

KATE. I'll tell you what's real, Greg. The mortgage on this apartment is real. The kids' tuitions are very, very real.
GREG. I need to feel more ...
KATE. More what, Greg. And don't say "real."
GREG. More connected, then.
KATE. Connected.... Connected to what?
GREG. Life. *(Pause.)* No. *(Pause.)* Living.
KATE. I'm beginning to understand, darling.
GREG. You are?
KATE. I am, sweetie. This is another one of those things that happen to men in middle age.
GREG. No it isn't.
KATE. Yes it is, darling. I admit I'm slightly sauced, but I still know a hawk from a handsaw.
GREG. What?
KATE. It's like when poor fat old Ted Donahue tried to take up tap dancing.
GREG. *(Getting up.)* This is entirely different.
KATE. *(Getting up; slurring her words.)* Well I'm sorry, sweetie, but whatever it is ... I have to say time's up.
GREG. Time's up?
KATE. Really up. I said I'd try, and I have, and it's been much longer than a few days. So I'm putting my foot down, Greg. I want you to give Sylvia away.
GREG. Away?
KATE. I want that. I am asking that. I insist upon that.
GREG. What do you mean, give her away? To whom?
KATE. Some farmer. Give her to some farmer.
GREG. There are no farmers any more, Kate. Farmers don't exist. Read *The New Republic*.
KATE. Oh now ...
GREG. And I refuse to give my dog to some agricultural conglomerate. Sylvia? Being cared for by Archer-Daniels-Midland? Nope. Sorry. Can't do it.
KATE. Greg ... *(Sylvia comes in, carrying a woman's shoe.)*
SYLVIA. Look what I've got!
KATE. Oh Lord, she's got my shoe.
GREG. It's a peace offering.

KATE. It is not! It's a deliberate act of aggression.
SYLVIA. *(Parading it around.)* Look at this shoe! Look at this fabulous shoe!
KATE. Drop that, Sylvia! Right now!
SYLVIA. Chase me.
KATE. She'll ruin it, Greg.
SYLVIA. Chase me.
GREG. She just wants to play.
KATE. *(Chasing her around the couch.)* I want that shoe, Sylvia. Immediately.
GREG. Bring it here, Sylvia. *(Sylvia finally brings the shoe to Greg; drops it at his feet.)* Good girl! *(Greg picks up the shoe, brings it to Kate.)* Here's your shoe, Katie.
KATE. *(Looking at the shoe.)* She's ruined it.
GREG. It's an old shoe.
KATE. *(On the verge of tears.)* It's my best pair! You owe me a new pair of shoes, Greg!
GREG. O.K. O.K. I'll buy you some shoes.
KATE. I'll bet she took my book, too.
GREG. What book?
KATE. My annotated copy of *All's Well That Ends Well*. I can't find it. I'll bet Sylvia took it and ate it.
GREG. She wouldn't do that.
SYLVIA. Hey! Hey! Hey!
KATE. She ate half *The New Yorker*!
GREG. It was a lousy issue anyway. *The New Yorker's* getting —
SYLVIA. Hey, hey!
KATE. Greg, I am issuing an ultimatum.
GREG. *(Starting out.)* It's time for her dinner. *(To Sylvia.)* Come on, sweetheart. Time to eat. *(They hurry off.)*
KATE. *(Calling after.)* Sweetheart? Is it *sweetheart* now? Goddammit, Greg! When's the last time you said that to *me*? *(She throws the shoe after him, then sits down hopelessly, polishing off whatever glasses of liquor are available. After a moment, Sylvia comes back on, carrying the shoe.)*
SYLVIA. I believe this is yours. *(She drops the shoe at Kate's feet.)*
KATE. Sylvia, I have something to say to you.
SYLVIA. What if I don't feel like listening?

KATE. Then I'll see to it that you never lick another plate.
SYLVIA. *(Getting onto the couch.)* All right. Shoot.
KATE. Off the couch, please.
SYLVIA. Greg lets me sit here.
KATE. I don't. Off! Right now!
SYLVIA. Make me. *(Kate moves toward her.)* I'm warning you!
I've been known to bite!
KATE. *(Almost falling over onto the couch.)* Try that just once,
Sylvia! Just ONCE! And you are out the door! Now OFF! Right
now!
SYLVIA. O.K. Cool it. I get the picture. *(She reluctantly gets off
the couch.)* You sure don't like me, do you?
KATE. I think it's safe to say I hate your guts.
SYLVIA. May I ask why?
KATE. Because you're messing around with my marriage.
(Sound of Greg offstage, banging a dish.)
GREG. *(From off.)* Din-din! Come and get it! *(Sylvia starts off.)*
SYLVIA. I believe I'm wanted in the kitchen.
KATE. *(Making a lunge for Sylvia; they both fall to the floor.)*
Hold it, Sylvia.
SYLVIA. Let me go!
KATE. I plan to do everything I can to get you out of here,
Sylvia.
SYLVIA. I doubt if you can do very much, Kate. *(Both are now
on their hands and knees.)*
KATE. Before long you're going to be cowering in some cage.
GREG. *(From off.)* Dinny-poo! Sup-sup-supertime!
SYLVIA. My master's voice, Kate.
KATE. *(Holding onto her.)* I'm not through yet, Sylvia. Now
you should know that all you are is a male menopausal mo-
ment. Oh, I know, I know, it's all been very exciting, walking
around town during these fine fall days. But when winter
comes, Sylvia, when it's cold in the morning and dark in the
afternoon, when he has to stand shivering in the park wait-
ing to pick up your do-do, how long do you think you'll last,
Sylvia? He'll have second thoughts then, Sylvia, and I'll be
right there to help him think them. *(Sylvia struggles to get away.)*
GREG. *(From off.)* Sylvia! Come! Kibble time!

SYLVIA. You're forgetting one thing, Kate.
KATE. Oh. And what is that, Sylvia?
SYLVIA. He loves me.
KATE. Oh yes?
SYLVIA. He does. He thinks I shit ice cream!
KATE. There's love and there's love, sister!
SYLVIA. Yes, well, we'll see.
KATE. Yes we'll see, Sylvia. From here on in, it's a fight to
the finish.
SYLVIA. Fair enough! And may the best species win! *(They
confront each other on all fours. Greg comes in, carrying a dog dish
filled with kibble.)*
GREG. *(Seeing them.)* Hey! Great! Can I play, too? *(He drops
to his hands and knees, next to them. Kate looks at him. Quick black-
out.)*

END OF ACT ONE