

(He runs out. LOUISE, a waitress at the club, now hurries in from the kitchen. She's a knockout — 23, leggy, good-natured, and a little dizzy. She's in her own world which is very innocent and wonderful to visit.)

LOUISE. Justin?...Justin?!

(to the audience)

Golf is easy. The first thing you do is buy clothes that don't match.

(She hurries out. As she goes, DICKIE BELL and HENRY BINGHAM enter from opposite sides. They are the Executive Directors of rival country clubs, both in their mid 40s. They glare at each other, then turn to the audience.)

DICKIE. I'm not saying my golf game is bad but if I grew tomatoes, they'd come up sliced.

BINGHAM. Golf spelled backwards is flog. Think about it.

(As they go, PAMELA, 39, beautiful, tanned, and very sophisticated, walks through on her way to a board meeting. To the audience.)

PAMELA. Golf and sex are the only things you can enjoy without being good at them.

JUSTIN. *(off)* Louise?

(PAMELA turns and hears JUSTIN and smiles.)

PAMELA. *(to the audience)* And so we begin.

(This signals the beginning of the play proper, and the lights change. As PAMELA disappears, JUSTIN hurries into the room looking for LOUISE.)

Louise, guess what?! I have surprise for y -...

Louise?...Louise?!

LOUISE. *(off)* Justin?

(Simultaneously, as JUSTIN goes out through the door to the left of the bar, LOUISE comes in through the door to the right of the bar.)

Justin, I -...Justin?

JUSTIN. *(off)* Louise, I've got to talk to you! Our entire lives are at stake!

(She goes off through the door to the right as he comes in through the door to the left.)

Louise?

LOUISE. *(off)* Justin?!

(And he heads off through the door to the right, as she comes on through the door to the left.)

JUSTIN. *(off)* Louise?!

LOUISE. Justin, I'm in the Tap Room. I'm standing just in front of the bar near the window!

(JUSTIN enters through the door on the left.)

JUSTIN. There you are.

LOUISE. Justin! What are you doing here? And look at you, you're all dressed up. What is it?! What's going on?!

JUSTIN. Don't I get a kiss first?

LOUISE. Oh, sorry.

(She puts her hand on the back of his neck and gives him what looks like the best kiss of the century. It's totally unselfconscious and enormously sexy. She releases him as matter-of-factly as she kissed him and he reels backwards.)

So what's up?

JUSTIN. I'm-I'm-I have a surprise for you.

LOUISE. I love surprises.

JUSTIN. I know you do. Well, the first thing is...I-I work here.

LOUISE. Where?

JUSTIN. Here at Quail Valley. Isn't it great?! I work for Mr. Bingham. I'm his new assistant. So now we can see each other all the time!

LOUISE. The Mr. Bingham? As in the head of the club?

JUSTIN. Yeah. Isn't it something?

LOUISE. Justin, that's fantastic! When did you start?

JUSTIN. About five minutes ago. And I haven't even been fired yet!

LOUISE. That is so great! But how did you get the job?

JUSTIN. Well, a few days ago I-I stopped by the club to say hi, and I saw Mr. Bingham chasing some man across the ninth green, trying to hit him with a 7-iron. He was shouting "You incompetent bungler!" – so just to be funny I said, "You should use a pitching wedge so when you hit him you'll get more loft," and he turned to me and said, "Would you like a job, because any moment now there'll be an opening," and so he gave me an interview!

LOUISE. Oh, wow. Then it must have gone well.

JUSTIN. It went like a dream! I-I told him how much I love golf and I think that impressed him. I mean not that I'm allowed to play here, as an employee.

LOUISE. Did you tell him your scores?

JUSTIN. Yeah. He said what did you shoot the last time you played and I told him the truth – it was a hundred and thirty-six – and he laughed so hard that he spit up his coffee. So at least I put him in a good mood.

LOUISE. Well, I think you play very well.

JUSTIN. Thanks. *You* played for a while.

LOUISE. Not as well as you. I'm not *that* good.

JUSTIN. Aw. Anyway, he told me all about the job and said I'd have to work really hard.

LOUISE. I'm not surprised. He's tough as nails. Somebody told me he eats barbed wire for breakfast, but I said that's not possible, it's not on the menu. I also think he's unhappy in his personal life.

JUSTIN. Is he married?

LOUISE. Yeah. He calls her Lady Voldemort, She of Darkness. But you know this is tournament weekend, so if he hired you now he really must have confidence in you.

JUSTIN. Tournament weekend?

LOUISE. Yeah. Every year we play Crouching Squirrel Country Club for the Inter-Club Championship. It's a really big deal. Sort of like Troy versus Greece in the 8th century B.C.

JUSTIN. Night school?

LOUISE. We're studying the Homeric epic. I'm reading *The Iliad*. Our teacher asked us what *we* we thought it would be, studying Homer, and I said maybe picking up old blind Greek men. But he said we should compare the story to our everyday lives and this tournament has turned out to be like perfect!

"O hear thou Gods of the game of sticks
And little dimpled balls,
For thou hast pitted Crouching Squirrel
Against Quail Valley
And the greens this day are tricky!"

That's part of my term paper, I'm writing a sort of ode to golf. And Quail Valley is just like Troy cause we always lose.

JUSTIN. Always?

LOUISE. For the past five years. And Mr. Bingham gets really upset about it. Between you and me, I think he puts money on it. Muchacho dolores.

JUSTIN. Listen, I haven't even told you the *big* surprise yet.

LOUISE. You haven't?

JUSTIN. See, now that I have a full-time job, I have a salary, right? And-and you have a salary. So you see what that means?

LOUISE. ... Two salaries?

JUSTIN. Right... and with two salaries, I guess we can afford to...

(He takes a ring box out of his pocket and opens it. Then he gets on one knee. Her jaw drops.)

Louise Margaret Heindbedder, will you marry me?