

ACT I

(A wealthy living room in a house in a Boston suburb: Mrs. Jablom's home. Stuffy feeling.)

Parlor at rear Right with the front door out of view; big glass windows in the back; glass sliding doors rear left, leading to backyard; hallway door on the Left, next to a wet bar, the interior of which FACES US-- with numerous drawers and cabinet doors in which, when open, we can clearly see the insides of; big patry next to the bar with its doors closed.

Big couch and love seats, etc. Good taste overall.

It is Friday about 6:30PM. A very attractive woman is on the phone: her name is CONCHITA, and although she is a "white" young woman who looks and is dressed like a movie star, she is, in fact, dressed in an exquisitely elegant dress. She is 26 in age.

Conchita is on the phone:

CONCHITA

Yes: two dozen eggs; ten pounds of steak; white rice; ten bottles of wine - five whites, five reds; a large order of Caesar salad; a side of mayonnaise; a gallon of vanilla ice-cream, and a case of beer. The usual brands. You can drop it by any time tomorrow morning. And charge it to Mrs. Jablom's account. (beat) Thank you.

(She hangs up as the doorbell rings.)

CONCHITA goes to the front door as MRS. JABLON enters from the hallway.)

MRS JABLON

I'll get the door, Conchita. I know who it is. You can relax now.

CONCHITA

Thank you, ma'am.

MRS JABLON

Oh, and Conchita?

CONCHITA

Yes, ma'am?

MRS JABLOM

No sign of Kevin yet?

CONCHITA

None, ma'am.

MRS JABLOM

Then I may have to stay and miss the meeting. Which will spell suicide for my candidacy.

CONCHITA

I'll be in the guest house watching my telenovelas. But should you need anything, I can easily record it.

MRS JABLOM

Ah, the soaps!... In my youth, "Guiding Light" provided tremendous amounts of comfort. But now, forty years later, how could anyone not wish they were all dead?

CONCHITA

That is why I watch telenovelas that are in Spanish. So I will now know what I'm missing.

MRS JABLOM

Clever.

(Doorbell rings again)

MRS JABLOM

Oh, dear! You do your thing; I'll get the door.

(CONCHITA dusts off a few spots as she walks to the hallway door and goes off. MRS JABLOM goes to the parlor, disappears into it, and later returns with MR. SHAPIRO.)

MR SHAPIRO

Thank you, Mrs. Jablom. I really needed to speak to you.

MRS JABLOM

I thank you for agreeing to see me in my home, instead. What is this all about, please?

MR SHAPIRO

The matter concerns your son.

MRS JABLOM

Kevin?

MR SHAPIRO

Yes. You may remember the Student outing to the Art Museum on a Friday of last month?

MRS JABLON

Ah, yes. Kevin said they enjoyed some colorful impressionistic paintings which were - as he put it - quite "rad."

MR SHAPIRO

"Enjoyed" does not quite cover it. Considering that your son Kevin, and his fellow students, were stoned out of their minds throughout the entire excursion.

(MRS. JABLON is stunned.)

MRS JABLON

Mr. Shapiro. How can you venture such calumnious inferences? My son Kevin does not even drink.

MR SHAPIRO

Your son Kevin, and his considerable distribution powers, Mrs. Jablon, was single-handedly responsible for making a group of fellow students stand in front of dozens of dark Rembrandts for hours on end, and leaving them with the impression that the exhibit was actually a Van Gogh...

MRS JABLON

I was raised a strict Conservative, Mr. Shapiro. I have not the slightest idea of what you so enjoy alluding to. My family was devout to prayer from morning 'til night, and the Holy Word was Rule. Any deviation from that norm would be rewarded with the torturous thrills of molestation.

MR SHAPIRO

Catholicism is not in the realm of my experience, Mrs. Jablon, and it hardly nails the subject at hand.

MRS JABLON

But you are the Principal at Our Sisters of Our Utmost Sorrows!

MR SHAPIRO

Let us stick to the subject at hand and to the reason I asked you to see me: Two of our Professors, Mr. Cacciatoriccinni -- who teaches Advanced French -- and Mr. Sanchez -- Swedish, -- also found themselves extremely -- shall we say -- BOMBED that day at the Museum. Feeling a little funny, yet not able to distinguish their behavior to be any different from anyone else's - what with EVERYONE talking back to the supposed Van Gogh paintings at a Rembrandt exhibit - they had to assure themselves that there WAS indeed something wrong. Naturally, they realized it for certain once they had seconds.

MRS JABLON

And what in the world were they thinking, supplying drugs to young students?

MR SHAPIRO

YOUR SON, Mrs. Jablom, was the one supplying THEM and everyone else.

MRS JABLON

This is insupportable.

MR SHAPIRO

I quite agree with you there.

MRS JABLON

Were there any witnesses?

MRS SHAPIRO

Naturally, two hundred and seven students who will not talk. Plus Mr. Cacciatoriccinni and Mr. Sanchez remember nothing at all but their respective hangovers. Mr. Shapiro, don't you understand? -- These colorful Impressionistic Paintings were neither here nor there except in their own heads! For the next two weeks, Mr. Sanchez taught, not Swedish, but Italian. An admirable feat, when you consider he has never learned a word of Italian in this life. And yes, more witnesses came forward: the museum people themselves. Stunned at first, for the exhibit had never before been accompanied by a laugh track, they saw your son Kevin in the middle of it all distributing little tablets to the willing, which in this particular case seemed to be absolutely everyone.

MRS JABLON

I'm sure it was just gum or something. Kevin was raised to be generous.

MR SHAPIRO

Gum does not make a professor speak in tongues nor students discern stop-motion animation in Art, Mrs. Jablom. Your son is a drug peddler, and a threat to all Educational Systems of any kind that do not have the good fortune to be located in Colombia.

MRS JABLON

I shall talk to Kevin myself before I accuse him of anything. Thank you and have a good evening.

MR SHAPIRO

Mrs. Jablom, I hope you do not take this matter lightly. (serious) Where is your son Kevin?

MRS JABLON

He has disappeared.

MR SHAPIRO

Disappeared?

MRS JABLON

Which is the reason I asked you to come here instead.

MR SHAPIRO

De-confuse me, Mrs. Jablon.

MRS JABLON

I thought it a perfect idea to meet you at the school, as you wished; and then I could just stay there for the PTA meeting. I actually drove off only to come back for my make-up case and ear clippers - which I had forgotten and which I NEVER leave behind. And lo and behold, to my utter dismay, I find that Kevin had disappeared! Naturally I couldn't leave again! He had agreed to housesit for me!

(The phone rings.)

MRS JABLON

Excuse me. (She answers phone) Suzy! Hi! (To Mr. Shapiro) It's Mrs. Azucena, my neighbor. (Into phone:) No, Suzy, your son Dylan is not here. Neither is my Kevin. (beat) Really?? NONE of their are to be found either? (beat) The ENTIRE neighborhood? Well, they must be SOMEWHERE! I'm sure it's all just fine. You know young kids. When I was a teenager I didn't drink or touch anyone. There were too many chaperones. (beat) Yes, of course. I'll call you if I hear anything; just promise to do the same for me? (beat) Yes, it is strange. Dylan and Kevin are dear friends and I'm sure, if one were to get into trouble, the other would, likewise. Bye.

(She hangs up)

MRS JABLON

Strange. For some wild coincidence, all the kids happen not to be home.

MR SHAPIRO

And ALL their mothers are at the PTA.

MRS JABLON

(a sharp look:)

And what does that suggest, Mr. Shapiro?

MR SHAPIRO

I don't want to think about it. (muttering:) But I don't think Van Gogh is out of the question.

MRS JABLLOM

But that is absurd. By now the museum is closed.

MR SHAPIRO

You have a good evening, Mrs. Jablom. I'm afraid we must discipline Kevin. And expulsion may just be too good for him.

MRS JABLLOM

Expulsion!

MR SHAPIRO

Yes. Throttling a young one in the ass is considered morally reprehensible now, and is regrettably just not allowed anymore. Never again. Never.

(Doorbell rings)

MR SHAPIRO

Could it be?...

MRS JABLLOM

I hope so. Just so he can put an end to all of your unfounded suspicions.

(MRS JABLLOM disappears through the parlor, and immediately returns with a nun who follows her: SISTER LUCINA)

MRS JABLLOM

Please come in.

SISTER

If you will forgive me for coming unannounced.

MR SHAPIRO

Good evening, Sister Lucina.

SISTER

Mr. Shapiro, I am here looking for you. The PTA wonders what keeps you from being at the meeting?

MR SHAPIRO

I am attending to a little matter concerning Mrs. Jablom's son, Kevin.

SISTER

Yes. (to Mrs. Jablom:) After all, you ARE his mother.

(She shudders and genuflects again. MRS. JABLON is perplexed at all this.)

MRS JABLON

Are you here for Mr. Shapiro, or to exorcise me?

SISTER

Pardon me. But the Faculty's lack of attendance at the PTA meeting seemed a trifle uncanny. I refer to Mr. Sanchez and Mr. Cacciatoriccinni, from the Language Department. We also noticed the absence of Mrs. Jablom herself, who is running for her second term as Chairwoman and President. That did seem odd. But, naturally, when the absence of our own Principal was detected, I began to worry about some kind of uprising, or boycott. Then, I was soon informed, by Mr. Shapiro's office, of his actual whereabouts.

MR SHAPIRO

You say that Mr. Cacciatoriccinni and Mr. Sanchez are NOT at the meeting?

SISTER

No, sir. All the phone calls to the local watering holes have yielded negative results. We may try the bars next.

MR SHAPIRO

This is not good.

MRS JABLON

(to SISTER:)

You see, I couldn't possibly ask Conchita to housesit. She's watching her telenovelas.

MR SHAPIRO

(more to himself)

All the students disappear tonight, along with Sanchez and Cacciatoriccinni...

SISTERS

All students?

MR SHAPIRO

Sister Lucina, I thank you for alerting me. I fear disaster, that's all.

MRS JABLON

Disaster?!

SISTER

(genuflecting)

Mother of Mercy!

MR SHAPIRO

I venture to surmise that at this very moment, the entire Class is watching MORE Van Goghs, not necessarily at a museum.

SISTER

Naturally, sir, the museum being closed by this time.

MRS JABLON

(to MR. SHAPIRO:)

Are you alluding to what I think you're alluding?

MR SHAPIRO

I am afraid so.

MRS JABLON

Are you saying what I think you are saying?

MR SHAPIRO

(nods)

Yes.

MRS JABLON

Do you think they ALL broke into a museum??

MR SHAPIRO

Drugs, Mrs. Jablon! Drugs!! They're all doing drugs!! There are 200 happy students right now watching the Milky Way inside an unchaperoned living room! There is an audience for a Woodstock concert not necessarily listening to music!

SISTER

(genuflects)

Mother of Mercy!

MRS JABLON

How could they possibly? Where?!

MR SHAPIRO

With your son at the helm, even the White House as a location is not out of the question!

(Doorbell rings)

MRS JABLON

Oh, dear!... (as she goes to the front door:) I am sure we will get to the bottom of this and find out all is well.

(MRS. SUZY AZUCENA enters. Same age as MRS. JABLON. She lisps badly.)

MRS AZUCENA
Zandra! I've let myself in...

MRS JABLON
Suzy! (to Everyone:) This is Suzy Azucena. Suzy, of course you know of Sister Lucina and Mr. Shapiro?

MRS AZUCENA
Yez, yez, of courze. It iz my pleasure to finally meet you for real.

MR SHAPIRO
My pleasure.

MRS AZUCENA
My pleasure.

SISTER
We're not allowed pleasure, though I assure you a most warped guilt.

MRS JABLON
(to Suzy:)
Any news yet?

MRS AZUCENA
Nothing. I cannot help but feel a zudden pang of abzolute fear inzide me. It iz zimply zcary!

MRS JABLON
My sentiments exactly.

MRS AZUCENA
(to MR. SHAPIRO:)
What do you think, Mizter Shapiro?

(MR. SHAPIRO takes off his glasses and wipes them clean with his handkerchief.)

MRS JABLON
We absolutely must find these young fellows.

MR SHAPIRO
(putting glasses back on)
And when we do, we must punish them.

SISTER
Yes.

MR SHAPIRO
Repeatedly.

SISTER

The eye of God is Everywhere. And when he decides to strike it'll be His own Will. He watches everything. Everything! We are not safe, you hear me?? We are NOT SAFE!!

(They all look at her)

SISTER

Drama was my minor.

MRS JABLLOM

Oh, I can't think straight. I wish my Will Jablom had not died.

MRS AZUCENA

I wish my Zal hurried back from work.

SISTER

I wish my Rod had never set eyes on that little tra--

(and before she finishes "tramp", she stops, freezing self-consciously.

They all look at her.)

SISTER

(continues:)

In younger times, before my ordination -- I had needs.

MRS JABLLOM

(to SISTER:)

Mrs. Azucena's son, Dylan Azucena, is also not to be found.

MR SHAPIRO

Obviously a member of this audacious conspiracy taking place in this town.

MRS AZUCENA

The lazt time I zaw hiz zmling faze waz thiz morning. Zauzage and Meczican Zalza iz what I zerved him for breakfaszt. (beatific:) Oh - I can ztill remember hiz beaming faze when I told him: "Zon, here iz breakfaszt: Zauzage and Zalza. It'z Meczican." Then, for zome ztrange reason, hiz faze, now covered with zpit and zaliva, waz not zmling anymore...

(SISTER and SHAPIRO are still working on this one.)

MR SHAPIRO

And was that the last time you saw your son Dylan, Zasu
-- Suzy?

MRS AZUCENA

Abzolutely. At breakfaszt.

MRS JABLON

(to MR. SHAPIRO:)

What do you make of that?

MR SHAPIRO

(confused)

I'm still working on the other one...