turns and knocks Harold on the sofa. He waves the knife at him.
Nina screams. Tommy looks at Nina apologetically and then runs out.
Nina follows to the door. Harold breathes heavily on the sofa.*

Oh my God, oh my God.

Nina goes to him.

Nina Dad, are you all right?
Harold Call the police. Call the police.
Nina The police?
Harold Yes, yes, we've been robbed haven't we?
Nina Well not really, he's only taken a couple of things.
Harold We've still been robbed. We must stop him, stop him from doing it again to other people, other innocent people like ourselves. He's got a knife, he's a dangerous man.
Nina Well, not really dangerous.
Harold Why are you defending him, Nina? He nearly killed me – us. Call the police at once.
Nina I'm not doing anything, Dad, until I know you're all right.
Harold I'm all right, I'm all right.
Nina You're breathing heavily, maybe I should call an ambulance instead.

Nina pours a drink for Harold.

Harold I don't want an ambulance, Nina, I want the police.
Nina Have a drink of this. It'll do you good.

Harold drinks the brandy.

Harold Ah, yes, thank you. Now are you going to call the police, Nina, or am I to do it myself?
Nina Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. I'll call them, I'll call them. What are we going to say to them?
Harold The truth, Nina, what else? We'll tell them that a man called Bernard broke into our house, dressed up as our new French au pair and then robbed us.
Nina Don't you think the police might find that just a little bit amusing, Dad?
Harold I don't care. It's not funny. Now are you going to call?
Nina But –

Harold puts his glasses back on.

Harold All right, give me the phone, give me the phone. If you're not going to do it, I will.
Nina All right, all right, I'll do it, I'll call them.
Harold Good.

Nina goes slowly to the phone.

Oh dear, what an evening! What an evening!

Harold pours some more brandy.

Nina I wouldn't drink too much more of that, Dad, the police will think you've been hallucinating.
Harold I'm all right. Besides, I have you as a witness don't I?
Nina Yes, I suppose so.

Nina picks up the phone and stares at it.

The police.
Harold Yes.
Nina What's the number again, I've forgotten?
Harold Nine, nine, nine. How could you forget?
Nina The emergency services?
Harold Yes, it's an emergency isn't it?
Nina Nine, nine, nine?
Harold Yes.
Nina Oh God! Here goes.

Nina starts to dial.

Nine, nine –

The doorbell suddenly rings.

Harold Oh my God, what's that?
Nina The doorbell, Dad.
Harold I know it's the doorbell. Who is it?
Nina I don't know.
Harold My God, maybe he's back – Bernard. He's come back to kill us.
 Call the police. Call them!
Nina I'll take a look.
Harold Are you mad?
Nina I don't think it will be Bernard, Dad. I don't think he would ring
 the doorbell. Do you?
Harold No, no, I suppose you're right, but –
Nina Maybe it's the police. Maybe they've caught Bernard already.

Doorbell rings again.

I'll see.

Harold Nina! Nina!

Nina goes to answer the door.

(To himself) Please, please God, don't let it be Bernard.

Nina returns followed by Tommy. Tommy is dressed in his normal clothes. He carries his bag.

Nina It's Tommy, Dad.
Harold Tommy? Tommy? Your Tommy?
Nina Yes.
Tommy Hello Mr. Carter.
Harold Ah, hello Tommy. What are you doing here at this time? It's
 half past eleven.
Tommy I know, but I was cycling back from a friend's house, Mr Carter,
 going home and I was passing by here when I saw someone
 running from this house.
Harold Bernard.

Tommy Well, a woman, I thought –
Harold No, that was Bernard, he's just –
Nina Dad, please! Let Tommy continue. Go on Tommy.
Tommy She looked very suspicious and I noticed she had a knife in her
 hand, so I cycled after this 'woman'. I stopped her and asked
 her what she was doing. I then noticed that this she was in fact a
he. She was a man.
Harold Yes, Bernard – I've told you it was Bernard. Now Nina, call the
 police.
Nina Dad, let Tommy finish! Yes Tommy, and then?
Tommy He was furious, he ran at me with his knife, but I was too quick
 for him, oh yes. I hit him – hard and then hit him again and then
 again. Well, he eventually ran away leaving his bag behind. I
 looked inside the bag and found some things that you may
 recognise.

Tommy produces the stolen items.

Nina This, this and I think this is yours, Nina. Your Mandy.
 Yes, my Mandy. Brilliant.

Tommy produces Nina's things.

Tommy Your watch and bracelet too perhaps.
Nina Yes. Brilliant, Tommy, brilliant. Well done.
Tommy Thank you.

Tommy produces Harold's wallet.

Harold And Mr Carter, perhaps this is your wallet.
Nina Yes, yes it is, it is. I –
Harold You're so brave, Tommy. Isn't he, Dad? Isn't he brave. To fight
 with that man – that Bernard.
Harold Yes you are, Tommy, very brave. I'm – we're very, very
 grateful. Thank you. I must reward you.

Harold begins to take some money from his wallet.

Tommy No, Mr Carter, I won't accept a reward.
Harold But I must give you something, something for your bravery
Tommy. I insist. I insist. Please.
Tommy Well, Mr Carter, if you insist on giving me something, perhaps I
could ask you for a little favour.
Harold Name it.
Tommy Perhaps it may be possible for me to see Nina more than just on
Saturdays, perhaps I could see her on Sundays too and maybe
also the occasional night – s during the week.
Harold Well, I don't know –
Nina Dad, show some gratitude after all he's done. He could have got
himself killed.
Harold Quite right, Nina, quite right. Well, yes, Tommy, I'm sure we
can come to some 'arrangement'.
Tommy Thank you Mr. Carter. Well, I'd better be going. School
tomorrow.
Harold Yes, quite right, Tommy. Thank you again, Tommy. I'm very
proud of you.
Tommy Don't mention it, Mr Carter. Goodnight Nina. *(To Harold)* May
I?
Harold By all means.

Tommy kisses Nina.

Nina I'll see you tomorrow, mon brave.
Tommy Yes. *(To Harold)* Perhaps this weekend I can call on Nina, Mr
Carter?
Harold Well –
Nina Dad!
Harold Yes, this weekend. All right Tommy.
Tommy Goodnight.

Tommy takes his bag and turns to go.

Harold Tommy wait.

Tommy turns back towards Harold.

The bag, Bernard's bag. Where are you going with that?
Tommy I – er –
Harold I'll take that.

Harold takes the bag from Tommy.

Tommy But –
Harold We'll need it, as evidence, for the police.
Nina The police! But Dad, surely we don't need to involve the police,
not now that Tommy has sorted it all out. I don't think Bernard
will be returning Dad, not when he –

*Harold opens the bag and starts to slowly pull out Mathilde's dress. Nina
falters in her speech as she watches.*

knows that – he'll – be – oh God!
Harold What's this?
Tommy Ah yes – now here's another very interesting story, Mr Carter –

Harold looks at Tommy accusingly.

Harold You! You! So it was you – Bernard –
Tommy I –
Harold And Ma-da-me La-pi-er-re...

Harold suddenly reflects on his own evening's bad behaviour.

Tommy *(Smiling apologetically)* Oui, monsieur.
Harold Ah.

Harold turns away.

Tommy Desolé
Harold Oh my God! Oh my God!
Nina TOMMY!

Harold and Nina both put their heads in their hands. Tommy makes to sneak out silently, but there is a sudden ringing on the doorbell. They all look towards the door.

V.O. Mme Lap. Hello, Monsieur Carter? Oh Monsieur Carter? C'est moi,
Madame Lapierre. Cou, cou!
Nina Madame Lapierre! But she's early.

Harold sinks down with his head in his hands again.

Harold Oh!

Music. Lights down. Curtain.
