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Norman Maine Publishing

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"I think this play  
is actually worse  
than when my  
all-white Baptist church  
did a production  
of "A Raisin in the Sun."

—George

## Sound Cues

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Sound CUES was first performed at the Eclectic Company Theatre in North Hollywood, CA, October 7-9, 2005: Aaron Lyons, director; Erin Treanor, producer; John Dickey, set and light design; and Jeff Folschinsky, sound design.

**FRANK:** Joe Allen Price

**COLLIN:** Bradford Beacom

**GEORGE:** Michael Estafen

# Sound Cues

**COMEDY.** When a community theatre soundboard operator breaks the stereo during a show, he/she and two other sound techs are forced to create the sound effects themselves. They manage to pull off the sounds of a horse, pig, dog, cow, flushing toilet, dying bear, ringing phone, and heartfelt love song, but when the lead actor storms off, the threesome must take center stage to save the show.

**Performance Time:** Approximately 30 minutes.

# Characters

(3 m or 3 f)

**FRANK/FAYE:** Stage manager; has spent entire life in the theatre behind the scenes, although his/her biggest desire is to be on stage; an actor in every sense of the word.

**COLLIN/CHRISTIN:** Soundboard operator.

**GEORGE/GALE:** Intern.

**NOTE:** Female version of the play starts on page 33.

# Setting

Tech room of a theatre while a play is being performed. The small room faces where the stage presumably is, so that while the actors are watching the "play," they are in fact watching the audience. The actors should give the impression they are talking quietly, whispering even, as a play is being performed.

A strong sense of confinement should be created. The tech room contains all the regular sound and light equipment normal to a mid-sized community theater, including a stereo and a microphone. The script of the play being performed is prominently displayed.

# Props

3 Chairs  
3 Flasks  
Handkerchief

# Sound Effects

Applause  
Intro music  
Phone ringing  
Dog barking  
Gunshot

Doorbell  
Woman screaming  
Car honking  
Farm animals

# Sound Cues

## [male Version]

*(AT RISE: Collin is sitting in front of the sound board and George is sitting somewhat off to the side. Frank's seat is in the middle of the two. It is a few minutes before the start of the "play," which is entitled, "The Rediscovery of Discovering: A Discovery." Every time the title of the play is stated, the actors should say "colon" as part of the title.)*

GEORGE: What time is it?

COLLIN: *[Insert whatever time it is.]*

GEORGE: Why can't plays ever start on time?

COLLIN: It's less dramatic. Besides, Maud needs time to get into character.

GEORGE: She's never been in character. *(Pause. Looks at the audience.)* There are a lot of old people here tonight. Ugly too.

COLLIN: They had to turn people away.

GEORGE: The lucky ones. At this rate, the show will be extended indefinitely.

COLLIN: Three weeks is long enough.

GEORGE: At least you're getting paid. All I get is an addition to my resume.

COLLIN: Not enough to eat. Besides, you're the intern. You're supposed to be treated horribly.

GEORGE: Well I stopped trying to please or impress anyone here after I had to clip the director's toenails.

COLLIN: I still can't believe you did that.

GEORGE: I was too shocked by the request to decline.

COLLIN: He told me last night that he thought my motivation was slipping.

GEORGE: You run the soundboard.

COLLIN: Apparently without motivation. He told me that I should try and remember something in my life that I felt really dedicated to and then apply that feeling to the soundboard.

GEORGE: What did you choose?

COLLIN: My dead dog Charlie. I think it's working.

GEORGE: He's given up on directing the actors and moved on to the crew.

COLLIN: Who can blame him?

GEORGE: Maud is really an impressively bad actress. Did you know she only goes by Maud because Maud Gonne is her favorite actress?

COLLIN: Who picks Maud Gonne as their favorite actress?

GEORGE: Maud. I'm surprised she didn't tell you.

COLLIN: Why?

GEORGE: I guess because...you know.

COLLIN: I told you not to bring that up. Do you think I want Frank to kill me? Because I really don't. My dad is here tonight, and as it is, he doesn't think I have a real job. He thinks the theatre is weird and full of misfits who don't do any real work and I'd like to prove him wrong. He's a very uptight person.

GEORGE: Your dad uptight? No.

COLLIN: It's the first time he's come to one of my shows. He hates the theatre.

GEORGE: Why?

COLLIN: He saw "Cats" once. *(Pause. They shake their heads.)* So the whole Maud thing is over and done with. She was drunk; I was sober. It was the opening night party. Nothing more to say.

GEORGE: At least you know she wasn't faking it. She couldn't even act that—

COLLIN: Frank will be here any second!

GEORGE: Don't be so nervous all the time. You're the most uptight person I know. Besides, I doubt he'd kill you. He'd

probably just spew out a bunch of Shakespearean insults like he always does when he's mad. Any excuse to act.

COLLIN: You're not funny.

GEORGE: Maybe not, but it is funny you had sex with the same woman as Frank.

COLLIN: He...with her a couple of times...and fell in love while I...with her once, and never talked to her again. That's all.

GEORGE: Sounds like the plot of a bad play.

COLLIN: Speaking of which, is that the playwright who just walked in?

GEORGE: Yeah, I saw him earlier. Don't tell me we've been waiting on him.

COLLIN: I feel even more nervous knowing the playwright is here.

GEORGE: Why? I think this play is actually worse than when my all-white Baptist church did a production of "A Raisin in the Sun."

COLLIN: Sounds horrible.

GEORGE: Besides, he is so pretentious we should ruin his play. Just look at the title: "The Rediscovery of Discovering: A Discovery." It's six words long with a colon and doesn't even make sense. I don't see why he couldn't just pick a two word title. Two word titles are ideal.

COLLIN: He finally sat down so maybe we can start the play now.

GEORGE: This play says nothing to no one about anything.

COLLIN: That's why it's so popular.

GEORGE: Well, I'd do anything to have something interesting happen.

*(Enter Frank.)*

FRANK: We are at places, so let's get this show started. What is this, show 50? 65?

COLLIN: Thirty.

FRANK: Is that it? (*Takes a flask out of his pocket and takes a swig.*)

COLLIN: You're going to drink during the show?

FRANK: It's only bourbon. Want some?

GEORGE: Yeah, I'll take some of that. (*Takes a swig.*)

FRANK: What about you, Collin?

COLLIN: I don't think it's a good idea.

FRANK: You need to loosen up. Put some passion in your life.

COLLIN: I am not that uptight.

FRANK: You never drink, smoke, or cuss. If you're going to stay in the theatre, you better take up at least two of the three and drinking is a good place to start at.

COLLIN: To start.

FRANK: What?

COLLIN: You said, "to start at." It is incorrect to end a sentence with a preposition. (*Frank just stares at him.*) Look, just because I choose not to kill my brain cells, promote the growth of cancer, or use unintelligent language, doesn't mean I am uptight.

FRANK: Fine, but it does mean you're boring. Have some fun—be a dirty sidewalk walker now and then.

COLLIN: I don't know what that means.

FRANK: Let's just start this show. Are you ready for the farm animal scene tonight? It was a little off last night and apparently Maud was very upset. She said she would have walked off the stage if she wasn't so dedicated to her art.

COLLIN: It was only off by a second or two.

GEORGE: I almost walked out of this room because her acting was so bad.

FRANK: The director has been getting on my back about your motivation. Wouldn't cast me in the play, but now that I am the stage manager he's lecturing me on motivation. What a fool. Okay, then hold sound cue one.

*(Despite the conversation, Frank is watching the play and following along with the script so that when he calls a cue it seems very precisely timed. Collin prepares the sound board. This action consists of basically pushing a button or two and is repeated every time a sound cue is called.)*

COLLIN: Holding.

FRANK: Lights to half, intern.

GEORGE: Lights to half. *(He lowers the lights.)*

FRANK: Raise curtain.

*(George flips a switch.)*

GEORGE: Raising.

FRANK: Sound cue one...go. *(Stringy intro music is heard followed by the applause of the audience.)* Lights out...go.

Perfect. You know I auditioned for this play?

GEORGE: You tell us every night.

FRANK: The only reason I didn't get the part is because the director is intimidated by real talent. I've had the problem my whole life. People are always scared I'll steal the show.

GEORGE: Yes, I'm sure that's what they're scared of.

FRANK: Sound cue 2 hold. One day, I'll be back on the stage doing what I was meant to do.

COLLIN: Sound cue 2 holding.

FRANK: And go. *(Phone ringing is heard.)* I heard the playwright is here tonight. You guys seen him?

GEORGE: Third row, center. The only one laughing.

*(Frank looks.)*

FRANK: I thought he'd be a lot fatter.

COLLIN: Fatter?

FRANK: Yeah, you know, like huge.

COLLIN: Why?

FRANK: That's just how I pictured him after reading the play the first time.

GEORGE: His picture is in the program.

FRANK: You can't tell if a person is fat from a headshot. I've asked lots of women out based on their headshots, and trust me, you can't tell.

COLLIN: What in the play would make you picture him as fat?

FRANK: It's just how I pictured him. Just like how everyone pictures George Shaw as a midget after reading his plays.

GEORGE: What are you talking about?

FRANK: Are you telling me that you didn't picture George Bernard Shaw as a midget after reading his plays?

GEORGE: Yes.

FRANK: What play did you read?

GEORGE: "Heartbreak House."

FRANK: Well, not "Heartbreak House," but the others.

COLLIN: I saw "John Bull's Other Island," and I didn't picture him as a midget.

FRANK: I'm not talking about seeing; I'm talking about reading. Jesus. You know my second wife was a midget. And a little one at that. Sound cue 3 hold. When she'd get mad at me, she'd sleep on the couch, and if I tried to sleep next to her, she'd sleep under it.

COLLIN: Holding.

*(Frank watches the stage.)*

FRANK: And go.

*(Sound of a dog barking followed by a gunshot is heard and then silence.)*

COLLIN: Your second wife was a midget?

FRANK: Yep.

GEORGE: The most shocking part of the story is that you were married.

COLLIN: Why did you get divorced?

FRANK: She was sleeping around on me. I came home one night and caught her in the act with a prominent professional basketball player. I won't mention names. But I'll tell you one thing, if he wasn't stronger than me, I would have taught him a lesson.

GEORGE: (*Jokingly.*) Did you at least get his autograph?

FRANK: (*Serious.*) He signed a ball for me. Sound cue 4 hold.

COLLIN: Holding.

FRANK: Sound cue 4 go. (*Sound of a doorbell is heard.*) And enter Maud. (*All three look.*) Whoever loved that loved not at first sight? That, gentlemen, is what a real lady looks like. A cut above the trashy women young men chase around these days.

GEORGE: She sure is. What do you think, Collin? She seems like your type.

COLLIN: I don't really have a type, George.

GEORGE: Everyone has a type. Are you saying you don't find Frank's girl attractive?

COLLIN: Of course I find her attractive.

GEORGE: Then she's your type.

COLLIN: I think everyone agrees she is beautiful.

GEORGE: She's the kind of woman you'd like to date. You'd make a good-looking couple, but you'd have hideous kids. Good-looking people always have ugly children. Did you know it takes on average 86 attempts of sexual intercourse for a woman to get pregnant?

COLLIN: (*Panicking and then recovering, somewhat.*) Just because I find her attractive doesn't mean I would have intercourse with her...for procreational or recreational purposes.

GEORGE: Where did that come from?

COLLIN: Nowhere, it came from nowhere. I'm just saying I wouldn't... with her. Why are we talking about this?

GEORGE: You brought it up. I'm not the one who enjoys talking about Frank's girl so much.

COLLIN: I don't like talking about her. I mean, of course I think she's beautiful, but she's Frank's girl, even though she won't talk to him anymore.

FRANK: That will change, boys, that will change. Once a woman has a taste of real meat they always come back for more.

COLLIN: Maud's a vegetarian.

FRANK: Are you sure? Because I bought her a ham for our second date, and she seemed happy about it.

COLLIN: You bought her a ham?

FRANK: Yeah, Boarshead honey baked. Quality shit.

GEORGE: Didn't you only have two dates?

*(Pause.)*

FRANK: Sound cue 5 and 5.5 hold.

COLLIN: Holding.

FRANK: Go. *(Sound of a woman screaming is heard.)* You know who that is screaming?

COLLIN: No.

FRANK: It's me. Did it in one take. 5.5 go.

*(Sound of a car honking is heard.)*

GEORGE: I know it's the 30th show and all, but shouldn't those sound cues be switched? If there was time for her to scream and then for the car to honk, wouldn't she just move out of the road instead of screaming?

*(Frank ponders this for a moment and then makes a note on the script.)*

FRANK: You know midgets are surprisingly good drivers. Much better than regular-sized women.

GEORGE: What is wrong with you?

FRANK: It's a fact. Look it up.

GEORGE: Listening to you is more painful than watching Maud act.

COLLIN: I don't see why you always have to pick on her and not the other actors who are just as bad, if not worse. She never did anything against you.

GEORGE: Because she's a horrible, miserable person and as soon as I am Minister of Population Control, I will bring back the guillotine and she will be the first to go.

COLLIN: That's not even an actual position.

GEORGE: Not yet. *(Pause.)* Just look at her!

FRANK: Quiet down! You don't know what you're talking about, intern. Maud's a fine woman. Sound cue 6 hold.

COLLIN: Maybe she's not the best actress, but you don't have to be so mean about it.

GEORGE: I have my reasons.

COLLIN: You don't have any reason to treat her the way you do.

GEORGE: *(Halfway through this line he realizes what he is saying but then decides to say it anyway.)* You're only saying that because you had sex with her.

FRANK: Sound cue 6 go. What?

*(Colin stands up quickly and backs away from Frank.)*

COLLIN: What?

FRANK: What did you say?

GEORGE: Push the sound cue!

*(Collin rushes over and pushes the button, and in doing so, knocks over the stereo. Pause.)*

COLLIN: Mother shit balls of a bloated vagina lover!

GEORGE: Holy shit, you cussed!

*(Frank approaches.)*

FRANK: Did you have sex with Maud?

GEORGE: *(Loudly, not caring.)* Shhh! People are turning around in their seats.

COLLIN: Charlie's dead, again. How are we going to get through the farm animal scene? It's coming up next.

FRANK: *(Picking Collin up.)* Did you make a cuckold of me?

COLLIN: Of course not. George made that up.

GEORGE: It's true. I made it up as a funny joke. Ha!

*(Frank lets go of Collin, who immediately starts putting the stereo back together.)*

FRANK: Are you sure, intern?

GEORGE: *(He says this as he points to Collin while gesturing that it was a very passionate night of love making.)* Of course, of course, intercourse.

*(Frank approaches Collin.)*

FRANK: *(To Collin.)* Tell me the truth, or there's going to be blood on the cleaver.

COLLIN: Help me, George.

GEORGE: This is so much more interesting than the play.

*(Frank shakes Collin.)*

FRANK: Tell me now! You fobbing rough-hewn hugger-mugger.

COLLIN: *(Points to the stereo.)* But Charlie...

FRANK: Who's Charlie? So you brought your friend too, you sick little...

COLLIN: *(Almost in tears.)* It was an accident.

FRANK: You want me to believe it was an accident? Did you slip and fall into her? Thou churlish rump-fed codpiece!

GEORGE: That must have been an awkward apology.

COLLIN: I only did it once. *(Pleading.)* You weren't dating her anymore.

FRANK: When you sleep with someone, you make a tiny little promise in your heart. "Oh, what graces in my love do dwell, that she hath turned a heaven unto a hell?"

COLLIN: She didn't like it. I cried afterwards.

FRANK: And you'll cry some more.

COLLIN: Please, no.

GEORGE: *(Casually.)* As much as I hate to stop your fight, the farm animal scene just started. The one with seven sound effects in 30 seconds? And we have no sound.

FRANK: *(Realizing.)* Shit.

COLLIN: It isn't my fault. George is the one with the big mouth.

GEORGE: You're the one that said Maud likes it rough.

FRANK: *(To Collin.)* I'm going to kill you and then eat you.

COLLIN: *(Cowering.)* Please don't.

GEORGE: Frank, the scene.

*(Frank rushes over to the script and looks at the stage.)*

FRANK: Shit! Sound cue 7 hold.

COLLIN: *(Desperate.)* Hold what?

FRANK: I just call them.

COLLIN: What is sound cue 7?

FRANK: The horse.

COLLIN: Shit.

FRANK: Sound cue 7 go. *(Long silence. Finally, Collin takes a hold of the microphone and lets out a long, strange sound somewhat resembling that of a horse. Frank and George just stare at him. Pause. Sincere.)* That was brilliant. She couldn't even tell the difference.

GEORGE: I can't believe you just did that.

COLLIN: (*Gesturing toward the stage.*) There's still the rest of the scene. All the animal sounds when she runs into the barn. We can't do them all.

FRANK: Of course we can. It's the break we've been waiting for. (*He looks at the script and then the play and takes hold of the microphone.*) Sound cue 8 hold. Holding. Sound cue 8 go. (*He makes the sound of a goat.*) That felt great! (*All three crowd around the script and microphone.*) Sound cue 8.5 hold.

GEORGE: Holding.

FRANK: And go. (*George makes the sound of a pig.*) Sound cue 9 hold.

COLLIN: Holding.

FRANK: Go. (*Collin makes the sound of a dog barking.*) Sound cue 9.5 go.

(*Frank makes the sound of a cow, George joins in.*)

COLLIN: Sound cue 10 go. (*He makes the sound of cat as the others continue making sounds, before long it is a cacophony of farm animal sounds as they all get lost in the moment. Finally, it comes to an end but not until Frank gets in one last cow sound. After a long silence, Frank takes a swig from the flask and gives it to George, who also takes a swig. Collin grabs the flask and finishes it in one gulp.*) My dad is going to disown me.

GEORGE: The playwright is crying. We should have done this weeks ago.

FRANK: There's still the love song.

COLLIN: Don't look at me.

GEORGE: I'm just the intern. I'm supposed to be getting coffee.

FRANK: I can't sing.

GEORGE: Fix the stereo.

COLLIN: There isn't time.

GEORGE: Rock, paper, scissors.

FRANK: Okay, on three. One, two, three...

*(Frank does rock, Collin does paper, and George does scissors.)*

ALL: Damn!

COLLIN: Now what?

FRANK: There's no time for discussion. I'll be the man and do it.

GEORGE: It's supposed to be a woman singing.

COLLIN: Don't do it. It's not that important of a sound cue. She'll just play it off like the radio won't work.

GEORGE: *(Waving him off.)* This is the most important sound cue of all. We can't leave room for Maud to improv. Besides, the whole point of her going into the barn is to find the radio, which her mom hid from her Amish uncle. It's her first discovery. You have to sing Frank. The show must go on.

FRANK: The intern is right. I can't leave her hanging—I am the stage manager. How much time do I have?

*(George is delighted, not because he is right but because Frank is going to sing.)*

GEORGE: *(Taking over the script, watching the stage.)* A few seconds. *(Frank begins preparing by doing breathing exercises.)* Okay, Frank, sound cue 12 hold.

FRANK: I'm ready, intern.

GEORGE: *(Watching the stage.)* And...sound cue 12 go.

FRANK: *(In falsetto, into the microphone while reading from the script.)* I was only a girl, a flower bud;  
But for him my flower opened up  
And his touch made me a woman,  
Now I only grow for him.

*(Collin and George just stare at him, shocked.)*

COLLIN: *(Sincere.)* Fucking friciting fuck yeah! That was great Frank.

GEORGE: I think it was better when you didn't cuss.

COLLIN: No, really, that was wonderful. You should be on the stage. I can't believe they didn't cast you.

*(Frank takes another flask from his pocket, takes a drink, and passes it around.)*

FRANK: Those jacklegs would be so lucky. It does feel good to be working again though.

COLLIN: Listen, Frank, I'm sorry that I...you know with Maud and didn't tell you. If it makes you feel better she hasn't even looked at me since. Probably because I cried so much afterwards.

FRANK: You know something, Collin? I cry afterwards, too. And who can blame us for crying after something so beautiful? *(They share a moment.)* And you know, she really is a bad actress.

COLLIN: Yeah, she really is.

FRANK: We let our minds be clouded with the yearnings of our hearts.

GEORGE: Would you believe she sleeps with a copy of "Acting for Dummies" under her pillow?

FRANK: It hasn't helped, and it surely isn't because she's not dumb. Someone give me sound cue 13. The toilet flushing.

GEORGE: I got it.

FRANK: And go. *(George makes the sound of a toilet flushing.)*  
Nice work.

*(Pause.)*

COLLIN: How do you know she sleeps with a copy of "Acting for Dummies" under her pillow? When were you in her room?

GEORGE: You must have told me that...or maybe she did.

COLLIN: I didn't tell you that, and I know she would never admit to even owning a copy of "Acting for Dummies." You

must have been in her room and there's only one reason  
Maud lets anyone in her bedroom...

GEORGE: That's crazy.

FRANK: Intern, were you in her room?

GEORGE: Of course not. I can't believe we are even  
discussing this.

COLLIN: You had sex with her, didn't you?

GEORGE: With who?

FRANK: You know who he is talking about.

GEORGE: I must have seen her buying the book.

COLLIN: You said you saw it in her room, under her pillow.

GEORGE: I must have dreamt it all.

COLLIN: While sleeping in her bed!

GEORGE: We weren't sleeping!

COLLIN: I knew it.

GEORGE: I had to see what I was missing out on.

FRANK: I am a man more sinned against than sinning.

GEORGE: One night when I was here late prepping the set,  
she came on to me.

COLLIN: So that's why you've been so mean to her.

GEORGE: We went back to her place because I didn't want to  
introduce her to my parents and we had sex. And we did it  
the next three nights, and now she won't even look at me. I  
feel so used and dirty like some two-bit floozy.

COLLIN: I can't believe you did that to me.

FRANK: To you? She was mine first!

COLLIN: Well, she was my first!

*(Awkward silence at this confession.)*

GEORGE: Really?

COLLIN: Yeah.

GEORGE: No wonder she didn't go back for seconds.

FRANK: You were only a boy when she made a man out of  
you.

GEORGE: I can't believe the first person you had sex with was Maud.

COLLIN: Well, I can't believe we all had sex with the same woman.

*(Awkward moment as all three come to fully realize that they were naked in front of the same woman, they uncomfortably look down and then at each other, sizing one another up.)*

FRANK: God damn it. The only thing we can do now is all share a secret. The rule is that if you share a woman the only way to save the friendship is to share a secret.

GEORGE: Couldn't we just not be friends?

FRANK: Collin already said that Maud was his first. Now you go, intern.

GEORGE: Why me?

FRANK: Look, just go. It'll make this less awkward.

GEORGE: *(Embarrassed.)* Fine. Let me think. I dated a girl once for three weeks before I realized she was handicapped. I just thought she was quiet.

COLLIN: What happened?

GEORGE: I stayed with her another week for the parking, but her dad finally asked me to stop coming over.

COLLIN: That's horrible.

GEORGE: Yeah.

COLLIN: My high school girlfriend only had one leg.

FRANK: Was she in Nam?

COLLIN: She's 26. She had a prosthesis and I just forgot about it after awhile.

GEORGE: What's your secret, Frank?

*(Pause.)*

FRANK: The last time I was cast in a show was in 1970 in a production of "Our Town." I got the part of the Stage Manager.

*(George begins to laugh.)*

COLLIN: That's a great role, Frank.

FRANK: Yes, but I've been playing it ever since. *(Pause.)*

Someone give me sound cue 14.

COLLIN: Which one is that?

FRANK: The bear.

COLLIN: I got it.

FRANK: And go.

*(Collin makes the sound of a bear dying.)*

GEORGE: I still don't understand how we are supposed to believe she kills a bear.

COLLIN: It's bad writing. None of it is believable and none of the characters have anything to say.

**[End of Freeview]**

## Sound Cues [Female Version]

*(AT RISE: Christin is sitting in front of the sound board and Gale is sitting somewhat off to the side. Faye's seat is in the middle of the two. It is a few minutes before the start of the "play," which is entitled, "The Rediscovery of Discovering: A Discovery." Every time the title of the play is stated, the actors should say "colon" as part of the title.)*

GALE: What time is it?

CHRISTIN: *[Insert whatever time it is.]*

GALE: Why can't plays ever start on time?

CHRISTIN: It's less dramatic. Besides, Burt needs time to get into character.

GALE: He's never been in character. *(Pause. Looks at the audience.)* There are a lot of old people here tonight. Ugly too.

CHRISTIN: They had to turn people away.

GALE: The lucky ones. At this rate, the show will be extended indefinitely.

CHRISTIN: Three weeks is long enough.

GALE: At least you're getting paid. All I get is an addition to my resume.

CHRISTIN: Not enough to eat. Besides, you're the intern. You're supposed to be treated horribly.

GALE: Well I stopped trying to please or impress anyone here after I had to clip the director's toenails.

CHRISTIN: I still can't believe you did that.

GALE: I was too shocked by the request to decline.

CHRISTIN: She told me last night that she thought my motivation was slipping.

GALE: You run the soundboard.

CHRISTIN: Apparently without motivation. She told me that I should try and remember something in my life that I felt really dedicated to and then apply that feeling to the soundboard.

GALE: What did you choose?

CHRISTIN: My dead dog Betty. I think it's working.

GALE: She's given up on directing the actors and moved on to the crew.

CHRISTIN: Who can blame her?

GALE: Burt is really an impressively bad actor. Did you know he only goes by Burt because Burt Reynolds is his favorite actor?

CHRISTIN: Who picks Burt Reynolds as their favorite actor?

GALE: Burt. I'm surprised he didn't tell you.

CHRISTIN: Why?

GALE: I guess because...you know.

CHRISTIN: I told you not to bring that up. Do you think I want Faye to kill me? Because I really don't. My mom is here tonight, and as it is, she doesn't think I have a real job. She thinks the theatre is weird and full of misfits who don't do any real work and I'd like to prove her wrong. She's a very uptight person.

GALE: Your mom uptight? No.

CHRISTIN: It's the first time she's come to one of my shows. She hates the theatre.

GALE: Why?

CHRISTIN: She saw "Cats" once. *(Pause. They shake their heads.)* So the whole Burt thing is over and done with. He was drunk; I was sober. It was the opening night party. Nothing more to say. Faye will be here any second and I don't want her to kill me.

GALE: Don't be so nervous all the time. You're the most uptight person I know. Besides, I doubt she'd kill you. She'd probably just spew out a bunch of Shakespearean insults like she always does when she's mad. Any excuse to act.

CHRISTIN: You're not funny.

GALE: Maybe not, but it is funny you slept with the same man as Faye.

CHRISTIN: She...with him a couple of times...and fell in love while I...with him once, and never talked to him again. That's all.

GALE: Sounds like the plot of a bad play.

CHRISTIN: Speaking of which, is that the playwright who just walked in?

GALE: Yeah, I saw her earlier. Don't tell me we've been waiting on her.

CHRISTIN: I feel even more nervous knowing the playwright is here.

GALE: Why? I think this play is actually worse than when my all-white Baptist church did a production of "A Raisin in the Sun."

CHRISTIN: Sounds horrible.

GALE: Besides, she is so pretentious we should ruin her play. Just look at the title: "The Rediscovery of Discovering: A Discovery." It's six words long with a colon and doesn't even make sense. I don't see why she couldn't just pick a two word title. Two word titles are ideal.

CHRISTIN: She finally sat down so maybe we can start the play now.

GALE: This play says nothing to no one about anything.

CHRISTIN: That's why it's so popular.

GALE: Well, I'd do anything to have something interesting happen.

*(Enter Faye.)*

FAYE: We are at places, so let's get this show started. What is this, show 50? 65?

CHRISTIN: Thirty.

FAYE: Is that it? *(Takes a flask out of her pocket and takes a swig.)*

CHRISTIN: You're going to drink during the show?

FAYE: It's only vodka. Want some?

GALE: Yeah, I'll take some of that. *(Takes a swig.)*

FAYE: What about you, Christin?

CHRISTIN: I don't think it's a good idea.

FAYE: You need to loosen up. Put some passion in your life.

CHRISTIN: I am not that uptight.

FAYE: You never drink, smoke, or cuss. If you're going to stay in the theatre, you better take up at least two of the three and drinking is a good place to start at.

CHRISTIN: To start.

FAYE: What?

CHRISTIN: You said, "to start at." It is incorrect to end a sentence with a preposition. *(Faye just stares at her.)* Look, just because I choose not to kill my brain cells, promote the growth of cancer, or use unintelligent language, doesn't mean I am uptight.

FAYE: Fine, but it does mean you're boring. Have some fun—be a dirty sidewalk walker now and then.

CHRISTIN: I don't know what that means.

FAYE: Let's just start this show. Are you ready for the farm animal scene tonight? It was a little off last night and apparently Burt was very upset. He said he would have walked off the stage if he wasn't so dedicated to her art.

CHRISTIN: It was only off by a second or two.

GALE: I almost walked out of this room because his acting was so bad.

FAYE: The director has been getting on my back about your motivation. Wouldn't cast me in the play, but now that I am the stage manager she's lecturing me on motivation. The half-wit. Okay, then hold sound cue one.

*(Despite the conversation, Faye is watching the play and following along with the script so that when she calls a cue it seems very precisely timed. Christin prepares the sound board. This action consists of basically pushing a button or two and is repeated every time a sound cue is called.)*

CHRISTIN: Holding.

FAYE: Lights to half, intern.

GALE: Lights to half. (*She lowers the lights.*)

FAYE: Raise curtain.

(*Gale flips a switch.*)

GALE: Raising.

FAYE: Sound cue one...go. (*Stringy intro music is heard followed by the applause of the audience.*) Lights out...go. Perfect. You know I auditioned for this play?

GALE: You tell us every night.

FAYE: The only reason I didn't get the part is because the director is intimidated by real beauty and talent. And who can blame her with a face like that? I've had the problem my whole life. People are always scared I'll steal the show.

GALE: Yes, I'm sure that's what they're scared of.

FAYE: Sound cue 2 hold. One day, I'll be back on the stage doing what I was meant to do.

CHRISTIN: Sound cue 2 holding.

FAYE: And go. (*Phone ringing is heard.*) I heard the playwright is here tonight. You guys seen her?

GALE: Third row, center. The only one laughing.

(*Faye looks.*)

FAYE: I thought she'd be a lot fatter.

CHRISTIN: Fatter?

FAYE: Yeah, you know, like huge.

CHRISTIN: Why?

FAYE: That's just how I pictured her after reading the play the first time.

GALE: Her picture is in the program.

FAYE: You can't tell if a person is fat from a headshot. I've asked lots of men out based on their headshots, and trust me, you can't tell.

CHRISTIN: What in the play would make you picture her as fat?

FAYE: It's just how I pictured her. Just like how everyone pictures George Shaw as a midget after reading his plays.

GALE: What are you talking about?

FAYE: Are you telling me that you didn't picture George Bernard Shaw as a midget after reading his plays?

GALE: Yes.

FAYE: What play did you read?

GALE: "Heartbreak House."

FAYE: Well, not "Heartbreak House," but the others.

CHRISTIN: I saw "John Bull's Other Island," and I didn't picture him as a midget.

FAYE: I'm not talking about seeing; I'm talking about reading. Jesus. You know my second husband was a midget. And a little one at that. Sound cue 3 hold. When he'd get mad at me, he'd sleep on the couch, and if I tried to sleep next to him, he'd sleep under it.

CHRISTIN: Holding.

*(Faye watches the stage.)*

FAYE: And go.

*(Sound of a dog barking followed by a gunshot is heard and then silence.)*

CHRISTIN: Your second husband was a midget?

FAYE: Yep.

GALE: The most shocking part of the story is that you were married.

CHRISTIN: Why did you get divorced?

FAYE: He was sleeping around on me. I came home one night and caught him in the act with a prominent professional woman wrestler. I won't mention names. But

I'll tell you one thing, if she wasn't stronger than me, I would have taught her a lesson. Sound cue 4 hold.

CHRISTIN: Holding.

FAYE: Sound cue 4 go. (*Sound of a doorbell is heard.*) And enter Burt. (*All three look.*) Whoever loved that loved not at first sight? That, ladies, is what a real man looks like. Like a young Burt Reynolds. A cut above the losers young women chase around these days.

GALE: He sure is. What do you think, Christin? He seems like your type.

CHRISTIN: I don't really have a type, Gale.

GALE: Everyone has a type. Are you saying you don't find Faye's man attractive?

CHRISTIN: Of course I find him attractive.

GALE: Then he's your type.

CHRISTIN: I think everyone agrees he is handsome.

GALE: He's the kind of man you'd like to date. You'd make a good-looking couple, but you'd have hideous kids. Good-looking people always have ugly children. Did you know it takes on average 86 attempts of sexual intercourse to get pregnant? But I bet with Burt it would only take one.

CHRISTIN: (*Panicking and then recovering, somewhat.*) Just because I find him attractive doesn't mean I would have intercourse with him...for procreational or recreational purposes.

GALE: Where did that come from?

CHRISTIN: Nowhere, it came from nowhere. I'm just saying I wouldn't... with him. Why are we talking about this?

GALE: You brought it up. I'm not the one who enjoys talking about Faye's man so much.

CHRISTIN: I don't like talking about him. I mean, of course I think he's handsome, but he's Faye's, even though he won't talk to her anymore.

FAYE: That will change, girls, that will change. Once a man has a taste of real meat they always come back for more.

CHRISTIN: Burt's a vegetarian.

FAYE: Are you sure? Because I bought him a ham for our second date, and he seemed happy about it.

CHRISTIN: You bought him a ham?

FAYE: Yeah, Boarshead honey baked. Quality.

GALE: Didn't you only have two dates?

*(Pause.)*

FAYE: Sound cue 5 and 5.5 hold.

CHRISTIN: Holding.

FAYE: Go. *(Sound of a man yelling is heard.)* You know who that is yelling?

CHRISTIN: No.

FAYE: It's me. Did it in one take. 5.5 go.

*(Sound of a car honking is heard.)*

GALE: I know it's the 30th show and all, but shouldn't those sound cues be switched? If there was time for him to yell and then for the car to honk, wouldn't he just move out of the road instead of yelling?

*(Faye ponders this for a moment and then makes a note on the script.)*

FAYE: You know midgets are surprisingly good drivers. Much better than regular-sized people.

GALE: What is wrong with you?

FAYE: It's a fact. Look it up.

GALE: Listening to you is more painful than watching Burt act.

CHRISTIN: I don't see why you always have to pick on him and not the other actors who are just as bad, if not worse. He never did anything against you.

GALE: Because he's a horrible, miserable person and as soon as I am Minister of Population Control, I will bring back the guillotine and he will be the first to go.

CHRISTIN: That's not even an actual position.

GALE: Not yet. *(Pause.)* Just look at him!

FAYE: Quiet down! You don't know what you're talking about, intern. Burt's a fine man. Sound cue 6 hold.

CHRISTIN: Maybe he's not the best actor, but you don't have to be so mean about it.

GALE: I have my reasons.

CHRISTIN: You don't have any reason to treat him the way you do.

GALE: *(Halfway through this line she realizes what she is saying but then decides to say it anyway.)* You're only saying that because you had sex with him.

FAYE: Sound cue 6 go. What?

*(Christin stands up quickly and backs away from Faye.)*

CHRISTIN: What?

FAYE: What did you say?

GALE: Push the sound cue!

*(Christin rushes over and pushes the button, and in doing so, knocks over the stereo. Pause.)*

CHRISTIN: Mother shit balls of a bloated cock lover!

GALE: You cussed!

*(Faye approaches.)*

FAYE: Did you have sex with Burt?

GALE: *(Loudly, not caring.)* Shhh! People are turning around in their seats.

CHRISTIN: Betty's dead, again. How are we going to get through the farm animal scene? It's coming up next.

FAYE: (*Picking Christin up.*) Did you sleep with my man? You hussy!

CHRISTIN: Of course not. Gale made that up.

GALE: It's true. I made it up as a funny joke. Ha!

(*Faye lets go of Christin, who immediately starts putting the stereo back together.*)

FAYE: Are you sure, intern?

GALE: (*She says this as she points to Christin while gesturing that it was a very passionate night of love making.*) Of course, of course, intercourse.

(*Faye approaches Christin.*)

FAYE: (*To Christin.*) Tell me the truth, or there's going to be blood on the cleaver.

CHRISTIN: Help me, Gale.

GALE: This is so much more interesting than the play.

(*Faye shakes Christin.*)

FAYE: Tell me now! You fobbing rough-hewn hugger-mugger.

CHRISTIN: (*Points to the stereo.*) But Betty...

FAYE: Who's Betty? So you brought your friend too, you sick little...

CHRISTIN: (*Almost in tears.*) It was an accident.

FAYE: You want me to believe it was an accident? Did he slip and fall into you? Thou churlish rump-fed pig bladder!

GALE: That must have been an awkward apology.

CHRISTIN: I only did it once. (*Pleading.*) You weren't dating him anymore.

FAYE: When you sleep with someone, you make a tiny little promise in your heart. "Oh, what graces in my love do dwell, that he hath turned a heaven unto a hell?"

CHRISTIN: He didn't like it. He cried afterwards.

FAYE: And now you'll cry.

CHRISTIN: Please, no.

GALE: *(Casually.)* As much as I hate to stop your fight, the farm animal scene just started. The one with seven sound effects in 30 seconds? And we have no sound.

FAYE: *(Realizing.)* Shit.

CHRISTIN: It isn't my fault. Gale is the one with the big mouth.

GALE: Yes, but I don't use it to pleasure Burt.

FAYE: *(To Christin.)* I'm going to kill you and bake you in a cake.

CHRISTIN: *(Cowering.)* Please don't.

GALE: Faye, the scene.

*(Faye rushes over to the script and looks at the stage.)*

FAYE: Shit! Sound cue 7 hold.

CHRISTIN: *(Desperate.)* Hold what?

FAYE: I just call them.

CHRISTIN: What is sound cue 7?

FAYE: The horse.

CHRISTIN: Shit.

FAYE: Sound cue 7 go. *(Long silence. Finally, Christin takes a hold of the microphone and lets out a long, strange sound somewhat resembling that of a horse. Faye and Gale just stare at her. Pause. Sincere.)* That was brilliant. He couldn't even tell the difference.

GALE: I can't believe you just did that.

CHRISTIN: *(Gesturing toward the stage.)* There's still the rest of the scene. All the animal sounds when she runs into the barn. We can't do them all.

FAYE: Of course we can. It's the break we've been waiting for. *(She looks at the script and then the play and takes hold of the microphone.)* Sound cue 8 hold. Holding. Sound cue 8 go.

*(She makes the sound of a goat.) That felt great! (All three crowd around the script and microphone.) Sound cue 8.5 hold.*

GALE: Holding.

FAYE: And go. *(Gale makes the sound of a pig.) Sound cue 9 hold.*

CHRISTIN: Holding.

FAYE: Go. *(Christin makes the sound of a dog barking.) Sound cue 9.5 go.*

*(Faye makes the sound of a cow, Gale joins in.)*

CHRISTIN: Sound cue 10 go. *(She makes the sound of a cat as the others continue making sounds, before long it is a cacophony of farm animal sounds as they all get lost in the moment. Finally, it comes to an end but not until Faye gets in one last cow sound. After a long silence, Faye takes a swig from the flask and gives it to Gale, who also takes a swig. Christin grabs the flask and finishes it in one gulp.) My mom is going to disown me.*

GALE: The playwright is crying. We should have done this weeks ago.

FAYE: There's still the love song.

CHRISTIN: Don't look at me.

GALE: I'm just the intern. I'm supposed to be getting coffee.

FAYE: I can't sing.

GALE: Fix the stereo.

CHRISTIN: There isn't time.

GALE: Rock, paper, scissors.

FAYE: Okay, on three. One, two, three...

*(Faye does rock, Christin does paper, and Gale does scissors.)*

ALL: Damn!

CHRISTIN: Now what?

FAYE: There's no time for discussion. I'll do it.

CHRISTIN: Don't do it. It's not that important of a sound cue.  
He'll just play it off like the radio won't work.

GALE: (*Waving him off.*) This is the most important sound cue of all. We can't leave room for Burt to improv. Besides, the whole point of him going into the barn is to find the radio, which his mom hid from her Amish uncle. It's his first discovery. You have to sing Faye. The show must go on.

FAYE: The intern is right. I can't leave him hanging—I am the stage manager. How much time do I have?

(*Gale is delighted, not because she is right but because Faye is going to sing.*)

GALE: (*Taking over the script, watching the stage.*) A few seconds. (*Faye begins preparing by doing breathing exercises.*) Okay, Faye, sound cue 12 hold.

FAYE: I'm ready, intern.

GALE: (*Watching the stage.*) And...sound cue 12 go.

FAYE: (*Into the microphone while reading from the script.*) I was only a girl, a flower bud;  
But for him my flower opened up  
And his touch made me a woman,  
Now I only grow for him.

(*Christin and Gale just stare at her, shocked.*)

CHRISTIN: (*Sincere.*) Fucking friciting fuck yeah! That was great Faye.

GALE: I think it was better when you didn't cuss.

CHRISTIN: No, really, that was wonderful. You should be on the stage. I can't believe they didn't cast you.

(*Faye takes another flask from her pocket, takes a drink, and passes it around.*)

FAYE: Those jacklegs would be so lucky. It does feel good to be working again though.

CHRISTIN: Listen, Faye, I'm sorry that I...you know with Burt and didn't tell you. If it makes you feel better he hasn't even looked at me since. Probably because he cried so much afterwards.

FAYE: You know something, Christin? He cried afterwards when we did it, too. And who can blame him for crying after something so beautiful? *(They share a moment.)* And you know, he really is a bad actor.

CHRISTIN: Yeah, he really is.

FAYE: We let our minds be clouded with the yearnings of our hearts.

GALE: Would you believe he sleeps with a copy of "Acting for Dummies" under his pillow?

FAYE: It hasn't helped, and it surely isn't because he's not dumb. Someone give me sound cue 13. The toilet flushing.

GALE: I got it.

FAYE: And go. *(Gale makes the sound of a toilet flushing.)* Nice work.

*(Pause.)*

CHRISTIN: How do you know he sleeps with a copy of "Acting for Dummies" under his pillow? When were you in his room?

GALE: You must have told me that...or maybe he did.

CHRISTIN: I didn't tell you that, and I know he would never admit to even owning a copy of "Acting for Dummies." You must have been in his room and there's only one reason Burt lets anyone in his bedroom...

GALE: That's crazy.

FAYE: Intern, were you in his room?

GALE: Of course not. I can't believe we are even discussing this.

CHRISTIN: You had sex with him, didn't you?

GALE: With who?

FAYE: You know who she is talking about.

GALE: I must have seen him buying the book.  
CHRISTIN: You said you saw it in his room, under his pillow.  
GALE: I must have dreamt it all.  
CHRISTIN: While sleeping in his bed!  
GALE: We weren't sleeping!  
CHRISTIN: I knew it.  
GALE: I had to see what I was missing out on.  
FAYE: I am a woman more sinned against than sinning.  
GALE: One night when I was here late prepping the set, he came on to me.  
CHRISTIN: So that's why you've been so mean to him.  
GALE: He took me to his place, introduced me to his parents, and we had sex. And we did it the next three nights, and now he won't even look at me.  
CHRISTIN: I can't believe you did that to me.  
FAYE: To you? He was mine first!  
CHRISTIN: Well, he was my first!

*(Awkward silence at this confession.)*

GALE: Really?  
CHRISTIN: Yeah.  
GALE: No wonder he didn't go back for seconds.  
FAYE: I can't believe the first person you had sex with was Burt.  
CHRISTIN: Well, I can't believe we all had sex with the same man.

*(Awkward moment as all three come to fully realize that they were naked in front of the same man, they uncomfortably look down and then at each other with a bad taste in their mouths.)*

FAYE: God damn it. The only thing we can do now is all share a secret. The rule is that if you share a man the only way to save the friendship is to share a secret.  
GALE: Couldn't we just not be friends?

FAYE: Christin already said that Burt was her first. Now you go, intern.

GALE: Why me?

FAYE: Look, just go. It'll make this less awkward.

GALE: (*Embarrassed.*) Fine. Let me think. I dated a guy once for three weeks before I realized he was handicapped. I just thought he was quiet.

CHRISTIN: What happened?

GALE: I stayed with him another week for the parking, but his mom finally asked me to stop coming over.

CHRISTIN: That's horrible.

GALE: Yeah.

CHRISTIN: My high school boyfriend only had one leg.

FAYE: Was he in Nam?

CHRISTIN: He's 26. He had a prosthesis and I just forgot about it after awhile.

GALE: What's your secret, Faye?

(*Pause.*)

FAYE: The last time I was cast in a show was in 1970 in a production of "Our Town." I got the part of the Stage Manager.

(*Gale begins to laugh.*)

CHRISTIN: That's a great role, Faye.

FAYE: Yes, but I've been playing it ever since. (*Pause.*) Someone give me sound cue 14.

CHRISTIN: Which one is that?

FAYE: The bear.

CHRISTIN: I got it.

FAYE: And go.

(*Christin makes the sound of a bear dying.*)

GALE: I still don't understand how we are supposed to believe he kills a bear with a toothpick.

CHRISTIN: It's bad writing. None of it is believable and none of the characters have anything to say.

**[End of Freeview]**