

CHARACTERS

HELEN

ALICE

LOST

Helen and Alice. Two ladies of uncertain age, prepare to go to a matinee.

HELEN. All set?

ALICE. All set.

HELEN. OK, you lock. I'll ring for the elevator.

ALICE. Wait. I can't find my keys.

HELEN. You just had them in your hand.

ALICE. I had them when I went to find my water bottle.

HELEN. Retrace your steps.

ALICE. (*Thinking.*) I came out of the bedroom ...

HELEN. Did you leave them on the bed?

ALICE. ... then I went back into the bedroom ...

HELEN. Under the bed?

ALICE. ... I couldn't remember what I had come in there for ...

HELEN. Did you check the sofa cushions?

ALICE. ... so I came back out.

HELEN. Did you look in the john?

ALICE. Now why would I take my keys in the john?

HELEN. I'm sure I wouldn't know.

ALICE. I went into the kitchen to get my water bottle ...

HELEN. I always leave my keys in the same place.

ALICE. Here they are, in the fridge!

HELEN. Well, of course.

ALICE. OK! All ready. Let's go.

HELEN. Wait a minute, my glasses.

ALICE. Where are they?

HELEN. I had them.

ALICE. You were just wearing them.

HELEN. Was I?

ALICE. I think so.

HELEN. I must have put them down when I was in the bedroom.
 ALICE. Did you leave them on the bureau?
 HELEN. I wasn't anywhere near the bureau.
 ALICE. Why would you take them off?
 HELEN. I don't know. I'm blind as a wall without them.
 ALICE. That's probably why you can't see where you put them.
 HELEN. Oh for heaven's sake! I'm wearing them!
 ALICE. Of course! I'm so used to you with them on, I didn't notice.
 HELEN. I think *you* may need glasses!
 ALICE. Shall we?
 HELEN. You lock, I'll get the elevator.
 ALICE. Righto. All locked.
 HELEN. Here comes the elevator.
 ALICE. Hold it! My water bottle!
 HELEN. We're going to be late.
 ALICE. I can't go without my water bottle.
 HELEN. Well go get it, but hurry.
 ALICE. What did I do with the keys?
 HELEN. In your hand.
 ALICE. I'll just be a second.
 HELEN. (*Calling.*) The elevator's here!
 ALICE. (*Calling.*) OK, OK, keep your pants on.
 HELEN. Get in. I can't hold this door any longer.
 ALICE. It's a good thing I went back, (*Pointedly.*) somebody left the stove on.
 HELEN. (*Ignoring her.*) Push "G."
 ALICE. Do I look overdressed?
 HELEN. No. Do I look too casual?
 ALICE. No. (*Small pause.*) Although I wouldn't have worn my flip-flops.
 HELEN. Oh my God! We have to go back.
 ALICE. We're going to be late.
 HELEN. Well, I can't wear flip-flops to the theatre, Alice!
 ALICE. Ok, but run. Runrunrunrun.
 HELEN. I need the keys.
 ALICE. Well, I don't have them, Helen.
 HELEN. Well, where are they then?
 ALICE. They're not in my purse ...
 (*They step off the elevator.*)
 HELEN. Look at that! You left them in the door!

ALICE. So I did.
 HELEN. We could have been robbed!
 ALICE. Oh, now —
 HELEN. Someone could have waltzed right in and —
 ALICE. All right, all right, I'm holding the elevator, go! Go go go! (*Sings to herself.*) *Hmmm, embrace me, my sweet — da-DUM-dada you ...*
 HELEN. Found my shoes!
 ALICE. Great. Get in.
 HELEN. These are the shoes I got in London.
 ALICE. How was London? I forgot to ask.
 HELEN. I forgot to tell you! London was fabulous! And — oh, oh! I saw — uh — oh, that play! That classic Russian play, you know the one
 ALICE. No.
 HELEN. Oh, you do, they're all in a country house, and there's an actress and everybody's miserable —
 ALICE. I know that one, it's coming to Broadway with Dame — what'sname.
 HELEN. There's this incredible speech! This man, the uncle, is very unhappy because he lost his watch — not his watch, his clock. That's not it — it's his feet, he can't walk or — something, anyway, he's very unhappy because of the trees, and he gives this speech to his young niece, somebody's niece, and it was the most brilliant thing I have ever heard. Absolutely life-changing.
 ALICE. What was the speech?
 HELEN. (*She thinks.*) Well, it was this feeling he had — his feet that — the trees were being cut and — being cut off —
 ALICE. The title is something with birds in it.
 HELEN. The uncle was played by — that actor —
 ALICE. Not birds. Something to do with fish.
 HELEN. What the hell is that actor's name?
 ALICE. Here we are. Garage level.
 HELEN. It's on the tip of my brain.
 ALICE. Here's the car.
 HELEN. He was so brilliant in that movie, you know the one, what was it called? It took place in Ireland. Scotland. Ireland. You saw it. We saw it together.
 ALICE. No, we didn't. I didn't see it.
 HELEN. Yes, you did! He played a gay bus driver who puts on a

play by — oh, that fat playwright, you know the famous fat wit that got arrested.

ALICE. I can't unlock the car.

HELEN. This is so maddening. What is the name of that film?

ALICE. What in the world is all that stuff in the back seat?

HELEN. We're going to be late.

ALICE. Wait a minute, this isn't my car!

HELEN. Oh, for pity sake.

ALICE. Here we go.

(*They get into the car.*)

HELEN. What were we talking about?

ALICE. When?

HELEN. Just now. We were talking about something —

ALICE. You mean in the apartment?

HELEN. No just now. Something to do with birds.

ALICE. That actor. You were trying to remember his name. James?

HELEN. John. Jeremy.

ALICE. Albert.

HELEN. Not Albert. That's not an actor's name.

ALICE. How do you know?

HELEN. I know theatre.

ALICE. Well, I know theatre, too. I'm always going to New York.

HELEN. Turn right at the light and — Right! Right! Turn right!

ALICE. I thought you said left.

HELEN. I said right. Go up here and — Did you see that?

ALICE. What?

HELEN. You didn't see that bird fly by?

ALICE. What bird?

HELEN. A big beige bird flew right in front of the window.

ALICE. What the hell is that man doing?

HELEN. I can't believe you didn't see it.

ALICE. He's pointing, he's running after us!

HELEN. Stop the car. Stop the car.

ALICE. What is he saying?

HELEN. I'm getting out. Oh good Lord!

ALICE. What?

HELEN. My purse! He's got my purse! I must have left it on the car roof!

ALICE. Oh, for heaven's sake. Thank you, sir, thanks so much. Get in.

HELEN. It must have slid off when you made that turn.

ALICE. Right. Now. Which way?

HELEN. That way.

ALICE. Are you sure?

HELEN. What do the directions say?

ALICE. What directions?

HELEN. You had directions, didn't you?

ALICE. I thought you had them.

HELEN. Why would you think that?

ALICE. Because you keep telling me which way to go.

HELEN. Well, I'm pretty sure this is the right way.

ALICE. What were we talking about?

HELEN. I have no idea.

ALICE. Birds, shoes, LONDON!

HELEN. London!

ALICE. In my opinion, London can't hold a candle to Paris.

HELEN. Paris!

ALICE. The food. The museums. I went to the uh — the uh — oh, the big one —

HELEN. (*Incredulous.*) The Louvre?

ALICE. The Louvre! The paintings I just fell in love with were the uh — theeeeee —

HELEN. The El Grecos. The Velázquezeses.

ALICE. No. No the —

HELEN. The Cezannes. The Matissses. The Monctts. The Manctts.

ALICE. Oh, he does the ladies, with the hats you know, sitting in bathtubs.

HELEN. I give up.

ALICE. Where are we?

HELEN. Uh — the sign says "Nepenthe."

ALICE. I've never heard of it.

HELEN. We're certainly nowhere near the theatre district.

ALICE. What's the name of the play again?

HELEN. What play?

ALICE. The one we're seeing.

HELEN. I haven't a clue.

ALICE. God, it's dark here.

HELEN. It's spooky. Is it going to rain suddenly?

ALICE. I can barely see.

HELEN. Look out!

ALICE. Hold on!