

A Fool's Errand

A Farce for the Newlywed & the Newly Divorced

By John Hanright

Synopsis: Newlyweds Angel and Ricardo are looking to spice up their sex life. However, when a mysterious love poem and an old flame enter the picture, Angel and Ricardo's marriage becomes a love knot. Will they save their relationship, or will all of it be a fool's errand?

Setting: A stylish redbrick NYC apartment

Time: 2008

Character Descriptions:

- ANGEL (M): 30-50 years old; married to Ricardo; used to be in a passionate relationship with Clement, still has strong feelings
- RICARDO (M): 35-50 years old; married to Angel; infatuated with Beau
- BEAU (M): 20-25 years old; single; lusting after Clement
- SANTIAGO (M): 30-35 years old; single; Mrs. Welker's love interest, though he is blissfully unaware
- MRS. WELKER (F): 60-70 years old; divorced; retired landlady; obsessed with Santiago
- CLEMENT (M): 35-55 years old; in a LTR but determined to win Angel back

ANGEL SIDES

ANGEL:

Hello? Clement!! How divine your voice sounds! Are you still in the city? Is Ernest with you? Good. I want to see you alone. After what you did last time we got together, I ought to strap you to the bed and spank you like the bad boy you are. Tonight? Well, we're having a little party. Yes, nothing too noteworthy, just Ricardo's and my wedding reception. So I don't think – *(After a beat, ANGEL smiles devilishly.)* I don't think we could possibly celebrate without you here. Won't Ricardo be jealous? Yes, dear, that's precisely the point.

ANGEL:

Look, if you're going to have an affair, at least have the decency to hide it well.

RICARDO:

I would've explained in the morning.

ANGEL:

What a surprise it would've been for me to wake up to a stranger on our couch.

RICARDO:

I would've left a note for you.

ANGEL:

Where, Ricardo? On his ass?

RICARDO:

All right, I know when I'm in the wrong.

ANGEL:

So do I. Well, let's see what we can learn about your booty call.

RICARDO:

Please don't be too rough with him, Angel.

ANGEL:

I solemnly promise to treat him with all due respect.

(ANGEL fixes himself a drink. BEAU enters sheepishly.)

Ah, the whore poet hath returned. Come to stick your pen in a nice inkwell, I suppose?

BEAU:

I just came back to get my bag.

ANGEL:

Oh please, Beau, there needn't be any bad blood between us. After all, Ricardo is the one who forced us into this awkward position. Come take a seat. So, Ricardo says you want to be a writer.

RICARDO SIDES

RICARDO:

No need to worry. Angel won't be home from his business trip for at least four more hours. That leaves us plenty of time to get to know each other better.

BEAU:

(Chewing gum) What do you wanna know?

RICARDO:

Well, we are looking for someone who can polish knobs and get into those hard-to-reach places.

BEAU:

Oh, I have loads of experience doing both.

RICARDO:

Perfect. And can anyone recommend your services?

BEAU:

Oh yeah, the guys at the club can vouch for me.

RICARDO:

I'm sure they can. One other thing: we are looking for someone in shape. Would you mind taking off your shirt? Just for an inspection... Oh yes, you are quite perfect.

BEAU:

So do I have the job?

RICARDO:

Yes, I think we have come to a satisfactory arrangement. In exchange for your services, you can live here on a trial basis. It won't be too hard to convince Angel of the benefits when he –

RICARDO:

Angel, it's impolite to read a writer's unpublished work. It leaves so little to be desired.

ANGEL:

*I gave a blowjob
For the first time yesterday
He didn't give it back*

(Sarcastically) Oh, Ricardo, he's a regular e.e. cummings.

RICARDO:

Don't judge a book by its cover. Beau works as a Go-Go boy to pay the bills, but he told me he came to the city to be a writer. I said there's no bitter – I mean, better place. But he has no place to live. And what's more, he still has his ideals. Isn't that just tragic? I told him we couldn't pay him, but we could give him a place to stay in exchange for his work. And I said if he did a good job, I'd try to get him a job at the firm.

BEAU SIDES

ANGEL:

You're a Go-Go?

BEAU:

Yeah, over at Fist Avenue dance club. I used to work at The Roxy until they shut down.

ANGEL:

What do you like about it?

BEAU:

Being looked at. It's nice to be desired.

ANGEL:

Don't get used to it. I was a twink like you. But then you wake up one day, look in the mirror, and realize that you've become a completely different person.

BEAU:

But that was, what, ten years ago? (*RICARDO points down.*) I mean, five? (*RICARDO desperately points down again.*) Three???

BEAU:

Don't you ever wish you were with another writer?

CLEMENT:

Oh no, an artist should be with a bore. The mundanity keeps life interesting. If you're constantly in the heights, you never come to appreciate the ground. But an artist who spends too much time in the world runs the risk of taking on the world's prejudices. Art can't grow in a vacuum, nor in the vice of modern society.

BEAU:

(*Staring longingly at CLEMENT*) Uh huh...

SANTIAGO SIDES

SANTIAGO:

Whadabout wine? Something to go with the...hors d'oeuvres.

[PRONOUNCE LIKE: WHORES DUVETS]

ANGEL:

I think a good French class would be more apropos. It helps when you know the difference between Moët & Chandon and Dom Perignon.

RICARDO:

Why don't you pick out a white and a red and let us decide?

SANTIAGO:

Gotcha. And whaddaya want for the hors – er, appetizers?

RICARDO:

You've met my brother Santiago, I believe.

MRS. WELKER:

No, I don't think so.

SANTIAGO:

(Vigorously shaking her hand) Good to meet ya.

MRS. WELKER:

(Uneasy but charmed) Yes, likewise.

SANTIAGO:

Ricardo, where's your bathroom? I've gotta piss like a racehorse.

MRS. WELKER SIDES

MRS. WELKER:

Your rent is now overdue by four days. If it goes beyond the end of the day, I shall be forced to take severe action.

RICARDO:

We'd appreciate your leniency, Mrs. Welker. You see, my paycheck was delayed, and the bank has yet to process it. But once –

MRS. WELKER:

I have already extended you more latitude than is owed. This is not a youth hostel – not that either one of you would qualify for one anyway. However you get the funds, I will need your rent today. Otherwise, the next correspondence you will receive from me will be an eviction notice. I trust I have made myself clear.

MRS. WELKER:

Angel tells me you were once a repairman. Well, I have some leaky pipes and was hoping that you might take a look.

SANTIAGO:

Sure thing! Where are they?

MRS. WELKER:

Oh, somewhere in the depths of my plumbing.

SANTIAGO:

I'll stop by later today.

MRS. WELKER:

Thank you. My apartment is 5B.

CLEMENT SIDES

ANGEL:

Clement!

CLEMENT:

It's Clément.

ANGEL:

You're from Ohio.

CLEMENT:

My time in France has accustomed me to the French pronunciation.

ANGEL:

You were there for two months.

CLEMENT:

That is more than enough time to realize one's truest identity. I'm relieved I have the right place. The first time I knocked, a geriatric man answered and then shut the door in my face.

CLEMENT:

Cut the crap, Ricardo. We all know you're as pink as a flamingo.

RICARDO:

Sorry about earlier. I didn't recognize you after your nose job. My sympathies, by the way.

CLEMENT:

I'm pleased to see you still dress your age.