

# FELIX'S BABY

by William Ramsay

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CAST:

FELIX

DEO -- (male)

JACK

CAROLINE

PENNY

TIME: The Present

PLACE      New York City.

## SCENE ONE

Spring in New York. A therapist's waiting room -- FELIX is meditating, twirling a miniature Tibetan prayer wheel.

FELIX

Ohmmm. Ohmmm. Ohmmm.

(The door to the therapists' offices opens. JACK appears.)

Ohmmm. Ohmmm. Ohmmm. Oh, hello there.

JACK

Oh. Howdy.

FELIX

You must be Doctor Olafson.

JACK

Right on.

FELIX

I'm waiting for Dr. Gomez.

JACK

Dr. Gomez should be out in a minute. Excuse me, please.

FELIX

I'm early, as a matter of fact. I find that meditating before my hour is very helpful.

JACK

(Impatiently)

Is that so now? Well, well, well. Anyway, she should be with you shortly.

(HE exits. FELIX groans loudly and collapses in his chair. He groans louder. JACK reenters.)

FELIX

Uhhnnnn!

What the hell?

JACK

(JACK goes over to FELIX and examines HIM. FELIX'S eyes are closed.)

Golly, are you all right?

(JACK feels FELIX'S pulse, lifts his eyelids.)

Can you hear me?

FELIX

I feel dizzy.

JACK

Have you been sick, my boy?

FELIX

Everything just turned black

(Jack wipes his hands with a tissue)

JACK

I've got a cuff in my office. Let me get your blood pressure.

HE exits. FELIX gets up and looks in the mirror and combs his hair. Then he quickly slumps back into the chair as JACK returns.

JACK

(Taking his pressure)

Well, let's see...

FELIX

I feel better – I think.

JACK

Your pressure seems normal.

FELIX

I think it was the meditating. Hyperventilated.

(JACK wipes his stethoscope with a tissue)

JACK

Well, just take it easy. You just rest yourself here for a few minutes.

FELIX

Thank you doctor, I'm sorry to have bothered you.

JACK

No bother. I'm a physician.

FELIX

I can tell a natural healer when I see one. I'm quite psychic, you know. It's a natural gift, but I've been fortunate enough to be able to find marvelous teachers to help me grow and grow. Spiritually, that is.

JACK

That's swell.

FELIX

I still feel woozy.

JACK

You should be all right, just rest a spell. I wonder what happened to *my* client.

FELIX

You're wonderful, doctor.

JACK

Just knock on the door if you need me again, Mr. ?

FELIX

Felix Jenson-Herrera.

JACK

All right, Mr. Herrera.

FELIX

Jenson hyphen Herrera.

JACK

So long. Mr. Jensen hyphen Herrera.

(JACK exits.)

FELIX

Yes, yes, yes!

## SCENE TWO

A few minutes afterward. CAROLINE and FELIX in her office.

CAROLINE

So this encounter with Dr. Olafson aroused some strong feelings in you?

FELIX

Decidedly. Extremely vivid impressions, difficult to describe, something in the hazy area between the intellectual and emotional -- spiritual, I suppose.

CAROLINE

Can you be more specific?

FELIX

I know how dubious you feel about the spiritual dimension. I'm a mystic, I admit. I believe I have powers -- that we all have powers. One of my clients yesterday said he could feel a warm, luscious tingling when I merely passed my hand over his body, even before the massage began.

CAROLINE

You seem to see me as being critical of you.

FELIX

I could feel the essential goodness emanating from Dr. Olafson. My teacher here in New York, Deo Chaudri, says he can feel the radiance of the stars in a person. But Dr. Olafson is your colleague. The attuned feel it first, but any acquaintance of his would certainly come to know this. He is really a caring person, a parental type in the best meaning of the word.

CAROLINE

Dr. Olafson. Hmm. You may be seeing an image of your own father.

FELIX

You, for instance, have that comforting quality too.

CAROLINE

You may see what you want to see in me. .

FELIX

I see you two as a pair of loving, caring people. You are both scientists -- at least if psychotherapy can be considered a science -- but you are intuitively at one with the universe.

CAROLINE

It sounds to me like two parents now. Parents you never had.

FELIX

What would I have done with parents? I'm myself. Grandfather Herrera was father enough for me. Too much. A man of far sight but limited vision. The awkward little boy with his nose in a book was a mystery to him.

CAROLINE

Your childhood. In the few weeks we've been seeing each other, you haven't really told me that much about it.

FELIX

Oh, I have other worries now.

CAROLINE

Like what?

FELIX

Death.

CAROLINE

It's something we all worry about.

FELIX

Yes, we worry about where we're going -- and what we're leaving behind..

CAROLINE

I'm curious. You've told me you never married. Some people seek to live on through their children.

FELIX

Not possible, I'm afraid.



CAROLINE

Do I take it you're sterile? How do you feel about that?

FELIX

No, no, it's just me and women.

CAROLINE

Go on.

FELIX

Ever since Vera dumped me in the second grade for an older man, I've had trouble connecting with women. I find it easier to make friends with men.

CAROLINE

Some people make friends with both.

FELIX

I don't know. Women are so – feminine. Of course, men *are* hairier.

CAROLINE

Maybe we should examine the nature of your fear of death. For instance, "Die before what?" is often a useful question.

FELIX

It's not a fear in the sense you're talking about. I worry about my future lives.

CAROLINE

Ah.

FELIX

You don't believe me.

CAROLINE

I didn't say that.

FELIX

Reincarnation is a fact.

CAROLINE

I won't argue about mysticism with a Ph. D. in Tibetan Literature.

FELIX

Ah, you mock me -- subtly -- but you mock me, Dr. Gomez. But I take it in good part.

CAROLINE

I just wanted to concentrate on the fact that you *are* worried.

FELIX

I am. But less so since I've met Dr. Olafson. And, of course, you, Dr. Gomez.

CAROLINE

Let's discuss this coupling of Dr. Olafson and myself next time.

FELIX

"Coupling." What an interesting word.

## SCENE THREE

A home office in a Gothic brownstone. FELIX and DEO. DEO wears a turban and is twirling a prayer wheel.

DEO

So your real goal is to get a baby. I still don't fully understand why you couldn't use, say, an adoption agency.

FELIX

But it can't be just any baby. The karma match has to be just right.

DEO

So that's why asked me to use my special contacts to identify those two people.

FELIX

I couldn't very well get a karma reading on potential parents through medical records or any kind of *Who's Who*, can I?

DEO

Well, have you looked the couple over that I found for you on wizardry.com?

FELIX

Are you sure that these guys on wizardry.com know their business?

DEO

Wizardry.com gives access to the foremost resource bank of expert practitioners of the mystic arts in the world. If they can't do a karma match, I don't know who can. Oh, by the way, I still need a check or credit card number from you.

FELIX

Kind of greedy wizards, I'd say.

DEO

Felix, it's wizardry.com, not wizardry.org or wizardry.edu. Even mystics have to make a living.

FELIX

\$2995 seems like a big price tag.

DEO

Well, I guess it all depends how important this is to you.

FELIX

It's important, all right.

DEO

Well, I won't pry, but have you any complaints so far? Do the two people meet specs?

FELIX

Well, they are in contact already, and their ethnic backgrounds match mine – Sephardic Jewish and Scandinavian. Although I don't see why that part is so important.

DEO

It has something to do with DNA. (A beat.) Or maybe political correctness.

FELIX

But they hardly seem to know one another.

DEO

That can be fixed.

FELIX

I know, but I've heard talk that he has a girl friend too.

DEO

Well, that proves he's straight at least.

FELIX

I wish I understood heteros better. Having babies and all.

DEO

Everybody's people, you'll figure them out.

FELIX

I hope so. I refuse to let anything or anybody stand in my way!

## SCENE FOUR

The waiting room, later that week. FELIX is painting a watercolor and singing.

FELIX

(Singing)

I'm in the mood for love, simply because...

JACK enters.

JACK

Oh, I'm sorry.

FELIX

Sorry for what, for goodness' sake? It's delightful to see you again.

(Singing)

"Funny, 'cause when you're near me...

(To JACK)

Here, take a look at this.

FELIX holds up his picture.

JACK

Oh, Dr. Gomez. Very nice.

FELIX

A good effort, if I do say so myself.

JACK

Looks like her.

FELIX

That isn't the point. It tries to capture her spirit. I've tried to suggest an aura of a particularly salubrious color -- but just subtly, nothing gross.

JACK

Watercolors are pretty tricky, they tell me.

FELIX

You can see the essential kindness in her character.

JACK

Are you all right, today? No dizziness? Your singing voice sounds good, anyway.

FELIX

Oh, are you musical?

JACK

Of course. I love Country & Western, and I'm a big opera fan too. So, you're okay?

FELIX

I'm better than okay, Doctor. I'm super, I'm in tune with the universe. How is it with your life?

JACK

Fine. Good seeing you again.

FELIX

Dr. Gomez thinks very highly of you. I can tell.

JACK

Well, that's nice.

FELIX

"A combination of intelligence and sensitivity" – and I quote.

JACK

What?

FELIX

I suppose that's what lots of people feel.

JACK

I can't believe my patient is late again. And something's happened to my lunch date. Excuse me, I have to see if my patient called.

FELIX

Maybe he's sick.

Maybe.

JACK  
(JACK exits.)

FELIX  
Or maybe he received a mysterious emergency telephone call.

(PENNY enters and sits down)

PENNY  
Do you mind telling me what time it is?

FELIX  
I have fifteen minutes past one.

PENNY  
I'm late.

FELIX  
Who's your therapist?

PENNY  
Oh, I'm not a patient.

FELIX  
No?

PENNY  
I'm meeting Dr. Olafson for lunch.

FELIX  
Ah-ha.

PENNY  
Pardon me?

FELIX  
A friend of his.

PENNY

That's right. A friend.

FELIX

I thought I saw a man, it might have been this Dr. Olafson, leaving half an hour ago with Dr. Gomez.

PENNY

What? Are you sure?

FELIX

I don't know, that's what I saw.

PENNY

That's funny. Well. I don't understand.

(PENNY exits. CAROLINE enters.)

CAROLINE

Hello, Felix. Who was that?

FELIX

Someone had the wrong office.



## SCENE FIVE

A few minutes later. Caroline's office. CAROLINE and FELIX.

CAROLINE

It seems strange that it happened again.

FELIX

It is.

CAROLINE

You don't really know anything about him. I wonder if he's a surrogate for me. An approachable therapist.

FELIX

I wonder about his personal life. He doesn't seem entirely happy, some way.

CAROLINE

Fantasies of family life, perhaps, Felix?

FELIX

I feel other people's karma and disturbances in the aura.

CAROLINE

Let's go back to the big topic from last time.

FELIX

I'm sorry if I'm boring you.

CAROLINE

Not at all. Your feelings about it must be central now. About your condition, I mean.

FELIX

Good old myoblastosis. Yes, we are old friends by now.

CAROLINE

I've never heard of myo-whatever. What is it exactly?

FELIX

It's a rare condition where the nervous system decides to give out on you. Fink that it is!

CAROLINE

Is there no hope?

FELIX

There's always hope – but not of living to a ripe old age. Or maybe even a not-so-ripe young age.

CAROLINE

So you feel pressed.

FELIX

As you know, I'm not so much about the death of my body. I do worry about the destiny of my soul, my next existence, the next spoke on the wheel of karma.

CAROLINE

You still must feel very alone..

FELIX

Not if you're fortunate in those who surround you -- that's important.

CAROLINE

I don't follow.

FELIX

Like in your case. People like Dr. Olafson.

CAROLINE

You have some fantasy about him and me. Mother and father, perhaps.

FELIX

The universe is our mother.

CAROLINE

Oh. Out time's up today.

FELIX

My time is up.

CAROLINE

We'll discuss your illness more next time.

FELIX

I mean with therapy.

CAROLINE

What? You can't be thinking of stopping therapy after only a few weeks. You've hardly begun, and I think we have discovered a number of issues that should be explored.

FELIX

Well, we'll see.

CAROLINE

I think we should talk about that next time.

FELIX

Who knows if there will be a next time? For any of us. At least in our present life forms.

CAROLINE

Please. I'll see you again next week.

FELIX

I don't think so. But auf Wiedersehen anyway.  
(HE exits.)

CAROLINE

I hope he doesn't quit. I can't stand failure. Especially in these terminal cases.

## SCENE SIX

A few days later, Deo's workroom. DEO and FELIX.  
DEO is wearing a sailing captain's cap.

DEO

And you stopped therapy with her?

FELIX

I needed to know her socially, more freedom of action.

DEO

What now?

FELIX

We'll see. I'm going to stake out the local coffee shop for her. You look different in that cap.

DEO

What cap? But what about this other woman?

FELIX

There are ways, there are ways.

DEO

Just play fair, Felix. You'll sully your aura.

FELIX

Have you taken a look at my aura lately?

(DEO extracts an odd-shaped instrument and peers through it at Felix.)

DEO

Yes, pretty violet on the aura-scope, especially around the edges. What have you been doing all these years?

FELIX

I've tried in many ways to be a good person. But I know that even so, I've lied, cheated, deceived innocent people – just to get my own way.

DEO

Can't you change your ways?

FELIX

No, there isn't time, and maybe it's impossible anyway. The only solution is that my soul -- and my mind -- must migrate into a healthy new baby with good parents. A clean, innocent vessel to give my being a new start in its road toward Nirvana.

DEO

I still wonder whether you will find it worth all you have to go through.

FELIX

How would you like to end up as a slime mold, or a cockroach – or a real estate developer?

DEO

Yes, as is, it's probably taken you a lot of lives to make massage therapist. All right, you have your contract with the resource bank. You're free to go ahead.

FELIX

Are you sure that wizardry.com can carry out the second part? That's really the hard part.

DEO

Yes, they can do the personality transfer.

FELIX

It's essential that it's really me that's being switched over.

DEO

But who really is you? If you'll pardon the grammar.

FELIX

Don't fink out on me, Deo.

DEO

Don't worry, it will be as much individuality as the concept "soul" comprises.

FELIX

I guess that – whatever "comprises" means -- will have to do .

DEO

Don't get greedy with the universe, Felix.

FELIX

Thanks a lot. How exactly does wizardry.com do all the transfer business, anyway?

DEO

What do you want for twenty-nine ninety-five? Do you think they're going to give away their secret programs for that? Just bring the baby in when you're ready.

FELIX

Does it take a long time?.

DEO

Not really. It's all done in the virtual reality chamber in the other room, with just a few clicks of the mouse.

FELIX

All right. I'm depending on you – and wizardry.com, of course.

## SCENE SEVEN

A few weeks later. The “Western Latte” coffee shop.  
CAROLINE and FELIX.

CAROLINE

It’s funny, running into you like this in the neighborhood.

FELIX

How have you been, Caroline?

CAROLINE

How have *you* been, Felix? You really shouldn’t have quit therapy so abruptly.

FELIX

Do you miss me?

CAROLINE

I feel rather awkward about meeting you socially. You might still discover you need me as a therapist.

FELIX

That’s old-fashioned.

CAROLINE

I don’t like to be thought of as old-fashioned.

FELIX

Some therapists even sleep with their patients nowadays.

CAROLINE

Well, I don’t sleep with mine, past or present.

FELIX

Well, that wouldn’t apply to me, anyway. But I wonder who you have slept with.

CAROLINE

Do you now? (A beat.) I’ve been worried about you, Felix.

FELIX

I've been planning the rest of my life.

CAROLINE

I know how you must feel.

FELIX

How about the rest of your life, Caroline?

CAROLINE

Oh, I'm fine.

FELIX

You live alone? May I ask?

CAROLINE

It's all right, I suppose. Yes, for the last four years. Sort of. Off and on.

FELIX

Divorced?

CAROLINE

It feels odd to have you asking the questions.

FELIX

Not a good marriage, I can feel it.

CAROLINE

You and your intuitions. Chuck wasn't the greatest. But still.

FELIX

Time to do better. Life flees away like dewdrops in the sun.

CAROLINE

No, I'm better off independent. I guess. It depends.

FELIX

A relationship has to be worth it. A man and a woman together is a sacred thing.

CAROLINE



I don't know if I want to discuss this subject with you.

FELIX

People do talk about these things nowadays.

CAROLINE

I'm a normal woman.

FELIX

"Normal" isn't good enough.

CAROLINE

That's not what Freud thought.

FELIX

Freud. Poo! Relax and close your eyes, Caroline.

CAROLINE

Oh, come on.

FELIX

Close your eyes.

CAROLINE closes her eyes.

FELIX

Now tune in your senses to the touch of my fingers.

CAROLINE

Not in a public place.

FELIX

We're alone in this corner. And I'm a licensed massage therapist in the State of New York,

(FELIX caresses her, lightly but expertly.)

CAROLINE

Oh, You'd better stop,

FELIX

Keep your eyes closed and concentrate on your nerve endings.

CAROLINE

Oh. Oh.

FELIX

Imagine yourself on a mountaintop, free, uncluttered, your body part of the trees and the sky.

CAROLINE

Oh my.

FELIX

Floating in the midst of a cloud.

CAROLINE

(SHE behaves as if SHE has had an orgasm.)

Oh, oh my god. Oh.

FELIX

Mediocrity is left below.

CAROLINE

Oh, Felix.

FELIX

(Shaking her)

Look at me.

CAROLINE

Yes?

FELIX

It isn't me, Felix, it's just a touch of kindness from another person. I could be a man or a woman. Or a nice little puppy dog, for that matter.

CAROLINE

Yes. Felix. My God.

FELIX

I'm just a surrogate for what you need. Just an appetizer.

CAROLINE

But Felix...

FELIX

I must be all things to the people around me. That's my fate in life, to assist others in connecting with the Truth.

CAROLINE

The Truth?

FELIX

Yes, the Truth about the universe, the universe that resides inside everyone, the sexual universe that seeks to mate with other worlds.

CAROLINE

You make coupling sound pretty cosmic, Felix. It isn't all that wonderful in my experience.

FELIX

Think of me as a guide. To find your other you, your other universe.

CAROLINE

I hate to say it, Felix, but it sounds like cosmic pimpery to me.

FELIX

I don't care what you call it, I only care about results. And I do have the person for you.

CAROLINE

Who?

FELIX

Dr. Olafson.

CAROLINE

Jack? Him?

FELIX

I can sense things in people.

CAROLINE

He doesn't look like someone who's good on the mountain cloud stuff. He acts awfully – ordinary. A hick, really.

FELIX

Don't let your provincial New-Yorkism blind you. He has a rich heritage, he comes from a line of ancient Viking warriors.

CAROLINE

I have Sephardic blood, but that doesn't make me the Queen Esther of Babylon.

FELIX

Trust me.

CAROLINE

Oh, I don't know how we got into this. I have the feeling you've tricked me, Felix.

FELIX

Why not? Life tricks us. The universe tricks us. God tricks us.

CAROLINE

This is all nonsense.

FELIX

Caroline.

CAROLINE

Yes?

FELIX

Find the mediocre in your life, the earth-denying self-absorbed yin-yang.

CAROLINE

Oh come on.

FELIX

Then run, don't walk in the opposite direction.

CAROLINE

You are crazy, Felix.

FELIX

Yes, I am. But don't worry, I have a head start, but you can catch up, Caroline.

CAROLINE

With the help of Jack *Olafson*?

FELIX

Don't think -- just act! Where's your sense of adventure?

CAROLINE

I don't know. But I do believe that Jack Olafson has a girl friend already.

FELIX

I don't know how much of a relationship it is. Anyway, there are always obstacles to every endeavor.

CAROLINE

I must be going.

FELIX

Say, do you like opera?

CAROLINE

You know, I've listened to opera on the radio and to tapes and CD's, and I've liked some things, but I've never actually been to an opera.

FELIX

I've got an extra ticket for the twentieth, at the Met. La Boheme.

CAROLINE

Really?

FELIX

Try it, you may like it. An adventure.

CAROLINE

Okay, I'll just do that.

## SCENE EIGHT

The Western Latte, later that day. JACK and FELIX are playing chess.

JACK

Check!

FELIX

Uh-oh.

JACK

Funny running into you like this, with a chessboard in front of you.

FELIX

You play well. In fact, I resign.

JACK

It's always been a passion of mine. Started with checkers as a little shaver and then just grew into chess, somehow.

FELIX

It's essential to have passions in one's life. Especially about other people.

JACK

I suppose. We certainly know that happens.

FELIX

But not to you?

JACK

I didn't say that – exactly.

FELIX

I was talking to Dr. Gomez about just that -- passions.

JACK

You're not in therapy with her any more?

FELIX

No. It's funny how some people don't look passionate – but they turn out to be full of fire.

JACK

You mean Dr, Gomez?

FELIX

She's one example.

JACK

You must be kidding.

FELIX

Oh no.

JACK

I am surprised. I won't ask how you know.

FELIX

Yes, don't. Say, you said you liked opera, right?

JACK

Another of my passions.

FELIX

I have an extra ticket for La Boheme, on the twentieth.

## SCENE NINE

A week later. A restaurant. JACK and CAROLINE having drinks.

CAROLINE

What an evening!

JACK

The production was first-class.

CAROLINE

I was surprised.

JACK

By the production?

CAROLINE

To find you here in the next seat.

JACK

Well, I was too.

CAROLINE

It's really bad.

JACK

Oh, I'm sorry if I spoiled things for you.

CAROLINE

I don't mean that, I mean the nerve of Felix, setting us up like that. I thought you had planned it – at first.

JACK

And I suspected you.

CAROLINE

Why? Did you think I had a crush on you? Well, you've got your nerve.



JACK

Hey, no. Anyway, as long as you had a good time.

CAROLINE

Anyway, you're pretty involved with somebody else, aren't you?

JACK

No.

CAROLINE

Is that what you think or what she thinks?

JACK

Let's leave Penny out of this.

CAROLINE

It doesn't matter. It's funny how you can know someone for months – but not know them.

JACK

Yes, people are different than they appear. Sometimes.

CAROLINE

Why? What did you think I was?

JACK

Oh, I don't know.

CAROLINE

Some uptight shrink?

JACK

Not exactly.

CAROLINE

Well, that's all right. I thought the same about you.

JACK

Who, me?

CAROLINE

Anyway, I had a great time. Felix had a good idea.

JACK

I'll drink to that.

## SCENE TEN

Penny's apartment, some time later. PENNY and JACK

PENNY

What happened to our lunch the other day?

JACK

I was there all along, but since you were late, I had to take my next client. Whoever it was that told you that must have made a mistake.

PENNY

How strange. Do you see a lot of Caroline?

JACK

Well, we do work together.

PENNY

You share a waiting room. I hope that's all.

JACK

We've also sort of shared an interesting patient lately. So we've been talking about him. A fascinating guy, Felix. Our mystical masseur, I call him.

PENNY

That's nice, why don't you invite him over for dinner?

JACK

Sure. Okay. Sometime.

PENNY

Invite Caroline too.

JACK

Sure.

PENNY

I don't know, I don't think I like your seeing her so much. Maybe she's got her eye on

you.

JACK

Well, I don't like your seeing Gregory.

PENNY

You know Gregory and I are just friends now.

JACK

You were engaged last year.

PENNY

Oh, silly. All that's over now.

JACK

Except for an occasional lunch or drinks together?

PENNY

I haven't even seen *you* since Monday.

JACK

I've been busy.

PENNY

Well, I hope you remembered we're going to that party Saturday night.

JACK

Oh, I may be a little late. I forgot. I'm going sailing in the afternoon.

PENNY

Sailing?

JACK

Yes. Felix's friend Dr. Chaudri is lending us his boat.

PENNY

Well, don't be too late. Promise?

JACK

Absolutely. Yes. Sure. Well, I should be going.

PENNY  
Bye. Don't forget Saturday night.

JACK  
Oh yes.

(JACK exits.)

PENNY  
Sailing, huh?

## SCENE ELEVEN

A few days later. A marina. JACK, CAROLINE, and FELIX.

FELIX

How are you feeling, Caroline? You still look a little green.

CAROLINE

The seasickness is better. I'm not.

JACK

I'm sorry it turned out to be such rough weather for sailing.

CAROLINE

I'm sorry about the whole thing. I've never been so humiliated in my life.

JACK

Oh, come on, Caroline.

FELIX

Well, Jack, you could have been a little more tolerant. It wasn't Caroline's fault that she didn't know that a sheet is what sailors call a rope.

CAROLINE

And you were so snotty when I asked where the blankets were kept.

JACK

It was funny.

CAROLINE

I'm glad you had a good laugh at my expense. You've got a male dominance problem, buster.

FELIX

I'm sure he didn't mean that.

JACK

No, I didn't mean that.

CAROLINE

And you yelled at me about the stupid sail.

JACK

But when I told you to pull in the mainsail, you said, "I will not."

FELIX

I think she was worried about tipping over, Jack.

JACK

But the mate has to do what the captain says.

CAROLINE

"Captain"!

JACK

Well, I was in charge.

CAROLINE

You big bully. You really find out about people sometimes. What a compulsive phallic narcissist.

JACK

My training therapist, Dr. Dummstein, didn't think so.

CAROLINE

"Dummstein." It figures.

JACK

I suppose you have no neuroses.

CAROLINE

Maybe I do, I don't like to be dissed, I really hate it.. Good-bye, Felix.

FELIX

Let me go with you.

CAROLINE

Thanks, I'd rather be by myself.

(Exits.)

FELIX

No, wait a minute for me. You could have been a little more sensitive.

JACK

I find it hard to deal with pig-headed people.

FELIX

Right. (A beat.) I shouldn't have put you in charge of Deo's boat, I guess.

JACK

What kind of mystic owns a sailboat, anyway?

FELIX

I'm going to try to catch up with Caroline. Coming?

JACK

No, I'm going over to the cafe and get a stiff drink.

FELIX

Deo should be there, tell him I'll call him later.

(JACK exits.)

Well, nobody told me this was going to be easy.



## SCENE TWELVE

A café at a marina. DEO, now dressed very spiffily in yachting costume, including his cap, is sitting eating.

(PENNY enters.)

PENNY

Excuse me. I'm waiting for a friend of mine to come in from sailing. Where would I find him?

DEO

What boat is he on?

PENNY

I'm not sure. I came down here because that Felix character left a message on my machine for Jack and said he'd meet them, *both* of them, it said, at the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Marina – on the “Dearborn” or “Donna,” or something.

DEO

Would it be “Dharma”?

PENNY

That's right, Dharma.

DEO

That's my boat. I lent it to my friend Felix, and he's out with some friends of his today. What's your friend's name?

PENNY

Jack Olafson.

DEO

Ah-ha!

PENNY

What do you mean, “Ah-ha”?

DEO

I know the name. Sit down, I saw the boat coming around the point – they should be here any minute. The two of them and Dr. Gomez.

PENNY

Caroline Gomez?

DEO

That's right.

PENNY

Ah-ha!

DEO

What do you mean, "Ah-ha"?

PENNY

I've heard the name.

DEO

Ah-ha!

PENNY

"Ah-ha"?

DEO

You must be Penny.

PENNY

How do you know my name?

DEO

Oh, I don't know... Maybe from my friend Felix.

PENNY

This masseur type seems to know everybody else's business.

DEO

Have a drink. It will help your search for dharma.

PENNY

I don't mind if I do. But what's a dharma again?

DEO

Dharma is the way, the way to right living, to understanding

PENNY

Oh, like yoga. Chakras and stuff. That stuff really turns me on.

DEO

Do have a drink. Alcohol sometimes acts favorably on the green chakra.

PENNY

Green chakra. You know, you don't look like one of those otherworldly types.

DEO

No, feel my hand, I'm quite in this world.

PENNY

You're strong.

DEO

It's necessary to be strong in this ephemeral world.

PENNY

Gee, I love words like that, Mr.....?

DEO

Chaudri, Deo Chaudri -- but call me Deo. I'll be glad to explain my philosophy to you sometime -- here's my card. But here comes Dr. Olafson.

PENNY

The bastard.

DEO

What? Oh, ah-ha.

(JACK enters.)

JACK

Penny!

PENNY

Hi, Jack

(Sidling over to DEO and clasping his hand.)

JACK

I see you know Deo.

PENNY

He's been explaining about chakras to me. He has a wonderful mind.

DEO

But where are the others?

JACK

Felix and Caroline went back together.

PENNY

Your pal Caroline. I didn't know she was going sailing with you.

JACK

Yes, she was there. And a pain in the neck she was too. Some women! Positively sadistic in their stubbornness.

DEO

What went wrong?

JACK

Everything. She is the most pigheaded, conceited person I know. Wouldn't take my orders. And I was the *captain*.

PENNY

Some women don't appreciate a man's strength. You say she and Felix went back together? Is he straight?

DEO

I don't think so.

PENNY

Pity.

JACK

I need a drink.

PENNY

Yes, poor dear. You look so down.

(DEO gets up from the table.)

DEO

Well, it's getting late, and I have to go. Good seeing both of you.

PENNY

Oh, do you have to leave -- already? I've so enjoyed meeting you and I'll keep your card.

DEO

Maybe we can have lunch sometime.

PENNY

Definitely. I'm looking forward to it.

(DEO exits.)

JACK

What are you fawning all over that weirdo for?

PENNY

He isn't weird – he's nice, and very smart.

JACK

Well, I don't like him.

PENNY

A little bit jealous?

JACK

Don't be ridiculous.

PENNY

Yes, ridiculous like you and *her*. She sounds too odd for you. I have an intuition about

those things.

JACK

I don't want to discuss that woman. Let's get that drink.

PENNY

I have a better idea. Why don't you come over to my place for a drink. I can even scare up some chicken breasts for supper.

JACK

Sounds great!

## SCENE THIRTEEN

Next day. The brownstone. DEO and FELIX. DEO is wearing a fez and a kaftan.

FELIX

She sat right there in front of you and got him to come up to her place? And you egged the two of them on. – I can't believe it. Just when I thought I was getting Caroline calmed down about the sailing fiasco. What a betrayal.

DEO

I didn't urge them on, I was just a spectator.

FELIX

Why didn't you stop them? Put Penny into a another dimension or something. And why are you dressed like that?

DEO

Like what?

FELIX

Whatever. Deo, are you trying to help me or not in this?

DEO

I wish you well, but my function has been to be an intermediary between you and wizardry.com – not between the two members of your chosen couple.

FELIX

But everything's in ruins. Penny's got her claws into him good this time.

DEO

I told you it wouldn't be that easy.

FELIX

You're right there. Think, Deo, think.

DEO

We need another of your clever schemes.

FELIX

We do, don't we? I need more dope on her. Felix the detective. Maybe you can help me.

DEO

I don't see how.

FELIX

You seem to have made friends with her. Buy her a drink, find out more about her life.

DEO

I don't know, Felix. It's not my line.

FELIX

Listen, Deo, after this is over, do you want me to give you a good reference or not? You don't want me to denounce you to wizardry.com as a second-rate sorcerer, do you?

DEO

All right, all right. I don't mind talking to her, as a matter of fact. A simple mind – but I like that. She listens extraordinarily well. She does have fundamental good taste.



## SCENE FOURTEEN

A few days later. The “Western Latte.” CAROLINE and JACK.

CAROLINE

I don’t know why I’m even talking to you.

JACK

Can’t you give a guy a chance to say “I’m sorry”?

CAROLINE

I don’t think it’s a question of that. It’s a question of personalities.

JACK

I made a mistake. I was neurotic-compulsive.

CAROLINE

I still think I’d call it phallic narcissistic.

JACK

Maybe you’re right. I have to work on my self-absorption. “Phallic narcissist” – I’m ashamed to think that I am.

CAROLINE

Maybe I was too harsh. That term is pretty strong.

JACK

No, no, I deserve the label. Roughly speaking. Maybe a little inexact.

CAROLINE

I’d have to look it up to make sure. I can’t remember a good case history offhand.

FELIX

Reich had one, I think.

CAROLINE

I think you’re right. And then there was the tightrope walker in Jones’ book.

JACK

Clever of you to recall that. Perfect phallic-narcissist.

CAROLINE

Well, I suppose that there are worse things than the “phallic” part.

JACK

I always did like your sense of humor.

CAROLINE

Do I really strike you that way?

JACK

Very much so.

CAROLINE

Felix was right, you are perceptive.

JACK

Caroline, forgive me.

CAROLINE

You dumped me and took right up with Penny again.

JACK

That was just a -- relapse. Besides, you dumped me.

CAROLINE

I did not.

JACK

Did so.

CAROLINE

Did not. But that doesn't matter. The question is how do I know you won't relapse again?

JACK

Don't worry. It's over, over!

CAROLINE  
How can I know that?

JACK  
Okay, look at these photos.

CAROLINE  
Who's the guy?

JACK  
Somebody named Gregory she was engaged to before. And that's his apartment house they're going into.

CAROLINE  
These are dated just the other day.

JACK  
Exactly.

CAROLINE  
She always impressed me as that type.

JACK  
Let's try again.

CAROLINE  
Let me think about it.

JACK  
Remember the opera. That was a real bonding experience, I think.

CAROLINE  
It was. Sort of cosmic.

JACK  
An encounter at the preconscious level.

CAROLINE  
Yes, I could almost believe I felt a touch of Freud's "oceanic feeling."

JACK

I was overwhelmed by waves of affect, anyway.

CAROLINE

Oh, Jack.

JACK

Caroline?

CAROLINE

Yes, Jack.

JACK

Oh Caroline! Thank God – or Sigmund Freud.

## SCENE FIFTEEN

The “Western Latte,” a few days later. FELIX and CAROLINE.

FELIX

You mean it’s all okay now?

CAROLINE

Yes. Isn’t it wonderful?

FELIX

What happened?

CAROLINE

Jack and I had a nice talk and he apologized very convincingly. I feel relaxed with him now. I feel we can do anything together.

FELIX

.  
If I were you, I’d avoid small boats.

CAROLINE

We’re going to give living together a trial. You know, having a common profession makes things so neat sometime.

FELIX

But what about Penny?

CAROLINE

She was exposed for the sex-obsessed tart she is.

FELIX

Oh?

CAROLINE

Yes, someone sent Jack some photos of her and Gregory.

FELIX

Oh.

CAROLINE

Jack is big on loyalty. He's a jealous type, I'm afraid. But I won't give him any grounds for complaint. I wonder who would have taken those photos.

FELIX

Who knows?

CAROLINE

Felix...

FELIX

Maybe Gregory sent them to get Penny back. Hard to tell. Anyway, I think your news is wonderful.

CAROLINE

Well, we're hopeful.

FELIX

It couldn't happen to a nicer couple.

CAROLINE

Anyway, everything is roses. And I feel I'm in your debt.

FELIX

Why? What have I done?

CAROLINE

Our little conversations gave me a new outlook on things. Not only sensuousness, they made me able to understand people like Jack better. You know, the scientific outlook and so on.

FELIX

Besides, you understand science too.

CAROLINE

But my temperament is different. I'm not so organized and exact. I really need someone like him to add balance to my life. Oh, I'm so happy.

FELIX

You couldn't be happier than I am. Believe me.

CAROLINE

Guess what?

FELIX

What?

CAROLINE

He's moving into my apartment tomorrow.

FELIX

Wonderful. I hope your relationship blossoms out into something happy – and productive.

CAROLINE

Productive?

FELIX

So to speak.

CAROLINE

Oh, you're thinking marriage and so on.

FELIX

That's right.

CAROLINE

Of course, if we should decide down the road to get married, I wouldn't want to have children – not for some years, anyway.

FELIX

No children?

CAROLINE

That doesn't matter. Jack would prefer to have a baby right away -- assuming we do get married.. But he can wait.

FELIX

Yes, I suppose it's good he can. But I'm a little upset -- I guess I have some kind of

personal interest.

CAROLINE

What personal interest?

FELIX

Well, Hmmm. Hmmm. Ah. I would like to see your child before...

CAROLINE

Oh, Felix. Of course. But...

FELIX

You mustn't worry. There's still some time left. I have faith that the baby question will sort itself out to everyone's satisfaction -- to yours, to Jack's -- and to good old would-be Uncle Felix's.



## SCENE SIXTEEN

A month later. JACK and Caroline's apartment.  
JACK and CAROLINE.

JACK

I am not fussy.

CAROLINE

Making me take my shoes off at the door? You don't look Japanese.

JACK

You don't have to take them off.

CAROLINE

Oh really?

JACK

Just make sure they aren't muddy – or anything.

CAROLINE

Isn't this all a little compulsive?

JACK

Why? It seems like normal behavior to me.

CAROLINE

If I do take off my shoes, will you promise not to keep vacuuming the place?

JACK

Somebody has to. I can't stand not having the place neat and clean.

CAROLINE

But *I* vacuum twice a week.

JACK

I like to make doubly sure.

CAROLINE

Well, you're making doubly sure you make your girl friend feel like a slob.

JACK

I never called you that.

CAROLINE

(Becoming upset)

But you think that, you do!

JACK

No I don't. Well, maybe a little bit of neurotic involvement -- something about early toilet training.

CAROLINE

At least I wasn't into tidying up my feces, like some people evidently were.

JACK

You've built up defenses around this, haven't you?

CAROLINE

Me? *I'm* all right. I just didn't realize the depths of this anal erotic streak in you.

JACK

Don't analyze me!

CAROLINE

No, Dr. Dummy-stein was supposed to have done that in your training. What happened to foul up your analysis, Jack? Mother fixation too strong?

JACK

At least I don't have penis envy.

CAROLINE

That was bullshit on the part of Freud.

JACK

No it wasn't.

CAROLINE

Yes it was!

JACK

No, no, no, no! My analyst showed me was true.

CAROLINE

Well, my analyst didn't believe in it.

JACK

My training analyst was better than your training analyst.

CAROLINE

No, my training analyst was better.

JACK

No, mine!

CAROLINE

Mine!

JACK

Neurotic rage, I recognize it.

CAROLINE

Oh, I don't know why Felix encouraged me to get together with you. I thought he was my friend.

JACK

Friend! He's more like an incubus. An odd kind of incubus, but still...

CAROLINE

I like Felix.

JACK

Sometimes I suspect you like him too damned much.

CAROLINE

Oh, I give up! How did I get hooked up with a shrink!

(CAROLINE exits.)

JACK

I can't believe I've gone and gotten myself into this. You jerk, Jack. Mother told me to look out for those New York girls. But I never would listen.

## SCENE SEVENTEEN

A day later. Caroline's apartment. FELIX and CAROLINE.

FELIX

But it can't be that bad.

CAROLINE

I don't know what's happened. He's acting so phallic, I can't believe it.

FELIX

Does that mean sexy, I hope?

CAROLINE

No, it means he's a male chauvinist pig.

FELIX

Well, maybe he is a little sexist. Like lots of men. I suppose even I am.

CAROLINE

Oh Felix, I think you're the least sexist man I know.

FELIX

Caroline, give Jack a break. I'm sure he means well.

CAROLINE

He's just so critical of everything I do. I don't cook the way his mother did. His socks aren't folded just so. Obsessive compulsive, if I ever saw one.

FELIX

Some people are that way. I wouldn't let it bother me.

CAROLINE

He thinks I'm a slob. Knocks my toilet training.

FELIX

Oh, that is serious.

CAROLINE

He thinks I'm neurotic, he treats me like a feeble-minded patient.

FELIX

But I still think he loves you.

CAROLINE

I think he also thinks I'm stupid. He thinks he's such an intellectual. He had his nose in a book when all the other kids at Grand Junction High were out playing football or drinking beer. He got drunk instead on Kant, Auden – and Masterpiece Theater.

FELIX

But you're not dumb, Caroline. You're just interested in other things.

CAROLINE

Like sex.

FELIX

Uh-oh.

CAROLINE

He says I hound him. I have natural hormonal urges, after all. You know, you helped me.

FELIX

I did, didn't I?

CAROLINE

"Reach for the sexual truth that lies inside each and every one of us." I've written that phrase on a card that I keep above my desk.

FELIX

Maybe I should talk to him. Or call my friend Deo in.

CAROLINE

Deo? What does he know about such things?

FELIX

Oh, in addition to his other interests, he's kind of a colleague of yours. He's certified in

Tantric-Hatha couples therapy.

CAROLINE

Oh Felix! I know how hard you worked to bring us together. I don't know why you bothered.

FELIX

You two were special.

CAROLINE

Well, now we're specially unhappy. And it isn't just two any more.

FELIX

What?

CAROLINE

Yes, I've missed my period.

FELIX

Oh, Caroline!

CAROLINE

It's very inconvenient. I suppose I should get rid of it.

FELIX

No, no, Caroline. Wait a minute.

CAROLINE

I mean, what's the point? I'm not Right to Life, you know.

FELIX

There's every point. A new human being.

CAROLINE

Now you're getting into politics -- when does life start, and so on. Well, I think women should have some say in this.

FELIX

Of course, but still. A baby.

CAROLINE

An embryo. Well, I don't believe in raising children in unhappy families. Besides, I didn't want kids yet. I want to travel, have some fun. And, you know, diapers are so – yucky.

FELIX

But it's more than that. There's a new life here – an important life. A sacred life.

CAROLINE

Men! You can tell who doesn't bear children.

FELIX

How about Jack's feelings?

CAROLINE

(With disgust)

Jack!

FELIX

Calm down, Caroline. Give yourself a chance to think things over. We'll all get through this, you'll see.

CAROLINE

You've been wonderful, Felix.

FELIX

Don't do anything rash about the baby.

CAROLINE

I feel so alone.

FELIX

I'm here.

CAROLINE

I know you are.

FELIX

Oh, Caroline dear.

CAROLINE

Okay. Don't look so worried. I'll think about it.

FELIX

Tell Jack. He's involved, you know.

CAROLINE

Yes, but I wish he weren't! Well, anyway, I'm not very pregnant.

FELIX

How long?

CAROLINE

Three and a half days.



## SCENE EIGHTEEN

Three days and four hours later. The Western Latte.  
CAROLINE and FELIX.

CAROLINE

Well, in case you're interested, it's now six days, 16 hours – and counting.

FELIX

You mean?

CAROLINE

Yes.

FELIX

You decided against abortion.

CAROLINE

You know, I found that first I had to separate Jack from the picture, conceptually, then I concentrated on thinking about just me and the microscopic him -- or her -- growing inside me. Then I just couldn't imagine doing away with it – him, her -- when it came down to it – him, her.

FELIX

Well, it sounds like Jack was delighted when you gave him the news..

CAROLINE

That's true enough. I thought he would burst with pride – or whatever emotion patriarchal figures experience at these times.

FELIX

Hasn't he been easier to get along with?

CAROLINE

He's been a changed man since I told him the day before yesterday. Considerate, self-effacing, bringing me healthy things to eat or drink, fluffing up my pillows.

FELIX

Great.

CAROLINE

He even cleaned my shoes for me after I come in from outside.

FELIX

I suppose that's -- progress.

CAROLINE

He even lets me put my feet on the couch – as long as I have clean stockings on.

FELIX

Wow.

CAROLINE

Well, we're only talking about a few days.

FELIX

Every minute in this life counts, believe you me.

CAROLINE

I admit I do enjoy the change. Still, I have a bad feeling. Like something's wrong. The Jungians would say I doubt that my anima is truly connecting with his animus. Maybe it's sort of a defective psychic plug – or socket, for that matter.

FELIX

Jung didn't know everything -- r anything, depending on who you talk to.

CAROLINE

Maybe I'm just being silly.

FELIX

You'll see. You'll be happy together – especially now that baby makes three.

CAROLINE

Does a baby make all the difference?

FELIX

This particular baby will make all the difference in the world.

## SCENE NINETEEN

A few days later. JACK on telephone in his apartment.

JACK

Sure, we can be friends, Penny. (A beat.) Yes, I'm back at my own pad, and I don't need you to tell me "I told you so." (A beat.) I don't want to talk about it. (A beat.) I really don't care what you learned about Felix (A beat.) Or how. (A beat.) You're kidding. It sounds like science fiction. (A beat.) Do what with the baby? (A beat.) Bizarre. (A beat.) Nobody can transfer souls, that's silly. (A beat.) Is that so? Well, it's true they're doing all this unbelievable stuff with cloning and son on now. So what? (A beat.) The reason I don't seem particularly excited by your grand discovery is that there isn't any baby any more, and it doesn't look like there's going to be any. (A beat.) No, she had thought about not having it, but decided to keep it. (A beat.) Yes, ironic. Her period was only eight days and two hours and fifteen minutes late. (A beat.) I don't want to talk about it. (A beat.) No thanks, I don't think we could have dinner. (A beat.) Nor a drink. (A beat.) No, not a latte either. (A beat.) No, don't even call me -- I'll call you.. We can be friends, but not that kind of friend anymore. (A beat.) Get Gregory to take you out. (A beat.) Well, if he's too busy teaching *chi gong*, get somebody else. Good-bye, Penny!  
(He hangs up.)

## SCENE TWENTY

A month later. The Western Latte. FELIX and JACK.

FELIX

I'm glad you agreed to see me.

JACK

I don't know if there's any point. What do you want, anyway?

FELIX

Just to see if there's any help I can give. About you and Caroline.

JACK

She won't return my calls.

FELIX

You can't blame her. She was pretty broken up about the baby.

JACK

Late periods happen. I don't know why she can't get over it. An oral deprivation reaction, if you ask me.

FELIX

Jack, first of all take some advice from me.

JACK

What advice?

FELIX

Lay off the psychobabble right now with Caroline.

JACK

Psychobabble? Me? Hmmm. I guess you're right.

FELIX

Besides, I don't think it's the pregnancy itself – it's the way you too changed when she was pregnant and then changed back when she wasn't.

JACK

Well, I was disappointed too -- my traces of an Oedipus complex must have taken over. It's okay now, I can see I was wrong.

FELIX

Relationships aren't easy. And the old Oedipus chorus won't help.

JACK

Sorry. It's just that I'd never really been with anyone like her. Not neat at all. I felt sort of overwhelmed. By messiness. Anal, for sure – oops, strike that.

FELIX

Maybe she felt overwhelmed too.

JACK

Who knows. Anyway, she had a right to kick me out. I was acting out something or other.

FELIX

You were *acting* like a jerk.

JACK

Uh-oh. Okay.

FELIX

Jack, would you consider couples therapy? I know just the person to help.

JACK

Certainly. The question is: will she go for it?

## SCENE TWENTY-ONE

Deo's office. DEO, JACK, and CAROLINE.

CAROLINE

It isn't that we lost the baby – or the embryo, whatever.

JACK

I don't know why you can't forgive me.

CAROLINE

It's that I don't think I know you anymore. When you thought we were having a baby, then I was important to you. But not after – or, really, before.

JACK

That isn't so. I know I was hard to get along with. But I can work on that.

CAROLINE

I don't know if you can, Jack. Characterological traits, you know.

JACK

There's nothing wrong with my character.

CAROLINE

Not if you're happy living with aggravated compulsiveness.

JACK

How about penis envy?

CAROLINE

I wouldn't bring up dongs, if I were you.

DEO

For the last half hour, you two have kept going around in circles, like the wheel of karma. Twirling, twirling, but the center never moves.

JACK

Oh for God's sake. "Wheel of karma"! I can't believe I'm doing this, anyway. With someone with no real credentials.

CAROLINE

You didn't have to do this at all. I didn't have to do it.

JACK

I did push for us to get help, but with a qualified couples therapist – not with *him*.

CAROLINE

I worried that all the couples therapists in our circle were either naive, biased – or divorced.

JACK

Still, we should have found someone else. This is undignified.

DEO

I can perhaps reassure you on qualifications.

CAROLINE

Felix said he was our best bet for someone who could help us find out the truth about our relationship. Someone with insight, compassion – and well-developed mind-body awareness.

DEO

I have a doctorate in Tantric-Hatha Duo-Therapy from the Sri Kananda-nanda-danda Institute of Metanormal Psychiatry and Lamaistic Studies.

JACK

I can believe that. Caroline, I still love you, that's the bottom line.

CAROLINE

You're telling me it wasn't just Felix's salesmanship.

JACK

Of course not.

CAROLINE

I wonder.

DEO

Caroline, how did you feel about what Jack revealed to you ten minutes ago about Felix and his plan for the baby?

JACK

I would think it must have changed her mind about her devoted "friend."

CAROLINE

It sounds horrible. I feel hurt.

JACK

That's why I didn't want to tell. I knew how devoted you were to Felix and I didn't want to hurt you.

CAROLINE

But now you do want to hurt me, is that it? Your sadistic streak is showing again, Jack.

JACK

Oh yeah? Are you sure we aren't dealing with one of your neurotic reaction formations?

CAROLINE

I think it's more your hatred of the mother image. It's your neurosis, not mine.

JACK

It isn't!

CAROLINE

It is!

JACK

You're irrational!

CAROLINE

You've lost complete track of reality!

DEO

Children, children. Please, no more of the shopworn Freudian armory of abuse. Caroline, try to talk about your hurt.

CAROLINE

It's awful when you realize that you've been betrayed by a friend.

DEO

Ah.



CAROLINE

This business about Felix and the baby not only hurt me, it made me think. It made me aware of some feelings I had been hiding from myself.

DEO

Feelings about Jack?

CAROLINE

Indirectly, maybe.

DEO

How very interesting. Now I feel that the session is getting somewhere.

CAROLINE

I'm not so sure.

DEO

Not so sure about what?

CAROLINE

The value of continuing this couples therapy.

JACK

Don't give up on us, Caroline.

DEO

What is on your mind, Caroline?

CAROLINE

This session here, Deo, has shown me that I have to rethink my whole life. About Jack. And about love in general. I feel confused.

DEO

Yes, yes, it's natural that you should be tired. Why don't both of you think things over and come back next week?

JACK

All right. "Tantric-Hatha therapy"!

CAROLINE

I have to go. I need to talk with Felix.

(SHE stands up. JACK also stands up)

JACK

Can I give you a lift somewhere?

CAROLINE

No thanks -- good-bye, Jack.

(SHE exits.)

JACK

Good-bye?

(JACK exits. A beat. The door to an inner office opens. PENNY appears.)

PENNY

All clear?

DEO

A difficult case.

PENNY

What's the outlook?

DEO

You may have your chance with Jack again. Perhaps so, perhaps not.

PENNY

I'm not so sure I want the chance anymore. I'm kind of tired of seesaw relationships.

DEO

Are you sure?

PENNY

Yes, maybe Jack isn't my style after all.

DEO

You don't mean you're going back to Gregory after all?

PENNY

Wrong guess, Deo.

DEO

What?

PENNY

Your psychic powers must not be in gear today. Look at me.

DEO

I'm looking.

PENNY

What do you see?

DEO

The devil is in your eyes.

PENNY

Are you sure it's the devil?

DEO

Let me see.

PENNY

Look closely.

DEO

The Lord Shiva? In his Lingam incarnation?

PENNY

Do you have to name it?

DEO

Perhaps not.

PENNY

Definitely not, I'd say – darling Deo.

## SCENE TWENTY-TWO

Caroline's apartment. CAROLINE and FELIX.

CAROLINE

When were you going to tell me, Felix?

FELIX

Well, for a long time I was searching for the right moment.

CAROLINE

When was that going to be? After you'd gotten the baby inside the computer or whatever to steal away his little soul?

FELIX

I can see now I was wrong. There was no good time.

CAROLINE

You deceived me.

FELIX

Yes.

CAROLINE

And I gather, a good many other people – like Penny.

FELIX

I got carried away with my project. With saving my own life. My self-absorption is one of the main things that's colored my aura so dark.

CAROLINE

It's hard for me to imagine how desperate you were – but even knowing you were under a death sentence, you had no right.

FELIX

I'm sorry if I've ruined your life.

CAROLINE

Well, I wouldn't say that.

FELIX

I feel I have. But believe me, the worst thing about this whole matter is what I've done to you.

CAROLINE

I hope the harm done all around isn't irreparable. I guess we'll never know -- "The path not taken." (A beat.) Well, at least all the people involved are still alive and well.

FELIX

You have to understand that when I started out, you weren't real people to me. All I could focus on was my survival. But then, since I've gotten to know you, especially you two.

CAROLINE

Yes? Since you've gotten to know us...

FELIX

I mean, especially you.

CAROLINE

Me, more than Jack?

FELIX

I think you know that, Caroline. I feel as much for you as I ever have for a female.

CAROLINE

Oh my, I can just adore that picture of little old me, a mere female person.

FELIX

You know what I mean. (A beat) Anyway, how was your session with Deo? Productive, I hope.

CAROLINE

Yes. In an odd way, it was. Very productive.

FELIX

Good. I hope you and Jack can get back together.

CAROLINE

And produce another baby for you?

FELIX

And produce a baby for yourself. Only if you want one.

CAROLINE

Not with Jack, I've decided. It's all over between him and me, Felix.

FELIX

Oh, no!

CAROLINE

No, it's okay. You see, during the therapy session with Dr. Chaudri, I realized something about my feelings – and where they really were centered. And they weren't fixed on Jack.

FELIX

But where then?

CAROLINE

You really have no idea, Felix dear?

FELIX

But Caroline. Caroline! That's impossible.

CAROLINE

Impossible that I should find out I'm really in love with you?

FELIX

But you know that I'm gay.

CAROLINE

That doesn't stop love – lust it might stop, but not love. Besides, I'm not so sure about the gay part. Do I detect telltale signs when you look at me sometime?

FELIX

I don't want to be changed.

CAROLINE

I don't want to change you, and if you are irretrievably gay – well, that's just the way life is. Besides, you taught me that eroticism isn't just straight sex. So I would think we could have some kind of intimate relationship – unless you find me disgusting.

FELIX

You? Disgusting? Oh, Caroline, that would be impossible. (A beat.) Besides, you seem to be assuming I love you too.

CAROLINE

Are you going to tell me you don't – when I know you do?

FELIX

Yes, I don't. I don't. (A beat.) This isn't happening, it isn't.

CAROLINE

Remember that first day at the Western Latte?

FELIX

I was just trying to help you.

CAROLINE

And you did, Felix darling. Now let me help you.

FELIX

But why? I haven't got exactly a matinee idol profile.

CAROLINE

I like your profile.

FELIX

And I'm not exactly built like a Greek god.

CAROLINE

I love your shape.

FELIX

And I'm dying.

CAROLINE

That *is* a drawback. But, we're all dying, Felix. I don't demand an eternity – I'll take whatever time with you I can get.



FELIX  
(Surrendering)

Oh, Caroline.

CAROLINE

Felix. Don't worry about a thing. You helped me that day – now let it be my turn.

FELIX

But the sex problem?

CAROLINE

That isn't the relaxed, broad-minded attitude toward sensualism that we explored that day in the Western Latte.

FELIX

But that was different, Caroline.

CAROLINE

Was it, Felix?

FELIX

Oh God.

CAROLINE

Is something wrong?

FELIX

I'm so confused.

CAROLINE

I feel a little shaky myself.

FELIX

Are you sure that this is happening?

CAROLINE

I feel awfully happy, Felix.

FELIX

I'd like to feel that way too. But I don't dare.

CAROLINE

Why not?

FELIX

It goes against everything I've ever believed.

CAROLINE

"Find the mediocre in your life, then run, don't walk, in the opposite direction."

FELIX

I don't know, Caroline.

CAROLINE

Sit back.

FELIX

What?

CAROLINE

Let me run your fingers over your face. Relax, think quiet thoughts.

FELIX

Oh, Caroline.

CAROLINE

Take it easy, I may not be a licensed massage therapist, but I think you'll still feel in my fingers what's in my soul, Felix.

FELIX

Oh Caroline, Caroline.

## SCENE THREE

Several months later. Deo's office. DEO, CAROLINE, and FELIX. Deo is wearing a turban

DEO

Well, this is a strange ending.

FELIX

Some of my gay friends have ostracized me, but I feel they're being unjust. I always thought that people should be tolerant of my preferences when I was in my gay mode, and now I think my old crowd should cut me some slack about my new life.

DEO

Didn't you ever suspect?

FELIX

No, women were always a mystery to me.

DEO

You can be forgiven that defect.

FELIX

I feel my friends should realize that I can't help it if I didn't know everything about my inner being. Besides, I had never considered something else, something important.

DEO

What was that, Felix?

FELIX

The prospect of fatherhood. – of a child of my own.

DEO

In truth, I knew all this already about you, Felix. From your aura.

FELIX

Why didn't you tell me?

DEO

It would only have confused you.

CAROLINE

Yes, he's confused enough as it is.

(PENNY enters. She is wearing a turban too.)

PENNY

(To Deo)

Hello, darling. Sorry I'm late. The store was out of your size in deck shoes.

(To FELIX and CAROLINE)

Well, I understand congratulations are in order.

CAROLINE

Thank you, Penny. Yes, I'm about six weeks along.

PENNY

Boy or girl?

CAROLINE

We don't know yet. But either one should be suitable for the soul exchange, wouldn't it, Dr. Chaudri?

DEO

Dr. Gomez!

PENNY

You mean you're still going through with the scheme?

FELIX

Caroline!

CAROLINE

No, no, just kidding.

PENNY

I wonder how Jack feels about all this.

CAROLINE

I got a nice note from him. He's taken up with a teenage rock music critic.

FELIX

She doesn't sound very compatible with such a compulsive neatnik

CAROLINE

It's okay. Her day job is as a housekeeper at the Plaza.

FELIX

No, Penny, no more soul-switching for me. I'm through trying to steal immortality. You can't fool the universe.

DEO

This decision should improve your aura tremendously.

(Picking up his aura-scope and peering at Felix through it.)

Oh, the battery's not charged. Just a few moments.

(HE plugs it into a wall socket but doesn't raise it again.)

FELIX

By rights I should get my \$2995 back.

DEO

How materialistic.

FELIX

You're a fat one to talk.

DEO

Oh, take it up with wizardry.com. But you'd better have some substitute piece of sorcery in mind – I think on returns they only give store credit.

PENNY

So, Felix. You've decided you're going to be content to die, just like everybody else?

FELIX

I've decided I'm going to be happy to live the rest of my days with Caroline – and if I'm lucky, a little time with the baby too.

DEO

Yes, maybe it's better to accept the normal path that the universe has designed for human beings – and let souls transmigrate according to the mysterious precepts of the Dharma. You'll leave the child behind you as your immortality, Felix. That may not be the happy ending you hoped for– but I think it's a nice one. Say, let me take one more look.

(DEO gets out the aura-scope and examines Felix.)

Yes, I see distinct streaks of pink among the violet. And a line of orange. It's almost like a piece of a rainbow!

THE END