

TRUE LOVE

A Theater Quartet

by

Richard Farber

version Oct. 2001

Duration: Full evening
The play is in two acts

Cast: Two men and two women, all in their late forties or early fifties.
They should be able to sing and dance as good actors often can.

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| Mr. Klein | is small and finely built |
| Mr. Gross | is large and heavy |
| Ms. Small | is thin and |
| Ms. Stout | is round about |

Orchestra: Minimum a single piano, perhaps a 3 or 4 piece ensemble.

Space: Sections of the play need a space that allows the actors to speak to the audience from different directions---at least from the sides if not also the back.

Set:: One set -- **house one** and **house two** set at an angle in perspective. Furniture -- couches, chairs -- over or undersized -- that designate all the room locations in the play and are on stage all the time. The sets for three other location should be 'flown' in. The **Marilyn Monroe cafe** where the men meet -- posters of Marilyn Monroe only; the **Robert Mitchum cafe** where the women meet -- posters of him alone or of a number of male actors; and the **marriage counselling room** -- posters of Freud, Whittiger, Masters and Johnson etc. ad lib.

Period Act one takes place now. Act two four years later ALTHOUGH THERE ARE FLASHFORWARDS AND FLASHBACKS

The play opens with Klein married to Stout &
Gross married to Small

They are at a time of crisis. They are getting old and feel that something is missing in their lives. They are looking for meaning -- for something that will make the remainder of their existence worthwhile. The one thing that seems to be the key for them is TRUE LOVE. As the evening develops we see how impossible that bitter-sweet dream is.

True Love
04/01/2004

3

version

Act two opens four years later. The couples have divorced. During the act Gross and Stout come together as do Small and Klein. This does not last.

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GROSS [TO KLEIN - SIMPLE] Do this, rub there, is that what you mean?

KLEIN [TO GROSS - SIMPLE] Yes. . .

GROSS [TO KLEIN - BITTER] If she felt anything, you wouldn't have to.

KLEIN [BITTER] Faster. . . slower

GROSS [BITTER] Come down

KLEIN [BITTER] Go up

GROSS [BITTER] Careful careful

SMALL [TO GROSS -WITH EMOTION] You're hurting me.

GROSS Shit, it would be better to go to the bathroom and jerk off.

KLEIN You said it

SMALL & STOUT You bastards !

A stylised dance. IT IS A SLOW MOTION SEQUENCE OF PUSHES AND SHOVS,
HATE AND DEPRESSION. IT ENDS IN A STYLISED POSE WHERE THE FOUR
TRY TO THROTTLE EACH OTHER. SUDDEN BREAK THEN . . .

SMALL That was the situation

ALL One, two three, four. . .

SMALL . . . months ago

GROSS But four times four years ago . . .

ALL . . .It was different

GROSS It was my second marriage

SMALL Mine too

STOUT Two couples

KLEIN Looking again

GROSS And again

SMALL And again

STOUT And again

KLEIN For that something

GROSS For that one thing

SMALL That makes the world

STOUT Want to sing.

A SONG

Four times four is how much I love
Four times four times four is how much I care.
Four to the fourth is how much I need you
Four to the fifth is love doctrinaire.

Reciprocate my dear forever
Be my vector's co dependent
Our connections never sever
Our lives together resplendent

Four times four ETC.

Let us conjugate, geometrate,
And on each special day
Four times I'll love you
True love in every way.

[THE FOLLOWING MONOLOGUE IS SAID BY EACH OF THE ACTORS AT THEIR OWN PACE TO DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE AUDIENCE. IN ORDER FOR ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE AUDIENCE TO HEAR IT, IT MAY BE REPEATED.] [EACH ACTOR ENTERS IN TURN AS THE PREVIOUS ONE FINISHES 'is in flux']

ALL Space is not a constant between two points . . . the attraction between two points positive negative ambilivative [SIC] is in flux . . . it is in itself a flux . . . molten then cooling . . . dross forming and the incandescent covered, then new energies found and exploited . . . first at one point than at the second and the third and the fourth . . . and with luck both or all and the dross to ashes blows away . . . away . . . away . . . and the flame visible sometimes spreading spreading, growing thicker and hotter and other times thinner and thinner until energy dies, entropies, and Maxwell's demon takes his toll and the two points or three or four drift apart in a sudden spasm of regret or if the play is a comedy, like this one hopes it is, there is a finalé when everybody is happy and the dominant tonic motive is pounded again and again; again and again, dominant tonic, dominant tonic, dominant tonic, dominant tonic . . . so that people know it's time to go and eat a late supper.

music THE FOUR RETURN TO THE STAGE

GROSS A flashy flash back

SMALL First meeting

SMALL Prelude to intimacy

Short musical comment, Romantic theme

STOUT I drink my coffee, instant with milk
KLEIN Sugar ?

STOUT No, two spoons of sadness

KLEIN O.K.

STOUT That's pretty normal, isn't it?

KLEIN Yes, just about like everybody else.

STOUT But I love you.

KLEIN That was quick

Short musical comment, sad - bittersweet

SMALL And now . . .

GROSS After two times eight years of marriage

Short musical comment, jagged - atonal

STOUT You don't pay enough attention to my breasts. . . .

KLEIN I don't what?

STOUT My breasts, attention !

KLEIN Yes Ma'am

STOUT You're not a breast oriented guy

KLEIN I wouldn't say that

STOUT But I am saying that and this too . . . You don't love me !

KLEIN But I love to suck your nipples . . .

STOUT I read in Cosmopolitan this month that some guys are breast oriented and other just want to gratify their beastly needs.

KLEIN You read that in Cosmopolitan? [ASIDE] It's getting harder to get at the nipples since she's gained even more weight.

STOUT I can extrapolate can't I ?

Add two and two and four and four
You don't love me anymore,
Eight and eight, two-fifty-six
And I don't think you really did.

Short musical comment, low clusters

KLEIN Loose some weight. . .exercise.

Short musical comment, arpeggio like

STOUT Now back,

KLEIN Back to the day that they met.

Short musical comment, Romantic theme

GROSS Thanks for inviting me up.

SMALL You're welcome PAUSE
Would you like a coffee?

GROSS Yes please, strong, very strong and lots of umm in it.

SMALL O.K.

GROSS MATTER OF FACT And afterwards I'm going to fuck you
'til smoke comes out of your ears.

Short musical comment, very matter of fact

KLEIN And now, now.

STOUT After four times four years of marriage

Short musical comment, one chord

SMALL You don't worship my breasts.

GROSS Yes . . . no . . . I mean . . .

SMALL You take no sensual gratification in my petit beautiful femininity

GROSS But I . . . I

SMALL You don't worship at the founts of my. . .

GROSS I'm not flexible enough to suck your tits.

SMALL ???

GROSS When we have intercourse . . .

SMALL That's right, you don't.

GROSS There's just to big a difference in height.

SMALL Men and their excuses.

GROSS You are right, but at least, I do try.

Short musical comment, very sad

SMALL I read this book about women and their breasts.

GROSS A tit book?

SMALL Yes, that breasts are a relationships's micro cosmos

GROSS [ASIDE] Micro, that's a given

SMALL Relationships between a man and his wife's tits are the same as
Their relationship one to the other.

GROSS What the left to the right? [A JOKE ABOUT HER TITS]

Short musical comment, SMALL GIVES HIM A MURDEROUS LOOK

GROSS Sorry. PAUSE And how do your tits feel about me?

SMALL Neglected, you son of a bitch !

A longer musical section, very lyrical.

ACTORS SPEAK DIRECTLY TO AUDIENCE. *music continues under four speeches*

STOUT [ABOUT KLEIN] He likes to climb on and bouncy ride.
Quick he comes
And out pops a sigh
A pop art balloon --- ouffffff
Then off like a light
And I'd be left there aching.

KLEIN [ABOUT STOUT] She's so big, heavy, hard to please.
Endless panting, sweating and more and more . . .
I would turn my mind around
Go someplace cool and quiet.

SMALL [ABOUT GROSS] He's so big and heavy
Endless panting, thumping and more and more.
I would turn my mind around
Go someplace cool and quiet.

GROSS [ABOUT SMALL] She likes to climb on and bouncy ride
Quick she comes
And out pops a sigh
A pop art balloon --- ouffffff
Then off like a light
And I'd be left there aching

lyrical music finishes THE FOLLOWING SPEECHES SHOULD BE SPOKEN
VERY PROSAICALLY DIRECTLY TO THE AUDIENCE

KLEIN Four professional people egoistical enough
To put career before children

SMALL Mutual support before giving.

GROSS [SIMPLE] I can think of four reasons that they can't have children

KLEIN & SMALL & STOUT [CYNICALLY] You can?

GROSS One, This is a low budget small cast evening and children on
the stage would complicate the production.
Two, Some of the language and most of the situations are
not suitable for children.
Three, The playwright couldn't figure out the plot if he had to
include children.

SMALL He had difficulties enough with first year calculus

STOUT And quadratic equations

KLEIN And. . .

STOUT&SMALL: Four . . .

GROSS . . . our actors union isn't prepared for us to share the stage with
children

STOUT I don't . . . nor with dogs

SMALL It would steal the show.

KLEIN So please except the plot as it is . . .

STOUT . . . or read Updike if you want to see how children complicate
divorce.

Music THE SCENERY OF THE FIRST COFFEE HOUSE IS FLOWN IN. THE

WALLS ARE DECORATED WITH POSTERS OF MALE CINEMA ACTORS.

KLEIN Flash forward

GROSS Eight months later

KLEIN Coffee house

music of coffee house

SMALL It's nice of you to meet me like this

STOUT Yes, not in a group,

SMALL Not talking about our marriages

STOUT Trying to save the unsavable

SMALL Salvage the unsalable

STOUT Swallow the unsavorable

PAUSE

We can order coffee with whipped cream

SMALL Cakes

STOUT Use real sugar.

SMALL The hell with them

STOUT Yeah

SMALL Their ideas of beauty

STOUT They're so rude, their gestures
 Their "how he did me the favor" PAUSE

SMALL You're right, they are like that

STOUT They are, and I'm sick of them PAUSE

SMALL Men PAUSE

STOUT Yes PAUSE

SMALL Yes PAUSE

STOUT Yes PAUSE

SMALL Yes LONGER PAUSE

STOUT You said it LONGER PAUSE

SMALL And I'll say it again

SMALL & STOUT Men ! THEY BOTH LAUGH. A PAUSE. THEY ARE
ABSORBED IN THEIR THOUGHTS.

coffee house music continues.

SMALL But it's not just then, it's me.
 I'm afraid, afraid of growing inflexible,
 Of feeling, old and coarse.
 I'm afraid of not adjusting, of just being, well . . . inflexible.

STOUT Even now, four months divorced, I don't really want change.
 I don't want to go out on a date

I don't want to have to shave my legs or sculpt the V
Look for those loose hairs
And all so carefully before a
'New chance' at happiness'

SMALL I know what you mean and it isn't just fear of change
I like the comfortable patterns of my life

STOUT Me too, they're sloppy but they're mine

STOUT & SMALL Being myself

SMALL But I feel . . . feel . . . that I can't afford to be inflexible

STOUT It's a pity that we can't love each other

SMALL Yes I . . . SHE REALISES WHAT SHE WAS ABOUT TO
AGREE.

THE TWO WOMEN LOOK AT EACH OTHER, MOVE INVOLUNTARILY CLOSER
TOGETHER, CONSIDER WHAT THEY ARE ABOUT TO DO AND BOTH
SIMULTANEOUSLY CHANGE THEIR MINDS AND SHAKE THEIR HEADS "NO"

coffee house music ends.

GROSS And now for a dance that is a flash forward.

STOUT Four years into our future.

A dance KLEIN WITH STOUT; GROSS WITH SMALL.
THE COUPLES DRIFT APART. SMALL DANCES WITH KLEIN; GROSS WITH
STOUT. AT THE END OF THE DANCE GROSS AND STOUT EXIT, SMALL AND
KLEIN ARE TOGETHER ON A COUCH.

SMALL I like it here [SHE IS CUDDLING ON HIS SHOULDER]

KLEIN. I like it that you like [PAUSE] and I like it too.

SMALL But I have to get up . . . turn off the death wish
Put the clothes in the dryer.

KLEIN If you get up can you make me a cup of coffee?

SMALL I've had great disappointments in life,
But I will make you a cup of coffee

KLEIN Good, PAUSE But when will that be?

SMALL When I get up. [PAUSE] I like it here

KLEIN Me too
PAUSE

SMALL Why did you say 'good'?

KLEIN When?

SMALL Just now, when I told you of the great disappointments in my life

KLEIN You did what?

SMALL Reaction, insensibility to my great disappointment.

KLEIN When?

SMALL Just now . . .

KLEIN Oh . . . now?

SMALL . . . and you reacted with the affirmative

KLEIN I . . .oh yes, I said I liked it too.

SMALL What?

KLEIN Your cuddling on my shoulder.

SMALL Good

KLEIN mmmmm

SMALL A SIGH

music, a brief theme of love that goes wrong

SMALL But you thought my disappointments were great

KLEIN I did not

SMALL Yes you did

KLEIN You didn't say anything like that

SMALL I . . .

KLEIN You talked about my shoulder and that we should have sex
and that you have to put the laundry in the machine

SMALL You never listen

KLEIN I always do. . .I can repeat everything that you say to me
FAST I like it. . .clothes in the dryer, death wish, disappointments
with life, want to have sex, would I like a cup of coffee. . . .
[TO HER] you see, I heard every word and there was nothing
about disappointments

SMALL But you. . . you just said

KLEIN I did not. . .I didn't say anything

SMALL But . . .

KLEIN . . . and I surely didn't mean anything bad for my poopsie mumpsy

SMALL No. . . But I

KLEIN My puppsy mooppsy [SIC]

Short Romantic Interlude music

GROSS A short Romantic interlude

SMALL AND KLEIN KISS AND CUDDLE *the music leads them into a song*

SMALL & KLEIN [SUNG] We are as we are here and now.
We'll soon be as we were then and how
In a special place
In an ever place
That convention of dimension,
No dementia no descentia
The fourth of course.

We'll be as we were and will be
Always are, as we want us to be

In a special place
In an ever place
That convention of dimension,
No dementia no descentia
The fourth of course.

We'll be as you want us to be
We soon are as you'll see we can be
In a special place ETC.

All things for each other
In that place in that lace-y filigree
All things for each other
In that time which is space-y don't you see
That convention of dimension,
No dementia no descentia
The fourth of course.

We'll square the circle
Reduce the number pi
We'll love eternal --
We'll live and love and dance and sing
Holding hands,
Together -- 'til we die

SMALL But back . . .

GROSS Almost to where we were

SMALL At the start

KLEIN IS PLAYING TETRIS. GROSS ENTERS AND 'HELPS' HIM WITH BODY LANGUAGE AND MUTTERED INSTRUCTIONS AND COMMENTS "No, left. . .left. . .

right . . .turn it around ETC. AD LIB. STOUT ENTERS AND BEGINS THE DIALOGUE
GROSS DOES NOT HEAR HER.

STOUT All you want to do is
 Play with those slowly falling
 Four-sided shapes . . .
 And not love me

KLEIN Yes, they at least are regular and
 Predictable in their randomness

STOUT Why a stupid game for children?

GROSS Children ?

KLEIN Predictable in their randomness

STOUT You have an adult here to play with?

KLEIN Playing Tetris is an antidote to life

STOUT Don't you mean parable or allegory or epistle?

KLEIN No, an antidote.
 An antidote to what I feel living with you.

KLEIN GETS ANGRY, RELAXES. HE CONTINUES PLAYING, GROSS KIBITZES AS
BEFORE. THE TWO MEN LET OUT A WHOOP OF SUCCESS

STOUT Why are there never enough of those long big ones !?

music bridge

KLEIN MAY STILL CONTINUE TO PLAY. STOUT LOOKS AT KLEIN WITH MIXED EMOTIONS. GROSS TURNS TO SMALL WHO SITS FROZEN AND UNMOVING. THE SET CHANGES, LARGE PHOTOS OF Freud, Whittiger, Masters and Johnson etc. THE FOUR ARE IN GROUP COUNSELLING TRYING TO SAVE THEIR MARRIAGES. AFTER SET IS ESTABLISHED *No music*

GROSS [TO SMALL] Goddamn it. How can you let me sit here like a fool and smoke my head off . . . don't you want to reach out towards me?

SMALL [TO GROSS] I sit try to be sympathetic to what you feel . . . I try my damnest to get a handle on what you need.

KLEIN [TO STOUT] I came in yesterday and there was a new smell and a 'keep away' sign . . . O. K. you can wear whatever scent you want, but just be sensitive enough to make me part of it . . . tell me you've tried something new, ask what I think and not let me unconsciously feel uneasy until I figure out what disturbs me. If you want this marriage then know that how you smell doesn't belong just to you.

STOUT [TO KLEIN] I have to sit here with you, together yet apart, and think what is good for you . . . for you . . . to be open to your problems. You tell me that you want me to be different, that you want me cool and distant.

GROSS You told me how you felt when I held back and tried to protect myself. I'm pushing this so far back that I can't remember the words that I used . . . how you understood something, understood how I felt, what I wanted from this marriage . . . You said that you understood but you never said what you want from this marriage. What do you want?

SMALL I am what I am.

GROSS You've done it again . . . I'm deeply hurt . . . and I must say it . . . I can't be some poor miserable beaten puppy that waits sad eyed for the

source of his pain to reach out to him and then, only then, suddenly awake,
alive, shaking from excitement.

STOUT When you have a problem you smile and say that its good when we
 have a day like today, a bad frustrating day, because afterwards
come better days or the best days or whatever the hell you say . . . and I, like some
idiot, some fool, try to tell you that days are in a chain, deepening more
beautiful, that trusting, that wanting are the heart of a marriage . . .

KLEIN Use whatever perfume you want, I don't care.

SMALL I've tried to always be there for you -- I've done my best -- I've tried to
be your friend and not just your lover.

GROSS Yesterday was too cruel.

SMALL Take whomever you want to bed.

STOUT Be hurt, think that I'm the one who's inconsiderate.

SMALL This is painful for me, excruciating.

GROSS I can't feel that I'm bad for you.

STOUT Go and find somebody who will be your friend and your lover. You
need somebody prepared for you to pull away, someone who will tell you
his secrets, his fears, his pains, his desires one night and the next night only smiles
and good will when you don't reach out to him in your need.

SMALL Be depressed with somebody who wants depression -- find a woman
happy, wet and always available.

STOUT I can't be a yo-yo.

KLEIN What the fuck am I supposed to do tonight . . . rub your clitoris and
you feel that I forgive you. Crawl miserably on you to make futile --
hard to say -- love?

GROSS Am I supposed to smile and forget how I feel . . . have a good fuck after
apologising for being so intense?

SMALL You're all body. You're soulless.

GROSS I so wanted a hug, simple caress to give me the strength to continue.
STOUT I'm not just a vagina to stick it in . I wanted you to be my mate and not
 come go stop start . . . you said no, that you want it all . . . that you want
me, that you want that depth of feeling that I gave you. I'm not your fucking
enemy. I cry because I can't be more for you and you want me to come and go,
start and stop and start and stop and I can't anymore.

SMALL I try now, I tried then ! You asked me, you almost begged me and I
 believed you. You said it was for me and I returned. I believed in
you. I believed it could work. I felt attuned to you. And then you were .
. . were . . . I wont say it

GROSS How can I trust you?

KLEIN I wasn't enough for you.

GROSS I don't want to be nice.

SMALL I feel cheated.

STOUT I'll use any perfume that I want, when I want.

KLEIN I feel that I'm not being fair, that I'm so upset . . .

GROSS Why don't you let me take a step back ?

KLEIN There is no way I can be with you . . .

GROSS . . . no way to continue loving you, goddamn it.

SMALL I feel . . .feel . . .

STOUT . . .abandoned?

SMALL Betrayed.

GROSS Is this what you want. Is this really what you want it to be? Don't you want the real thing from me?

KLEIN What am I going to do? Don't you realise what you asked from me?
What kind of commitment you asked me to make.

STOUT I was prepared. to be easy. I was prepared, but you never looked into my eyes when we were in bed. You did what you could I realise that. You were successful in making me cling to you, making me want you as the center of my world. You did your best.

SMALL You demanded. You wanted, but it's not a game. PAUSE You raped me on our first date. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS SCENE THE FOUR DO NOT LOOK STRAIGHT TO THE AUDIENCE. THE THREE LOOK AT GROSS. HE LOOKS PLEADINGLY AT THE THREE OF THEM. It could have been just fun . . . the emotions could have cooled down and the sex O.K. if not wonderful, But no, not with you.

GROSS I didn't. And if I did why did you continue seeing me? Why did you marry me? LONG PAUSE THE FOUR SLOWLY GO BACK INTO

THEMSELVES AND LOOK AGAIN DIRECTLY AT THE AUDIENCE.

STOUT Continue

KLEIN Continue

SMALL Yes

GROSS We must

STOUT Find a way . . .

KLEIN Yes

SMALL A way

GROSS Find a way

STOUT A way to drift apart . . .

KLEIN You almost seduced me into believing that there was a chance again

GROSS I don't trust you

KLEIN I'm sick of being nice

STOUT I feel cheated

SMALL Try to imagine how I feel.

STOUT . . . it could have been so good.

KLEIN You can ask me not to fart I can't control that but you don't include me

in something so basic as how you smell.

STOUT I'm prepared now, prepared for the ache of wanting you, for being in
bed at night and wanting. I'm prepared for the pain of being open and
really feeling, of really loving when there is no love

SMALL It's his responsibility, he's the man.

STOUT I'm tearing myself apart. I feel cheated because you asked me to really
love. I'm a fool and stupid for allowing myself to believe.

ALL I hurt so much.

KLEIN But talking didn't help . . .

GROSS Nothing works

SMALL Our marriage has failed.

STOUT Our marriage failed.

KLEIN Our marriage.

ALL Failed

a musical interlude, very introspective.

STOUT And another fast fast forward.

Music A DIFFERENT COFFEE HOUSE. THIS ONE HAS POSTERS OF MARILYN
MONROE ON THE WALL

GROSS We went for a coffee.

KLEIN I needed to talk with someone.

GROSS That's what friends are for.

KLEIN I needed to talk,

GROSS He really did.

KLEIN I asked him to meet me at a neighbourhood coffee bar.

GROSS It was newly redecorated.

KLEIN I was having problems at home.

GROSS Used to be a Chinese take away.

KLEIN Really serious problems . . .

GROSS The food wasn't very good.

KLEIN Really very serious problems . . .

GROSS They turned it into a coffee house.

KLEIN Please.

GROSS They had done it up with posters of Marilyn Monroe.

KLEIN I just couldn't stand it anymore.

GROSS I have a post card of the poster in my wallet.

KLEIN I was seriously considering divorce.

GROSS Don't you want to see it?

KLEIN Yeah, sure.

[GROSS TAKES OUT FULL SIZE POSTER OF MARILYN AND UNROLLS IT. KLEIN HOLDS IT AND STOUT ENTERS

GROSS [MONOLOGUE TO STOUT] I saw the poster there and thought of you
 . . . of your thighs . . . your breasts . . . your arms around me . . . your
legs clutching my back, your heels at the small of my back, beating a soft
tattoo of love and lust. I looked at Marilyn and comparing her with you felt very
lucky, very content and very very much in love.

STOUT But that is four months from now, and what you describe, your love for
me and the scene with Mr. Klein was taking place four years ago.

GROSS Never was much good at chronology . . . or quadratic equations

SMALL & KLEIN TO THE AUDIENCE EACH AT HIS OWN PACE. AND AS THEY
GET TO "Two people" GROSS & STOUT JOIN THEM.

ALL Quadratic equations
 Quadratic play-making.
 Quadratic relation, kaleidoscope shift quadrature involving the
 Second but no higher power of the variable of the unknown.
 Two people, two variables, two unknowns -- but no higher.
Polygamy and Pollyanna refused because life is complex enough
 Impossible enough in this fourth powered world of two unknowns

SMALL & KLEIN FINISH THEIR SIMULTANEOUS MONOLOGUES FIRST AND GO
AND LIE ON THE STAGE READY TO BEGIN THE FOLLOWING AS GROSS AND
STOUT FINISH.

SMALL The stone floor looked cool and inviting after lunch.

KLEIN It did.

SMALL And being a gentlemen he agreed . . .

KLEIN And we lay down,

SMALL Down . . .

KLEIN Come lay by my side and be my love, THEY LIE DOWN

SMALL Put your hand on my belly and kiss me . . .

KLEIN Kiss you THEY KISS

SMALL Stone floor

KLEIN Bone-y knees

SMALL Body hard and fine

KLEIN Left hand on my chest

SMALL Right hand on my forehead

KLEIN And bone-y knees on the floor

GROSS [HE JUST STEPS INTO THE SCENE] So what do you think of
the poster? Something huh? I mean a real women or what?

KLEIN I'm a little busy right . . . [now]

GROSS Really umma pumma bumma

SMALL We are kind of. . . [busy]

GROSS But I was talking to my friend here about Marilyn Monroe

KLEIN Now if you'll excuse me I'll . . .

STOUT O.K.

GROSS We'll be at the coffee house

GROSS LOOKS AT THE PORTRAIT OF MARILYN AND SAYS HIS DIALOGUE TO THE POSTER. STOUT STANDS TO ONE SIDE AND ANSWERS HIM. WE ARE BACK IN THE COFFEE HOUSE.

coffee house music.

GROSS She answered, she promised that she would be there
To pick me up if I fell.

STOUT I did.

GROSS When I fell, if I fell.

STOUT I meant it.

GROSS She looked deeply into me with her deep blue eyes . . .

STOUT And the paradise flower opened again.

Away the coming Death
With passion sighs, moans and screams
Groans that hide and reams and reams of love
Multi dimensional Love.

STILL IN COFFEE HOUSE

GROSS Women are really a pain in the ass.

KLEIN An ache in the balls.

GROSS Yeah.

KLEIN Yeah.

GROSS A pain in the ass an ache in the balls. PAUSE

KLEIN Not so clear thinking . . .

GROSS No

KLEIN They don't know what a man really feels, what he really needs,

GROSS A pain in the ass.

KLEIN That's right, they just can't know what a man really feels
or wants or needs

GROSS What he . . . he . . .

KLEIN Not like another man could

GROSS That's right they don't know what it is to be a man,

what having a penis is.

STOUT We know a lot about having a penis.

SMALL We keep getting it shoved into us.

PAUSE

KLEIN Well ?

GROSS Well ?

PAUSE

KLEIN No, no thanks

GROSS Yeah, you're right, no thanks

PAUSE

KLEIN Yeah, just a pain in the ass.

GROSS An ache in the balls.

coffee house music ends

SMALL I always ran away from love
Choose objects that I could not reach or
Men like Gross who where not good for me.

STOUT I always though that I knew Love
But at forty, did I really know
When I met Gross?

KLEIN I always thought love was sex
And the bigger the better

More and more, like with Ms. Stout
CYNICAL Plenty of woman.
But now I know that sex is just sex
And love with Ms.Small is love.

GROSS I always know that mind is mind and body body
That the mind is boss.
But with Ms. Small it was not my mind that was Boss
She was . . . was . . . was

ALL But now only now now now
I've found my true beloved

a musical interlude. THE FOLLOWING TWO SPEECHES ARE ON MUSIC.

KLEIN The finding of true love.

GROSS The unfolding of the paradise flower.

music builds to a climax and stops.

STOUT I think it must be rare. Bodies bonding -- losing self to find a deeper
self. It isn't just the joy of sports or sex -- endomorphines pumped out
from the brain

STOUT ALONE OR THREE AS CHORUS I want to be loved, truly loved.

STOUT There is the uncovering -- thoughts dissipate, upper functions away --
and a basic inner you opens as he sucks on your tit and not thinking
turns and enters you. the paradise flower unfolds again and another you, a
suppler you is yet again in love.

STOUT ALONE OR THREE AS CHORUS I want to be loved, truly loved.

STOUT It is not the ritual, the denial, the detailing of that which is the
uncovering of self of being at the core of the flower, only again and again
astonished that there are ever more petals - spatials - fractals to fold away and
away and away.

ALL I want to be loved, truly loved.

WE ARE BACK IN THE COFFEE HOUSE.

music

KLEIN I talk to my friend
 Ask about how unfair the feeling is
 How not different by quantum jump
 The flower unfolding and just plain fuck.
 Beauty, physical beauty
 Visual swell of flesh and not just smell or taste
 No scars that disfigure, figments of ugly

GROSS . . . and I thought of the times in my life where the earth moved, the
 petals at least quivered, and saw no correlation between beauty
and the paradise flower . . .

KLEIN A certain flow roundness of belly
 No short dumpy fingers
 No smoking . . .

GROSS . . . only how beautiful that she was . . . intensely beautiful . . . how little
 things that could be on a list became objects of joy when the petals
quivered and love inkled.

no music

SMALL GOES DOWNSTAGE CENTER AND PLAYS THIS MONOLOGUE VERY
PASS-THE SALT STRAIGHT AND MATTER-OF-FACT.

SMALL What are the mathematical probo-possibilities of two couples extempo
 - contemporaneously finding true love in arms of the ex-partners of
each other? PAUSE

Well? PAUSE

If you can't answer a simple direct question like that, I'll give you an
 answer.

TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND RAPIDLY SAY THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SENTENCE

Statistically not very very between couples that divorce and remarry
again or again-and-again, or again and again and again because in fact within
four years the percentage, taking into account all pre-relevant and per -
valent variableing and factoring them expo-logarhymically, is not one-fourth
of what the playwright imagines and even less so in couples that swap,
exchange, or simply replace each other in the 4 pro mille of the 14% in this
quadratic sentence where I began asking about mathematical possibilities and
rendered questions of aleatorism, chance-ness, randomnation and just
plain bad luck as opposed to the prerequisite of four -- two couples divorcing --
knowing each other before their first marriages and after separating meeting
again at group marriage counselling sessions finding True Love in the arms of the
ex-partners of each other which might be the case in a musical comedy
slapstick vaudeville cartoon where the characters tra la la la is a form of real -
theatricality but not in this situation being at least four times four times four
times four or four to the fourth power greater then what I thought when started this
sentence of which I can no longer put.

STOUT Right.

GROSS Good,

KLEIN Got'it.

SMALL Thanks.

STOUT Not-again

GROSS Bye

KLEIN And a song

SONG True love can happen
The flower can unfold
Happiness can happen
Take it , grasp it bold
Paradise is a flower
If you need and want you're alive
If you give and sing you're alive
If you strive and dance you're alive
Paradise is a flower
Be alive.

music segues to a beautiful romantic interlude

AT THE MARRIAGE COUNSELLOR *no music*

GROSS ABOUT SMALL She smiled a lot.
A big inviting smile.
Lots of teeth.
Almost like the rictus of death

SMALL I have nice teeth and smiling is friendly, inviting

GROSS She was looking for an available man, any available man

SMALL I was not..

KLEIN Was she that desperate?

SMALL I was not

GROSS She'd talk to a man, look intently into his eyes . . .

STOUT Paying attention is important,

SMALL It makes a man feel wanted

STOUT Needed

SMALL And needed is a way to a man's heart

KLEIN And his bed.

GROSS She had made a cheese cake

SMALL It was good

KLEIN Very good

GROSS Very very good

STOUT Baking is also a way to a man's heart

KLEIN His stomach

GROSS And then his bed

KLEIN But back to the smile

GROSS The rictus of death

KLEIN The courting mask that women wear when they're desperate

SMALL I wasn't desperate

STOUT She was just looking for a relationship

GROSS & SMALL Desperate

KLEIN So out came the smile, the teeth, the flattering clothes

GROSS The cheese cake

KLEIN The rictus

SMALL I wasn't desperate

SMALL & STOUT I / she wasn't.

A SONG

I have to find a way
a modality RHYME WITH WAY
To make this life O.K.
Carnality? Conjuality?

I have to find a way
For the sun to rise . . . to set
Problems faced . . . Solutions met

For me to live every day . . .
Modality RHYME WITH WAY
Carnality RHYME WITH WAY
Conjuality RHYME WITH WAY
Perspicacity RHYME WITH WAY

SMALL We hoped that next month would be different
 And it was

music allegro marcato fight music of the beginning which underlines the sequence.
WE ARE IN THE GROUP COUNSELLING ROOM. THE SEQUENCE IS VERY
AGGRESSIVE.

THE LEFT HAND COLUMN IS THE SOLO, THE THREE RIGHT HANDS COLUMNS
ARE SAID TOGETHER. FEEL FREE TO Ad Lib. RESPONSES. THE ACTORS
DOING THE LEFT HAND COLUMN MUST WORK HARD TO GET THEIR TEXTS
ACROSS. THIS SEGMENT STARTS LOUD AND GETS LOUDER.

| <u>GROSS</u> | [ABOUT SMALL] | <u>KLEIN</u> | <u>SMALL</u> | <u>STOUT</u> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| The hair on her arms disturbs me | | You said it | Jesus | You goddamn . . . |
| Her body hair | | Phui | | |
| As if over the years | | | | |
| Her substance grew out over her body | | | | |
| | | Men | | You goddamn son of a bitch |

| <u>KLEIN</u> | [ABOUT STOUT] | <u>GROSS SMALL</u> | <u>STOUT</u> | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| She became formless | | Hallelujah | all alike | Christ you . . . |
| Addicted to chocolate | | Yum yum | | you |
| Her once almost tight enough | | | as if you | |
| Flabby -- far away | | fucking cunt | were | I'll kill your ass |
| Just as her soul receding | | get away | worth something | |
| Just as what love there once was | | | | love, who needs it |
| Far away | | far far away | go fuck off | |

| <u>STOUT</u> | [ABOUT KLEIN] | <u>GROSS SMALL</u> | <u>KLEIN</u> |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|
| I used to take pleasure | | | who needs |
| in his fine body | | fine piece | pleasure |
| Small hard | woman | a shit | from them |
| Compact as if well made | bunch a | | |
| East Asian quality | cunts | you're not | I wouldn't do you |
| But not for me, not any more. | no, you tell em | | the favor |
| Holding him became like grasping | shove it up | | if you were the |
| A hard smelly pillow. | | | last woman on |
| His coming into me | | your ass | earth |
| No longer a gift. | PAUSE | | |
| It never was | | | |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| SMALL | [ABOUT GROSS] | <u>GROSS STOUT</u> | <u>KLEIN</u> |
| I used to think that I would | smelly twats | | |
| love him forever | stupid slots | love those | could we please |
| That every other man | | ass holes | please stop |
| would seem | not worth the | | all this and realise |
| Minor next to him | sweat ya work | god damn | that we must be- |
| I woke up | up fuck'n em | | have like adults |
| Big is not beautiful. | | | here |

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| GROSS & SMALL | and his isn't big enough |
| | to fight about anyway |

END OF ACT ONE
INTERVAL.

True Love
04/01/2004

45

version

You have read just the first act of the play. For a complete copy and information about performance rights please contact me or Mr. Guido Huller at Drei Masken Verlag