

A Senior Moment

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DESCRIPTION

Jewel, Darcy, Salvia, and Seeromanie, all in their sixties, wonder why Chantelle, also in her sixties, is looking good these days, as if she's not a day older than, say, fifty.

CHARACTERS

- Chantelle
- Darcy
- Jewel
- Salvia
- Seeromanie

All are in their sixties or older (or can play that age).

SETTINGS

- As indicated in the script.

Scene 1

Five women sitting around having coffee drinking wine and talking. Four of them are looking at CHANTELLE, who does not mind having the four of them look at her.

CHANTELLE

Nope.

JEWEL

Come on.

CHANTELLE

I said no. The four of you -- you and you and you and you -- haven't even gotten close.

JEWEL

A better clue, then --

DARCY

Wait --

Yeah -- SALVIA

-- not yet -- DARCY

-- wait -- SALVIA

I still want to try -- DARCY

Me, too -- SALVIA

-- to figure [out] -- DARCY

-- this mystery who sits before us -- SALVIA

Yes! DARCY

You said -- SEEROMANIE

Only if -- CHANTELLE

She said, didn't she -- SEEROMANIE

She did -- JEWEL

-- she'd tell us -- SEEROMANIE

-- you did -- JEWEL

-- if we guessed, right? -- SEEROMANIE

But none of you -- I'm telling you this now --
not even warm. CHANTELLE

Then some better clues -- JEWEL

Not yet -- DARCY

JEWEL

A more clued-in clue is what we need, mi amor --

CHANTELLE
(to JEWEL)

No --

(to SALVIA)

I agree with you --

SALVIA

Mystery.

SEEROMANIE

And that means she wins the [game] --

CHANTELLE

And we can't have that. Can we.

A momentary silence.

SEEROMANIE

All right. She threw down the challenge --

DARCY

The gauntlet!

CHANTELLE

I like my challenges --

DARCY

(likes the sound of the word)

The gauntlet!

SALVIA

(matching her)

All right, the gauntlet!

SEEROMANIE

She thinks she's given us all she needs to give us -- so instead, let us review.

CHANTELLE

By all means.

SALVIA

Review, review. Items -- hair.

JEWEL

A sheen --

DARCY

A new cut --

SALVIA

A little color --

JEWEL

Highlights --

SALVIA

But the color, too -- there's a name for that?

SEEROMANIE

I think she'd like us to say "brassy."

CHANTELLE

Ah --

DARCY

So, brassy -- she is brassy --

SALVIA

Item -- skin.

JEWEL

That -- a mystery, ain't it -- not lizard skin --

DARCY

Not corrugated card[board] --

JEWEL

Not the sag and the flop, like this --

ALL (EXCEPT CHANTELLE)

Tighter.

JEWEL

Tighter.

SEEROMANIE

In the pink --

SALVIA

One: brassy. Two: pink.

JEWEL

And tighter.

SALVIA

Item three -- clothing.

JEWEL

The clothing.

DARCY

Now that you [mention it] -- right --

JEWEL

New threads.

SERROMANIE

New duds --

JEWEL

(fingering cloth)

Real silk, isn't it, real silk?

CHANTELLE

Indian silk.

SEEROMANIE

Errandi silk?

CHANTELLE

What other?

SEEROMANIE

(to the rest)

Friends, this silk that --

(to JEWEL)

-- you are fingering --

JEWEL

It says "Do not let me go."

SEEROMANIE

This silk -- errandi silk -- is the silk of silks.

JEWEL

(letting it go)

Slick. Smooth and --

DARCY

(to SALVIA)

All right, so silk -- c'mon, let's keep it [going] --

SALVIA

What're we up to?

DARCY

Number four.

SALVIA

Number four -- jewelry.

DARCY

Don't see a big increase in that --

SEEROMANIE

Except for -- do you see it? -- the second piercing in the left lobe --

SALVIA

But not the right one -- you're right --

DARCY

Yeah --

SALVIA

-- the little silver hoop --

DARCY

Right --

JEWEL

Don't see any tongue studs, though --

SALVIA

Eeww!

JEWEL

No nostril posts --

DARCY

Eyebrows -- none. Lower lip -- none.

CHANTELLE

But wait.

CHANTELLE lifts up her shirt: a belly-button piercing. Stunned.

SALVIA

That was not expected.

DARCY

(overlapping)

Unexpected -- yeah --

SALVIA

Is there, like -- well --

JEWEL

-- like anywhere else?

CHANTELLE's look says "yes."

JEWEL

Anyone brave enough to guess where?

DARCY

It isn't -- is it? Is it?

CHANTELLE nods yes.

DARCY

Get out!

CHANTELLE

I'll show you --

DARCY

Get out!

SALVIA

I don't even look at my own -- I'm not gonna look
at yours --

JEWEL

Our loosened labia --

DARCY

Vanishing vaginas --

SEEROMANIE

Stop the alli[eration] --

CHANTELLE

Clandestine clits --

JEWEL

Good!

CHANTELLE

All right, we'll stop!

SEEROMANIE

Thank you.

(to SALVIA)

You are going to tell me that you're not the
littlest bit --

SALVIA

I didn't say I wasn't --

DARCY

Me, neither --

SALVIA

But still -- come on -- come on -- to do that,
down there --

JEWEL

I haven't seen a cooch in a long time --

SALVIA

It's different if it's in your nose --

JEWEL

I'm up for it --

(to SALVIA)

C'mon, it's not an alien --

SALVIA

Speak for yourself.

JEWEL

Won't bite!

DARCY

Vagina dentata!

CHANTELLE

(to SALVIA)

Look at you -- you are going to tell me that I have a best friend who would not share this with me?

SALVIA

What about old dogs and new tricks?

CHANTELLE

And which for you? Old dog? New trick?

SEEROMANIE

"Woof" or "wow"?

SALVIA

You always want to embarrass me.

DARCY

It's so easy.

SALVIA

I suppose this means I have to go first.

(to CHANTELLE)

All right.

JEWEL

We are proud of our prude!

CHANTELLE pulls out her pants waist. SALVIA looks. Then all of them.

SALVIA

I couldn't imagine --

CHANTELLE

Did not have a single problem with this.

SALVIA

But still --

DARCY

And it's not like you're young --

SALVIA

It didn't hurt?

JEWEL
She didn't say that. Did it?

CHANTELLE
The real point -- if we're gonna talk sensation -
- is not about the pinch of the installation, but
-- after --

Something dawns on them.

SALVIA
You're --

JEWEL
(at the same time)
You're --

DARCY
-- getting it!

SALVIA
You're not!

CHANTELLE
You're not -- but I am.

JEWEL
Wait. Wait! I don't get -- the connection
between -- you know -- all the baubles and
bangles and bright shiny -- wait a minute -- wait
--

SEEROMANIE
Dawn comes late to Marblehead --

JEWEL
No! --

CHANTELLE
Go on.

JEWEL
You can't!

SALVIA
She can't what?

JEWEL
Either you're paying for it, or --

CHANTELLE
I am not paying for it.

JEWEL
Something just squeezed in my thighs --

DARCY
(to JEWEL)

What're you thinking?

SEEROMANIE
I'll tell you the other choice.

CHANTELLE
I know you can.

SEEROMANIE
You're getting paid to get laid.

CHANTELLE
(overlapping)
-- paid to get laid. Lights. Camera. And.
Granny porn is born.

They are not sure what to say.

CHANTELLE
You've guessed the secret.
(to SEEROMANIE)
You win.

SALVIA
No shit.

CHANTELLE
No shit.

SALVIA
No shit! And for the record, this time I'm not
sorry that word comes out of this mouth.

JEWEL
Will wonders never cease.

DARCY
Wonders? I just don't know. I just don't know.

They are still not sure what to say.

SEEROMANIE
All right, since I won, I get to ask what I'm
gonna ask, and simple is what I'm asking: why.
Just "why."

DARCY
Yeah.

SEEROMANIE
As you can see, we're all a little shocked --

SALVIA

No shit.

SEEROMANIE

-- and we're not sure we should be doing an intervention on you or drinking more heavily.

JEWEL

We should drink more in either case.

CHANTELLE

Good suggestion. Here, hold up your glasses.

CHANTELLE serves them all.

CHANTELLE

Now lose those tight little sphincter-faces you've put on and listen up. Why? Here's the why. What's a young girl to do after her husband kicks it over -- and the plumbing still works -- and he didn't quite leave enough behind because he had his own -- well, I don't need to repeat all that to you all.

DARCY

But there's dating.

Everyone bursts out laughing.

DARCY

Well, it's better than --

CHANTELLE

Really?

DARCY

(considering)

All right, then it's different --

SEEROMANIE

It's buying and selling.

JEWEL

Giving and taking -- we give and get taken. You know this --

DARCY

Yeah, but still --

(whispering)

-- porn --

JEWEL

She's thinking "degrading" --

DARCY

We've always been told --

CHANTELLE

And let me tell you what was -- is --
"degrading," and I don't mean to be nasty about
this, so don't take it that way, but after he
died? I felt shame for being so weak -- I had
nothing like a skill or a strength to my name --
always his signature on everything. Now --

JEWEL

Some of the shots you get to call are your own.

SEEROMANIE

The money shots!

SALVIA

Have you done --

Everyone looks at SALVIA.

JEWEL

She speaks.

SALVIA

I can't believe I'm gonna ask this --

JEWEL

Go, girl!

SALVIA

Up the --

CHANTELLE

I've done "up the" all over the place, with all
sorts and shapes and hydraulics --

SALVIA

But "up the," you know --

SEEROMANIE

Just say it.

SALVIA

I can't just say it --

JEWEL

The poop chute!

CHANTELLE

Oh yeah.

SALVIA

Wow.

DARCY

Do you -- swallow?

CHANTELLE

Not supposed to -- believe it or not, there're scripts to follow --

DARCY

So it just goes --

CHANTELLE

All over -- well, that depends --

SALVIA

On?

CHANTELLE

How many fountains are flowing, so to speak.

SALVIA

More than one?

DARCY

Look at you!

SALVIA

I had one guy all my life -- then he goes pfft! -
- excuse me if I'm a little curious!

JEWEL

Curious?

(to others)

Is that what she looks like? You look hungry!

SALVIA

Who here hasn't been hungry for a long time?

(to CHANTELLE)

Good for you!

JEWEL

And disease?

CHANTELLE

At least this outfit I'm with -- all of us tested, condoms all around -- STDs are not good advertising --

SEEROMANIE

Personally --

CHANTELLE

What?

SEEROMANIE

I get all of the curiosity and the hunger --

JEWEL

Don't forget my thighs -- squееееeze!

SEEROMANIE

But -- well -- the body, you know -- it's an older body -- we all got older bodies -- no matter what we --

SALVIA

Do you ever come?

CHANTELLE

Sometimes.

SALVIA

I just wanted to know! Go on.

JEWEL

You are a hoot.

DARCY

A hoot and a half. Go on.

CHANTELLE

Your point about the body -- this body -- let's face it, I can pump my iron and do my senior Pilates and firm firm firm until the bovines waddle home --

SEEROMANIE

But it's still --

CHANTELLE

It is still -- sometimes I go out of my head while the lights/camera/and/action thing is going on -- because I need to let slide away this picture of the too too sagging flesh being --

DARCY

The money's good?

CHANTELLE

Beats Social Insecurity and a silly pension.

DARCY

So it's good?

CHANTELLE

It's good.

DARCY

So if it jiggles -- so what?

SALVIA

Mine flounces -- ka-floom, ka-floom!

SEEROMANIE

And when would it be doing that?

SALVIA

Sometimes, early morning, before getting out of bed --

JEWEL

The five fingers will never divorce you.

SALVIA

Exactly!

DARCY

And they always come home at night!

SEEROMANIE

And they never tell lies!

DARCY

Maybe we should have all just married our right hands.

SALVIA

Left for me. Means I'm in my right mind.

DARCY

And you can get awards -- you know, like the Oscars, only not -- I've heard -- c'mon!

CHANTELLE

I don't think --

SEEROMANIE

You never know --

JEWEL

All your hard work could add up to --

SALVIA

"Best Senior Porn Star of" -- see, I'm not completely clueless.

JEWEL

Not completely, dear.

DARCY

And we'd all be sitting right there, wouldn't we?

SALVIA

Flouncing in --

JEWEL

A night of lavish celebration --

SEEROMANIE

All dressed up to go see the ones who get
undressed -- here, here!

THE OTHERS

Here, here!

CHANTELLE

Here, here. Who knows how long it'll last.

JEWEL

But while the ride is good --

DARCY

The ride is good, right? Right.

SALVIA

Um --

DARCY

What?

SALVIA

Nothing.

SEEROMANIE

A nothing like that always means something.

JEWEL

C'mon, cough it up --

DARCY

Eew!

JEWEL

It's not like you're the only one thinking it
here.

DARCY

What am I thinking that I don't know I'm
thinking?

SALVIA

Do you have any of your movies?

CHANTELLE

To show you?

SALVIA nods yes. CHANTELLE gestures to the rest of them. They all
nod yes.

CHANTELLE

Well, let's see -- what from my oeuvre would you
like to see? Frisky Over 60? Older and Bolder?
Aged to Perfection, volumes 1 through 7?

JEWEL

Dealer's choice.

CHANTELLE

Dealer's choice -- you're all sure?

They nod yes. CHANTELLE raises the glass of whatever she has been drinking.

CHANTELLE

Salud.

SALVIA & DARCY

Dinero.

SEEROMANIE & JEWEL

Y amor.

ALL

And the time to enjoy them.

They clink the glasses and toast each other.

Transition: space is filled with flickering light, shadows, barely heard cheesy music.

* * * * *

Scene 2

DARCY knits or crochets, a cloth bag next to her feet. SALVIA drinks tea.

DARCY

It was eye-opening.

SALVIA

It was opening, all right.

DARCY

"Openings," plural, kind-of opening.

SALVIA

Did you watch everything?

DARCY

I tried to. She made it seem so funny.

SALVIA

She's always making good jokes.

DARCY

And some of it was -- pretty unbelievable. In the ridiculous sort of way of that word.

SALVIA

The kind of way that would make you laugh if you're not taking it in so seriously.

DARCY

Or watching your friend.

SALVIA

Yeah. Yeah.

DARCY

That made it --

SALVIA

Yeah. For me, it made it like, "Let's just get this over with."

DARCY

A little goes a long way. Even a little was too long.

SALVIA

Yeah.

A momentary pause.

DARCY

What are you thinking?

SALVIA

What am I thinking.

DARCY

You always repeat when you're trying to buy time.

SALVIA

Like I always have an easy time talking about myself.

DARCY holds up the knitting.

DARCY

You want to?

SALVIA

Yeah -- hand it over.

DARCY hands over what she's working on, pulls another knitting project out of her bag. They both knit.

SALVIA

Always glad you taught me how to do this.

DARCY

Even if you do do it backwards.

SALVIA

Left-handed people are in their right mind --

DARCY

-- in their right mind -- saves on Christmas gifts.

SALVIA

Any-time gifts.

They knit.

SALVIA

I had mixed feelings.

DARCY

I was mixed, too.

SALVIA

Yeah -- but maybe not like me.

DARCY

When you're watching someone you know do something you never knew --

SALVIA

It was more like "mixed up" for me than mixed.

DARCY

There's a difference?

SALVIA

Big.

DARCY

Watch your --

SALVIA

Oh right -- thanks.

DARCY

Don't want to mix up your stitches.

SALVIA

Who knows what will turn out then.

DARCY

Chaos.

SALVIA lays her knitting in her lap.

DARCY

Go on. Go on.

SALVIA

The good-girl part of me --

DARCY

Which we so love to make fun of.

SALVIA

Glad I give you guys a good time --

DARCY

Go on.

SALVIA

A sin, you know --

DARCY

You were raised so Catholic -- enough said.

SALVIA

They work on you from day one, so the good-girl part never gets to go away.

DARCY

Even when you want it gone.

SALVIA

Threaded in the bone marrow. So, I'm watching --

DARCY

And your bone marrow's going --

SALVIA wags her finger, nun-style.

SALVIA

"Wrong, wrong, bad girl, bad girl" --

DARCY

Like you're talking to a dog --

SALVIA

The animal nature --

DARCY

And good girls don't have an [animal] --

SALVIA

Not when your role model's been a woman knocked up by an angel.

DARCY

And good girls don't do --

SALVIA

And certainly this good girl didn't do -- has never done --

DARCY

What your best friend is doing more or less in front of you --

SALVIA

And I know she's not a bad girl --

DARCY

And yet --

SALVIA

And yet -- there's what my eyes see, and it's --

DARCY

Hard --

SALVIA

Hard, yeah -- hard all over the place.

DARCY

"The angle of the dangle" --

They laugh. They knit. They laugh.

DARCY

I thought the pizza delivery boy -- with the "extra large" --

SALVIA

The cheese -- the sauce --

DARCY

I kept thinking, "Who gets a pizza in the middle of the day wearing a negligee?" But in the world of --

SALVIA

It's a magical world --

DARCY puts down her knitting.

DARCY

What?

SALVIA

Magic.

DARCY

Magic? "Magic" is a beautiful girl cut in half without losing her smile --

SALVIA

I mean, anything can happen.

DARCY

It's not real -- it's manufactured -- you know,
"lights, camera" -- she said there's scripts --

SALVIA shrugs in a way that irritates DARCY.

DARCY

You did say "mixed up."

SALVIA

Glad you remember.

DARCY

And you are if you think --

SALVIA

I don't know that I think --

DARCY

You just said --

SALVIA

One man, you know that, first to last and no
others -- the good girl -- all my life --

DARCY

Where's this going? You want to go and do --

SALVIA

No -- no --

But SALVIA doesn't sound convinced.

DARCY

So then --

SALVIA

I want to order a pizza, extra large -- and I
don't want just the pizza delivered --

SALVIA puts her knitting down, squares up to DARCY.

SALVIA

Dating -- yesterday, you said dating --

DARCY

Everyone laughed at me.

SALVIA

So I should date.

DARCY

Even you laughed at me.

SALVIA

Answer me --

DARCY

It's a way -- it's been years since --

SALVIA

And just how is that supposed to happen for me?
For you? For us?

A momentary pause.

SALVIA

You don't know, do you?

DARCY

No I don't know --

SALVIA

You make the suggestion, but you don't know.

DARCY

Don't get so --

SALVIA

And it's not like I know, either, me with my big
fat experience of the world -- but just the
thinking about what you said makes me --

DARCY

We all get scared --

SALVIA

I wasn't going to say "scared" so don't put --

DARCY

Of course it's scared --

SALVIA

Well, it's not just that since I'm scared all the
time anyway, so that just gets like breathing --
but more this, that I gotta package up the
package so that some -- pizza, any size -- likes
it. Not what I like but -- "good girl" still!
Get it?

DARCY

Loud and clear --

SALVIA

Just tired of being -- placed -- dated --

DARCY

So don't date -- fine --

SALVIA
That's why I diddle myself in the morning because
it's mine -- undated --

DARCY
Give me the knitting --

SALVIA
No!

SALVIA picks up the knitting and knits with great vigor.

DARCY
So you think she's got the answer?

SALVIA
At least she doesn't have to date to get her
pizza!

DARCY
So you must think I'm an idiot?

SALVIA
No!

But SALVIA means "yes." They both knit with great vigor until DARCY
puts it down.

DARCY
Damn you! Damn her! Fuck!

It's as if the word has tripped a pressure valve.

DARCY
It was one thing for her to tell us what she was
doing -- but the movie --

SALVIA
We asked for it --

DARCY
So what? It just --

SALVIA
Big stone dropped in a little pond.

DARCY
Boom! Nothing is the same. You feel that?

SALVIA
I feel that.

DARCY
I hate it.

SALVIA

"Good girl" agrees, but --

DARCY

But you don't care about "good girl" --

SALVIA

I think it's about time --

DARCY

And that's why I'm hating this even more. The snake's in the garden.

SALVIA puts down the knitting.

SALVIA

I'm sorry.

DARCY

Fuck.

Said like a farewell.

Transition.

* * * * *

Scene 3

CHANTELLE in a bathrobe on the set with SEEROMANIE. They are eating fruit.

CHANTELLE

You have a brave soul, my dear.

SEEROMANIE

The Queen has always been curious --

CHANTELLE

You have always been that.

SEEROMANIE

And the Queen has become curiouser. I suppose I should say that the curious pussy has her nine lives back.

CHANTELLE

You could say that, especially around here.

SEEROMANIE

I just did.

CHANTELLE

They may steal it for a line.

SEEROMANIE

I give it freely. Without a footnote.

CHANTELLE

I like how we get fruit on the set. Good crew.

SEEROMANIE

They're efficient --

CHANTELLE

Have to be --

SEEROMANIE

In fact, I didn't think it would be so --

CHANTELLE

So what --

SEEROMANIE

Industrial.

CHANTELLE

It is the porn industry.

SEEROMANIE

I'm amazed anyone can stay, you know, focused.

CHANTELLE

You mean certain body parts.

SEEROMANIE

I do mean certain body parts -- like the one you were [with] --

CHANTELLE

Donkey Kong -- his nom de porn --

SEEROMANIE

He was very "professional" --

CHANTELLE

It's a job -- sort of --

SEEROMANIE

So were you --

CHANTELLE

It's a bit -- tight -- to fit him in -- but can't show that -- no one here ever confuses the porn with the erotic --

SEEROMANIE

Who owns the house?

CHANTELLE

And that's another thing. We have to be in and out --

SEEROMANIE

So to speak --

CHANTELLE

Yeah -- in a set time because we're renting the space from, who knows, a stock trader who wants money on the side --

SEEROMANIE

His little on the side --

CHANTELLE

Or hers -- all sorts rent their houses, their boats, their pools -- quick cash --

SEEROMANIE

Not my place --

CHANTELLE

Yeah, well, not mine either --

SEEROMANIE

I'd have to clean it up first --

CHANTELLE

My pull-out couch would not be sexy --

CHANTELLE offers fruit.

SEEROMANIE

I'm fine.

CHANTELLE

Yeah, industrial -- it's a business -- I'm done --
- last year "Hollywood" put out about 700 movies
-- this industry put out at least 20 times that -
-

SEEROMANIE

Big demand for putting out --

CHANTELLE

So it goes to follow a big supply of putting out --

SEEROMANIE

And you're doing your little part.

CHANTELLE

In the great scheme of out-putting.

CHANTELLE looks at SEEROMANIE.

CHANTELLE

All right. Out with it.

SEEROMANIE

You want me to put out?

CHANTELLE

Come on. Why?

SEEROMANIE

You know me --

CHANTELLE

I do.

SEEROMANIE

I'm the curiouser queen.

CHANTELLE

You are.

SEEROMANIE

Because I am truly interested in everything my friends do.

CHANTELLE

And that includes knitting.

SEEROMANIE

Okay, she goes a little overboard with that --
"The Yarn Harlot" --

CHANTELLE

Could be a new porn genre --

SEEROMANIE

Unusual things to do with balls of yarn --

CHANTELLE

There's an audience for anything --

SEEROMANIE

Purling and bondage --

CHANTELLE

Garter stitches and garters --

SEEROMANIE

Double needles and slip stitches --

CHANTELLE

I believe we might have ourselves a winner.

SEEROMANIE

And like I said, I am truly interested in everything my friends do.

CHANTELLE

And you're truly avoiding giving me my answer.

CHANTELLE waits. And waits.

SEEROMANIE

All right -- all right -- you probably guessed this anyway --

CHANTELLE

I never guess with you --

SEEROMANIE

I had to see for myself -- in action -- the body that --

CHANTELLE

Really?

SEEROMANIE

Really.

CHANTELLE

Really -- this body?

SEEROMANIE

That body.

CHANTELLE

It's really that?

SEEROMANIE

Really that.

CHANTELLE

Even after all this [time] --

SEEROMANIE

Even after all this time.

A half-joke at best.

SEEROMANIE

The vision's been hauntin' my dreams, the two of you.

CHANTELLE

It's not the same body that screwed --

SEEROMANIE

It is and it isn't -- doesn't matter.

CHANTELLE

Thirty years ago.

SEEROMANIE

Sometimes it feels like you screwed him
yesterday.

CHANTELLE

Really.

SEEROMANIE

Sometimes, just out of nowhere, it comes -- the
discovery of the screwing -- the vision of it --
it can be years in-between takes, and then --

CHANTELLE

I don't know what to say.

SEEROMANIE

Say nothing -- my dime. Hauntin' my dreams --
ever since you laid this out for us with the
salud, dinero, y amor. The haunt's been coming
up each day -- and as I'm watching you
industrialize your body, it comes again -- and
it's all I can do not to say fuck it and just
walk off -- and not ever talk to you again.
Ever.

CHANTELLE

Even after all this [time] --

SEEROMANIE

Even after all the thirty years.

This sinks in.

SEEROMANIE

Because -- because -- it's been something like a
lie that's kept us linked up all this time, the
two of us. Hasn't it.

CHANTELLE goes to speak, but SEEROMANIE stops her.

SEEROMANIE

Still my dime. I love you. A lot. That you
know. You love me. That I know. But the
present -- our present -- has gotten the way it
is from its past -- and watching you, even with
your body such as it is --

CHANTELLE

Look, I can stop --

SEEROMANIE

I'm not wanting you to stop --

CHANTELLE

I can -- it's not worth --

SEEROMANIE

That would throw everything off even more -- this is not judging or blaming --

CHANTELLE

Good, because we agreed about that a long time ago, about the blaming --

SEEROMANIE

Like I said, not judging, not blaming. He deserved the payback he got from us --

CHANTELLE

And we agreed, no more from you about what --

SEEROMANIE

Stop -- this is not a reminiscence. A contract review. This is about you and me. Not him. This is about you and me continuing. Present tense. Not him, dead tense. What you did with him -- well, we did it back to him --

CHANTELLE

And that made all the difference -- he was scum -
- acted like scum --

SEEROMANIE

Yes. He. Did. And he deserved every inch of what we did to him. All right, on my dime I will allow us one moment of reminiscence.

CHANTELLE

It was sweet.

SEEROMANIE

Getting him back was sweet.

CHANTELLE

Wasn't it sweeeeeeeet.

SEEROMANIE

Reminiscence over?

CHANTELLE

Done.

SEEROMANIE

But.

CHANTELLE

But bodies and curiosity --

SEEROMANIE

All of what we toasted to --

CHANTELLE

Salud, dinero --

SEEROMANIE

That's done.

CHANTELLE

The basis for our --

SEEROMANIE

It's done. That phase is done.

CHANTELLE

Because it's been this old body --

SEEROMANIE

And this one --

CHANTELLE

And the violations --

SEEROMANIE

And what we did about them --

CHANTELLE

That's kept us going. Linked.

SEEROMANIE

And now that you're using it differently --

CHANTELLE

It's become a big stone in a little pond --

SEEROMANIE

In a good way, in a completely good way -- for me, at least -- I can't speak about the others -- I was really annoyed that you went and did this without the least --

CHANTELLE

Kept it private because I didn't know --

SEEROMANIE

Doesn't matter -- it made me realize how you and I have to take a risk to make what works between us not happen just because we've got it sucking on an outdated disaster. I'm getting too old to live with things that suck.

CHANTELLE

Surely you don't mean me.

SEEROMANIE

Surely I don't mean you.

CHANTELLE

What do you propose?

SEEROMANIE takes a bite of the fruit.

SEEROMANIE

Fruit's always best when it's fresh. Then it runs out and you have to go pick some more.

CHANTELLE

Deep.

SEEROMANIE

So we'll go find some fruit.

CHANTELLE

I gotta get back.

SEEROMANIE

To your back.

CHANTELLE

You staying?

SEEROMANIE

I don't know if my thermostat can take it.

CHANTELLE

We're doing just one more shot.

CHANTELLE gives SEEROMANIE a bit of fruit, which SEEROMANIE eats.

SEEROMANIE

Oh, twist my rubber arm. What is your nom de porn?

CHANTELLE

I don't have one.

SEEROMANIE

I'll help you figure one out.

CHANTELLE

Deal.

Transition.

* * * * *

Scene 4

JEWEL, DARCY, and SALVIA, dressed to go out, helping each other with final preparations.

DARCY

I cannot believe I am going to do this.

JEWEL

You fret too much.

DARCY

Speed dating --

JEWEL

It's the cure for what ails us -- it'll be fun.

DARCY

Oh, yeah, laughs -- a barrel of 'em.

SALVIA

I'm with her on this --

JEWEL

You two are afraid.

SALVIA

I've got as much dating experience as a clam --

JEWEL

Even clams open up, and on a regular basis -- and don't forget that hidden pearl.

SALVIA

Not sure bivalve imagery is going to help relax me --

DARCY

Why did you sign us up without asking us?

JEWEL

And what would you have done if I had asked you?

DARCY

Stayed home and washed the insides of my knees.

JEWEL

Ergo, why ask? Like Yoda, just do.

SALVIA chuckles.

SALVIA

Yoda --

JEWEL

Besides, I've done it before, it doesn't leave bruises, and it'll pry you both out of this funk you've sunk into.

DARCY

I am not in a funk --

JEWEL

You haven't shown me any knitting in a --

DARCY

I'm taking a break.

JEWEL

And doing what instead?

DARCY

Investing in credit default swaps.

JEWEL speaks to DARCY, looks at SALVIA.

JEWEL

Oh, working on getting too big to fail, are you? And you --

SALVIA

I know, I know --

JEWEL

You've stopped our tennis --

SALVIA

I know --

JEWEL

Gotta wonder if you're still doing the sales job.

SALVIA

I do like to eat.

JEWEL

Still freelancing for those greeting card companies, or are you now rich with filthy lucre?

DARCY

Added a new one this week while I'm waiting for the riches to flood in.

JEWEL

So the both of you are working and hiding away -- classic avoidance tactics.

DARCY

Of what?

SALVIA
Don't be so hard-ass.

DARCY
I am not avoiding anything.

SALVIA
She's not stupid --

JEWEL
That I am not. As evidence: so it's not a coincidence that all of this reclusive behavior began after our dear porn star revealed her secret life to us?

DARCY
No!

A moment of suspension.

SALVIA
Yes.

DARCY
Fuck.

JEWEL
What'd you say?

SALVIA
She's been saying that a lot.

JEWEL
I don't mind that, but it doesn't have any spit in it. Say it again.

DARCY
Fuck.

JEWEL
See what I mean? Dry as sand. And why, pray tell, is that coming out of your mouth?

SALVIA
Go ahead.

DARCY
I don't want to.

SALVIA
Go ahead.

DARCY
I don't --

SALVIA

Go [ahead] --

DARCY

I [don't] --

JEWEL

If you don't, I will make up something insulting to your intelligence and your station in life.

Frowns. Gloom. Exasperation.

DARCY

All right!

JEWEL

So commence.

DARCY

It's all different.

JEWEL

What "it"?

DARCY

It. Everything. She's made everything all different.

JEWEL

And that's it for the "it" that's bugging you?

SALVIA

That's the "it".

DARCY

That's not enough?

JEWEL

No it's not. So what?

DARCY

What she's done doesn't bother you?

JEWEL

What "done" are you talking about?

DARCY

Are you testing me?

JEWEL

(to SALVIA)

She is testy.

DARCY

You're testing my one good nerve.

JEWEL

Honey, your one good nerve went bad a long time ago.

DARCY

I have a very even temper --

JEWEL

So does a corpse. This always happens to you when you don't knit for a while.

SALVIA

She's right.

DARCY

Both of you keep out of my knitting!

SALVIA

Beware of the horny woman with pointed metal in her hands.

DARCY

That is insulting!

JEWEL and SALVIA look at each other and half-laugh/half-smile.

DARCY

That is just so -- so --

JEWEL

True. Oh, sweetheart, it's true, true, true.

DARCY

It -- is --

JEWEL

Should've picked up on the pheromones earlier.

SALVIA

They've been like this cloud around her head -

JEWEL

The horny aura.

DARCY

Do you realize how hard it is to -- handle -- these --

JEWEL & SALVIA

Hormones.

JEWEL

Like being a repeat teenager.

DARCY

Please save me --

JEWEL

Why? The rush, the fizz in the blood --

DARCY

It wasn't much fun the first time around -- now
in this -- package -- it's just a farce.

JEWEL

No no no --

DARCY

Yes yes yes --

SALVIA

Going once, going [twice] --

JEWEL

Now you're getting a second chance at a second
poke.

DARCY

Yeah, a poke in the eye.

SALVIA

Her yarn's all balled up.

JEWEL

"Balled" is what she wouldn't mind [getting] --

DARCY

Stop it! Just -- you two -- stop -- Whenever I
think about what she's doing --

SALVIA

Which is all the time --

DARCY

I get -- I can't believe this! -- I get wet!

DARCY indicates her body.

DARCY

This!

JEWEL

Knit her up a chastity belt!

DARCY

Do you realize what that does to your underwear?

JEWEL

Arrest the pheromones!

DARCY

And as usual you will miss the whole point. She misses the point.

SALVIA

I'm not so sure what the point is now.

DARCY

Yes you do because the "good girl" feels the same thing.

JEWEL

She still around?

SALVIA

Yeah.

DARCY

When you've got an itch, and it's in the middle of your back and you can't reach it --

DARCY mimes trying to reach it but can't.

DARCY

It's gotta -- get scratched -- or else --

JEWEL

Or else a little bit of insanity.

DARCY

And it's not just that there's absolutely nothing around to scratch this itch with --

SALVIA

Something long and hard in the hand.

JEWEL guffaws.

DARCY

It's a constant poke -- you want to know the real poke? -- constant thorn in the middle of the back -- that I am alone -- I am alone. I can't turn right or left and -- and --

JEWEL

Ask --

SALVIA

To get the itch scratched.

DARCY

Something like that -- very much like -- I don't need to be reminded.

JEWEL hugs DARCY, then holds her at arm's length.

JEWEL

I understand -- I understand -- but you're just doing the self-pity peeing-in-your-pants routine.

SALVIA

Now, that would be wet!

DARCY

Not the right kind -- what're you saying?

JEWEL

Self-pity is like peeing in your pants.

SALVIA

Not uncommon in women our age.

DARCY

It is not.

SALVIA

You know, I just want you to know that none of this language is bothering me one bit.

JEWEL

Our prude progresses.

SALVIA

Big time.

JEWEL

First it's warm and not unpleasant, then it gets cold and clammy and irritating as hell, to you and everybody else around you, and the fact of the matter is that you don't have to do it this way at all.

DARCY

I hate it, though, I just -- hate the alone.

JEWEL

It'll kill you.

DARCY

It's killing me.

JEWEL

Then we have to go kill it.

SALVIA

By speed dating!

JEWEL

By speed dating it will be and not self-pity.

DARCY

Well, how --

JEWEL

Come on, say it --

DARCY

How do you speed-date? I can't believe --

JEWEL

Easier than speed skating, really -- have some questions ready --

DARCY

Like what?

SALVIA

Walks on the beach -- deep intellectual conversations -- "I love piña coladas" --

JEWEL

Well, there's that -- drivel -- but I'm fond of things like "Do you have all your own teeth?"

DARCY

No!

JEWEL

She's so easy. Of course not, though it's not a bad item to check out as he talks -- you know, try to get a gander at those back molars --

DARCY

She's kidding me, right?

JEWEL

Just the usual -- the foods you like, movies, books, hobbies. I shy away from alcoholics and those who like to chat about their dead wives or gastrointestinal challenges, but not everyone minds that --

SALVIA

My bar is set low -- I'd be happy if I could find someone to talk at the dinner table -- my one and only never did, really --

JEWEL

It's not a high bar or a low bar -- it's not being at the bars -- it's just having some -- fun -- and who knows --

DARCY

What about -- bodily stuff?

JEWEL

And just what do you mean?

DARCY

You know -- equipment? Stop it! I mean like knees, hearing --

JEWEL

I told you -- teeth.

DARCY

I don't want something that's going to be in the shop every week --

JEWEL

I would keep the biology probe to a minimum on a speed date -- but, you know, look for the hair in the ears --

SALVIA

And the nose --

JEWEL

-- how long it takes him to get in and out of the chair, canes --

SALVIA

Avoid the ones with the claw fingers at the end -
-

JEWEL

-- is he bent like an angle-iron when he walks --

SALVIA

Look at his shoes --

JEWEL

Hearing aids --

SALVIA

Especially the big clumpy types.

JEWEL

Think of it like checking the produce in the produce aisle without getting to smell it or poke it.

DARCY

And look at me -- what're they going to think of --

SALVIA

It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. This is all about the chemistry of the moment, the rolling of the dice, the taking of a chance --

DARCY

Sex?

SALVIA

I'm going for the poetic, and --

JEWEL

It's all sex, honey, from the ringing of the timer to the handshake at the end -- and if it turns into breakfast the next morning, fine, but the best sex organ is between the ears, not the legs.

DARCY

All right, let's do it. I've got the list in my head. I've had it there for years.

JEWEL

And you?

SALVIA

Like I said, low bar -- do you say more than three words during dinner? Yes? You're coming home with me!

DARCY

Hey, hey, how does this look?

DARCY mugs an "I'm so interested in what you're saying" look.

DARCY

"I'm so interested in what you're saying." And this?

Another mug.

DARCY

And these?

Does several more.

JEWEL

I believe you have made your faces ready.

SALVIA

All for one --

JEWEL & DARCY

And one for all.

Shifts of lights to another part of the stage. The three of them enter the light.

DARCY

That was -- interesting.

SALVIA

"Interesting" is a good choice.

JEWEL

"Interesting" is what makes a horse race a race.

DARCY

You know, we're in a lot better shape than they are.

SALVIA

A lot.

JEWEL

It's not easy being a man, not after what a lot of them have been through. Feel better?

DARCY holds up a piece of paper.

DARCY

I have a phone number.

SALVIA

I do, too.

JEWEL

Makes me three.

DARCY

I hope we don't have the same number.

They check. They're relieved. The three of them bump knuckles together.

ALL THREE

Salud, dinero, y amor.

* * * * *

Scene 5

The five of them seated on stools, in separate lights, holding glasses of wine.

CHANTELLE

It is not easy.

SALVIA

It is certainly not easy.

DARCY

It is not easy --

JEWEL

At all --

SEEROMANIE

This growing and getting older.

DARCY

We can say it's about not getting older --

CHANTELLE

But getting better, aging --

SALVIA

Like wine --

JEWEL

Or cheese --

SEEROMANIE

Or seasoned like a sauté pan --

JEWEL

But, really, honey --

DARCY

You can offer up all the niceties you want --

CHANTELLE

All the pithy little sayings --

SALVIA

Like "Wrinkles should merely indicate where
smiles have been" -- or --

SEEROMANIE

"Growing old is mandatory; growing up is
optional" --

SALVIA

You know, the little heart-warming Hallmarked
packets of crap that're meant --

DARCY

To blunt the sag, the ache, the --

JEWEL

Snap, crackle, and --

CHANTELLE

Pop of a body going gentle or not into that good
or not-so-good night.

ALL

Rage, rage against the dying of the light --

CHANTELLE

Especially against the dying of anything good.

Lights blend to a domestic glow, and they all turn to face each other. They raise their glasses, then drink.

CHANTELLE

I've decided -- I've decided I'm going to give it up. The "biz."

SALVIA

You have given it up, or you're going to give it up?

CHANTELLE

I'm in the process.

SALVIA

Why would you do that?

CHANTELLE

It's just time.

SALVIA

"It's just time" -- what kind of reason is that?

DARCY

Agree -- not good enough.

CHANTELLE

Listen to you two.

SALVIA

You said it was working for you, so why give it up?

DARCY

You know how hard it is to find something that works?

CHANTELLE

They're busting my balls.

SEEROMANIE

And your chops.

JEWEL

And they have phone numbers.

CHANTELLE

You told me -- a date in eight is great.

DARCY

Don't knock it.

CHANTELLE

I'm not.

DARCY

Just don't --

CHANTELLE

I'm not. They're fierce.

SEEROMANIE

The power of a phone number.

SALVIA

Phone numbers.

CHANTELLE

Ah.

DARCY

Plural.

JEWEL

I have created --

CHANTELLE

You have.

CHANTELLE raises her glass.

CHANTELLE

Salud to you three.

DARCY

Not so quick -- why would you give up --

CHANTELLE

It's time to move on -- it's that simple.

JEWEL

Is it about the two of you?

SEEROMANIE

Yes.

JEWEL

Then it's not so simple.

SALVIA

You're now lesbians?

JEWEL

(laughing)

Stop it.

SALVIA

I'm mostly serious -- maybe you two always were, which is why you could, you know, screw him over the way you did --

DARCY

You did a great job with that, great job.

SEEROMANIE

If we're lesbians, it's in a completely non-genital, un-dyked and un-lipsticked hetero-leaning sort of way --

CHANTELLE

The real trick was that we were good haters --

SEEROMANIE

Good haters --

CHANTELLE

But not anymore --

SEEROMANIE

Not anymore.

DARCY

You guys were good haters -- made me laugh my ass off with your revengicals --

SALVIA

Castration by chorus --

DARCY

Metrical murders --

SALVIA

So non-sexual, hetero-bent lesbians with a musical tone.

SEEROMANIE

Should there be any other kind?

A silence descends.

JEWEL

Well.

DARCY

Well.

SALVIA

Well.

CHANTELLE

A deep subject.

SEEROMANIE
(overlapping)

-- a deep subject.

SALVIA

What now? It's all the same, but it's not, and it's all different, and it's not.

DARCY

I suppose you're still not open to doing more knitting.

The four of them say "no."

JEWEL

And I guess we can't speed-date each other --

CHANTELLE

Someone would always be the fifth wheel --

SEEROMANIE

I have an idea. For a new beginning.

CHANTELLE smiles. The other three look at each other.

JEWEL

It's not going to be like --

SEEROMANIE

Not it's not.

SALVIA

Thank God.

DARCY

And not the --

SEEROMANIE

(mock pain)

Will I always be reminded?

DARCY

Just as long as --

SEEROMANIE

My idea.

CHANTELLE

Go.

SEEROMANIE

Coney Island.

Beginning at a low volume but rising quickly is the sound of the Cyclone roller coaster carrying a screaming load of riders.

SEEROMANIE

They've got all new rides, but this is what I see
-- this is what I want: all of us on the Cyclone.
Hands-free, riding at the front or the back. Ups
and downs and dips and falls and curves and slams
and we all end up back at the same place at the
same time together.

Sound is up full. The five of them look at each other with rising joy
on their faces and in their bodies until, as one, they pivot on their
seats to face the audience, then pop their hands in the air and, in
synch, lean and bump and scream like banshees as the lights go to
black.