

LINT! THE MUSICAL

A MUSICAL IN TWO ACTS

By William Arnold and Scott Auden

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LINT! THE MUSICAL
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 FEMALES, 4 MALES, FLEXIBLE)

PHOEBE (f).....Meta-theatrical protagonist with a fragile psyche and a discreet fetish for major appliances. *(219 lines)*

GARY (m)Pathetic cuckold with a despicable way of earning a living and the life skills of a dislodged barnacle . . . but loveable. *(98 lines)*

THREE MUSES

FAB (f).....See Biz. *(32 lines)*

BIZ (f)See Cheer. *(38 lines)*

CHEER (f).....Psychic manifestations of Phoebe's former theatrical indiscretions, quasi-mythological backup singers of destiny or detergents. You decide. *(48 lines)*

JILL (f).....Community college bimbo with a junior-miss beauty pageant past and many layers of cheerful, protective idiocy. An aspiring professional spokesmodel. *(111 lines)*

JACK (m).....Long-term adolescent in desperate need of feminine support in the romantic, sexual, Freudian, Oedipal and platonic senses, respectively. *(93 lines)*

LINT! THE MUSICAL

HEINRICH VON BADDIE (m).....A villainous Teutonic landlord who longs to tie Phoebe up and leave her on some railroad tracks. Or is he . . . ?
(54 lines)

UNCLE HARVEY (m).....Effectively omnipotent and completely two-dimensional. Uncle Harvey is the Deus for our Machina. (26 lines)

SETTING

The interior of a laundromat.

TIME: The present.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The logo for *Lint! The Musical* was originally developed by Peter Riley, Art Attack of New Britain, Connecticut.

Lint! The Musical was originally produced by the Hole in the Wall Theatre (www.hitw.org) in New Britain, Connecticut.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

SONG #1	OVERTURUS INTERRUPTUS	Instrumental
SONG #2	SANE	Phoebe
SONG #3	THE RULES	Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #4	IT ALL COMES OUT IN THE WASH	Jack, Gary, Jill
SONG #5	VILLAIN SONG	Heinrich
SONG #6	POPCORN	Gary, Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #7	ANSON WILLIAMS	Jill, Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #8	I'M IN LOVE WITH MY HAND	Jack, Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #9	BITCH	Phoebe, Jill, Biz, Fab, Cheer

ACT TWO

SONG #10	SONG OF REQUISITE SELF-EXAMINATION	Phoebe
SONG #11	LINT	Phoebe, Jack, Gary, Jill, Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #12	IOWA INFOMERCIAL INSTITUTE ...	Jill, Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #13	SPIN CYCLE	Phoebe, Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #14	SAFE IN MY LAUNDROMAT	Phoebe, Jack, Gary, Jill, Biz, Fab, Cheer
SONG #15	THE BALLAD OF EVIL KITTY	Heinrich
SONG #16	BIG HAIR, BROKEN HEART	All
SONG #17	A MUSICAL MIRACLE (DEUS EX MACHINA)	All

ACT ONE

**SONG #1: OVERTURUS INTERRUPTUS
(INSTRUMENTAL)**

AT RISE:

As the overture finishes, the lights come up on the interior of a laundromat. In the laundromat are GARY, who is doing his laundry, and PHOEBE, who is behind the counter. During the pre-recorded house announcements, PHOEBE notices the audience and reacts with terror, screaming at the top of her lungs, and diving behind the counter. GARY can neither hear the house announcements nor see the audience, but he is paralyzed with shock at PHOEBE's screams. GARY is not the heroic type.

When the announcements have finished, PHOEBE gathers her courage and confronts the audience.

PHOEBE: None of this is real. None of this is real, so you can just stop looking at me. *(She tries to busy herself around the laundromat, pointedly ignoring the audience.)* Stop looking at me. You are nonexistent and therefore you must stop looking at me.

FAB: *(Offstage.)* That's bad logic.

BIZ: *(Offstage.)* Which is fine with us.

CHEER: *(Offstage, singing.)* After all, this is a . . .

FAB, BIZ & CHEER: *(Offstage, singing.)* . . . musical.

PHOEBE: *(To GARY.)* Did you hear that?

GARY: Hear what?

PHOEBE: Of course you didn't. Because *they* don't exist any more than they *(Indicating audience.)* do. *(To audience.)* Dr. Fishbein said you don't exist, and I pay him.

FAB, BIZ & CHEER: *(Offstage.)* Why don't you tell them all about it?

PHOEBE: Why don't I tell them all about it? Because they don't exist, that's why. Sane people do not have to explain themselves to non-existent people.

Music starts. PHOEBE begins to sing without realizing it.

**SONG #2: SANE
(PHOEBE)**

PHOEBE:

WHEN YOU'RE SANE,
YOU'RE UNDER CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS,
NOT TO CARRY ON LIKE A LOON;
NOT TO BE NAPOLEON AT WATERLOO,
AND NOT TO SING A SONG TO EMPTY ROOMS . . .

PHOEBE realizes she is singing.

PHOEBE: Hey! Stop it! Stop the music. No way I'm singing for anybody.

GARY: Okay. You don't have to sing if you don't want to.

FAB: (*Offstage.*) Oh yes, you do.

PHOEBE: No, I don't.

GARY: Right. That's the spirit.

BIZ: (*Offstage.*) But you know you're just bursting to tell them about it.

CHEER: (*Offstage.*) It's your story.

FAB: (*Offstage.*) It's *the* story.

PHOEBE: Maybe I do want to talk about it.

GARY: Okay. I'm listening.

PHOEBE: Sane people explain things.

GARY: Sometimes.

PHOEBE: Doesn't prove a thing. And I'm explaining to him.

GARY: To who?

PHOEBE: To you. Not them.

CHEER: (*Offstage.*) Who?

PHOEBE: YOU! Not to *them*.

GARY: Right.

PHOEBE: And I'm not singing.

FAB: (*Offstage.*) Sooner or later you have to sing.

CHEER: (*Offstage.*) Everybody has to sing.

PHOEBE: (*Indicating audience.*) They don't.

FAB: (*Offstage.*) Not 'til they're on their way home.

BIZ: (*Offstage.*) Then they're expected to hum and whistle.

PHOEBE: I'll give you a hum and a . . .

GARY: You'll give me a what?

CHEER: (*Offstage.*) Phoebe? Listen, honey. It's too late. This time we've got you. You're on stage and there's no getting off 'til it's done. (*Singing.*) You are in a . . .

PHOEBE: *Don't you say that word.*

GARY: What word? Hummer?

FAB, BIZ & CHEER: *(Offstage, singing.)* Musical!

PHOEBE: And I can get off any time I want to!

GARY: I'm sure.

PHOEBE: If only I'd listened to Nancy Reagan. I was young. I was stupid. We did anything in those days. We thought it would be fun. And I guess it was, at first. We did nitrous whippets while we were watching The Pajama Game. Then mushrooms and Carousel. I got sick during South Pacific. I suppose that should have been a warning sign, but God, who hasn't gotten sick during South Pacific? I wanted to keep going. I needed to push it. We dropped acid and watched Brigadoon. My God . . . The plaid . . . And finally, I'll never know why, we put on a video of Cats. We had it looped, y'know? So it played over and over. We thought we were so cool. Something snapped, I guess. No big surprise. It starts small. Humming your shopping list at the supermarket. Normal enough until the tuna starts harmonizing. But it gets worse. The day I saw the dream ballet at the DMV, I decided I needed professional help. Dr. Fishbein suggested this job running the laundromat. He said, who ever heard of a musical in a laundromat?

FAB: *(Offstage.)* Oh, Phoebe. That won't work. Musicals don't have to make sense.

BIZ: *(Offstage.)* You're thinking of art.

CHEER: *(Offstage.)* This is something else entirely.

PHOEBE: But don't you see? It *is* working. It's been ten minutes and no stupid song. Pretty soon the audience is going to get bored and start to leave. I may be delusional, but this is no musical, because if it was, there'd be a song right now.

FAB, BIZ & CHEER rise out of washers in sparkly, back-up singer evening gowns.

SONG #3: THE RULES

(BIZ, FAB, CHEER)

CHEER:

WHEN YOU'RE IN A MUSICAL,
THERE ARE CERTAIN RULES YOU MUST OBEY.

BIZ:

OBEY.

LINT! THE MUSICAL

FAB:
OBEY.

THE PEOPLE COME TO HEAR THE SONGS
'CAUSE THEY CAN'T UNDERSTAND A PLAY

BIZ:
A PLAY.

CHEER:
A PLAY.

FAB, BIZ & CHEER:
SO HERE WE ARE
DAY AFTER DAY
WE'LL SING OUR GUTS OUT
FOR THOSE SENIORS AT THE MATINEE.
WHAT ARE THE RULES?
RULES, WHERE ARE THE RULES?
WHO'S GOT THE RULES?
RULES? THESE ARE THE RULES!

FAB has made her way to the "Laundromat Rules" board behind the counter and slides them back to reveal the rules of a musical. They are: 1. Keep the dialogue to a minimum. 2. Principal characters are required to fall in love. 3. There must be a villain.

FAB: *(Speaking.)* One: Dialogue should not last more than three minutes. After that time, a song should be put in place. The song is under no obligation to refer to the previous dialogue or action. In fact, the less a song has to do with anything, the better.

BIZ: *(Speaking.)* Two: Principal characters are required to fall in love. Only a union between romantic opposites will resolve other, seemingly unrelated plot complications. If the star-crossed lovers are not able to achieve a union by the finale, they are required to die tragically in the last scene.

CHEER: *(Speaking.)* Three: There has to be a villain. According to a contract put in place between Actor's Equity and Satan, the Prince of Darkness, evil must have adequate representation in any drama. And technically, musicals count!

FAB slides the rules board back to its original position.

FAB BIZ & CHEER:
WHAT ARE THE RULES?
RULES, WHERE ARE THE RULES?

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WHO'S GOT THE RULES?
RULES? THESE ARE THE RULES!

PHOEBE: (To GARY.) Tell me you can see them.

GARY: Them who?

PHOEBE: But you heard the song, right?

GARY: Was it before or after we were talking about rules in Broadway musicals?

FAB: (To light booth.) Can I have a light shift, please?

Lights shift, leaving GARY frozen in relative darkness.

FAB: Thanks.

PHOEBE: (To the THREE MUSES.) Who are you people?

CHEER: (Singing.) She's Biz.

BIZ: (Singing.) She's Fab.

FAB: (Singing.) She's Cheer.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER: Biz, Fab and Cheer.

FAB: We're kinda like muses, except we don't inspire writers, we inspire characters.

BIZ: Well, force.

CHEER: Right. Force characters.

PHOEBE: Characters on a stage do not need to be forced.

BIZ: Are you kidding? Have you ever worked in theater?

CHEER: Now she's gonna tell us our jobs.

FAB: Sister, do you really think Oedipus would have seen it through to the end without somebody forcing him?

BIZ: And all *he* had to do was gouge his own eyes out and sleep with his mother. Think of what it takes to get somebody through a production of Godspell.

PHOEBE: This is ridiculous and insane.

CHEER: Yes! It's a musical!

PHOEBE: Alright. I give up. My whole life's in the shitter anyway, so why not be in a musical? I'll cooperate. Just tell me what I have to do to make this . . . to make them (Indicating audience.) . . . to make *you* go away.

FAB: Just finish the show.

BIZ: Get to the applause at the end.

CHEER: Not just intermission.

BIZ: The end.

FAB: After the applause comes the blackout.

PHOEBE: I think there's a good chance I'll black out before then.

FAB: (*Indicating the lights.*) No, then there'll BE a blackout. The lights. And THEN, you're done.

CHEER: Unless you want to curtsy.

FAB: (*To CHEER.*) "Bow." More P.C.

CHEER: (*Rolling eyes.*) Unless you want to BOW.

PHOEBE: And I never have to do it again?

BIZ: Was Rum Tum Tugger ever in anything but Cats?

PHOEBE: I'll bet you tried.

FAB: You're right, we did. Litter Box: The Musical. But there were artistic differences . . . We can't make you any promises. But you'll absolutely be done with *this* musical.

PHOEBE: All right. Tell me what I have to do.

FAB: Simple. You need to resolve all the romances.

BIZ: Find the Hero.

CHEER: Who helps you defeat the villain.

PHOEBE: All the romances, find the hero . . . and what villain?

FAB: The villain will be along any time now. There's no mistaking him. He's very . . . villainous.

PHOEBE: And the romances? Plural?

BIZ: In a musical, everybody gets some.

PHOEBE: Are you kidding? I'm spending my weekend in a laundromat. I'm not going to get any.

CHEER: Romance.

PHOEBE: Oh.

CHEER: Everybody gets some romance.

PHOEBE: Got it. But what everybody? There's me and there's . . . *him.* (*Indicating GARY.*)

FAB: Actually, you're right. This place is pretty empty.

BIZ: Even for a Saturday night.

CHEER: Even for a laundromat run by a crazy lady.

FAB: There should be another couple here by now.

CHEER: Well, you've got time stopped.

FAB: Oh, right.

FAB snaps her fingers, and GARY is lit again and unfrozen.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER: Break a leg.

PHOEBE: Break both.

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BIZ, FAB and CHEER exit. JACK & JILL enter, with JACK carrying all the laundry he can handle, and JILL carrying a book, Shakespeare for Dummies. JILL enters first and doesn't notice JACK'S struggle with the laundry or the door. As JILL crosses past PHOEBE, PHOEBE goes to the dryers to talk to the MUSES.

PHOEBE: Hey. Do I have to be in every scene?

JACK: *(As he passes PHOEBE.)* Um . . . no.

CHEER: *(Offstage.)* Yes, otherwise you could miss valuable exposition.

PHOEBE: "Valuable exposition" - - that's an oxymoron.

GARY: That hurts.

PHOEBE: *(To GARY.)* No, I was . . . *(To MUSES.)* Are you kidding? You think these people are strangers to me? I run this place! I know everybody who comes in here. I can read 'em like a book.

GARY: Oh, really?

PHOEBE: Yeah. This guy . . .

GARY: Gary.

PHOEBE: Like it matters. Gary here is either a pathetic widower or a pathetic bachelor. Am I right?

GARY: Pathetic cuckold, actually.

PHOEBE: That IS pathetic. And THIS guy . . . *(Indicating JACK.)*

JACK: Jack.

PHOEBE: Jack here has got his nuts in a bunch for . . . *(Indicating JILL.)*

JILL: Jill.

PHOEBE: Oh, that's original. Got a bucket?

JACK: Maybe we go together, you know, kinda like *(Singing.)* rama-lama-lama-ka-dinga . . .

PHOEBE: Hey! Knock that off! This is a Grease-free laundry zone, mister! Anyway, Jack here has got his nuts in a bunch for Jill, so he's pretending to help her with her laundry so he can see her panties without earning it.

JILL: Jack's here to help me with my Shakespeare.

PHOEBE: Oh, really?

PHOEBE goes to JILL'S laundry bag and pulls out a pair of panties. She dangles them in front of JACK and his mouth drops open. He is hypnotized. PHOEBE leads him around the room once, then puts them back in the bag. JACK recovers when she puts them away.

JACK: What happened?

GARY: (*Indicating corner of mouth.*) Here. Got a little bit of drool . . .

JACK: Oh. (*Wipes corner of mouth.*) Thanks.

PHOEBE: It'll all work out . . . It HAS to.

JACK: (*Laughing.*) So you're saying that it all comes out in the wash?

FAB, BIZ & CHEER: (*Offstage.*) Song title!

PHOEBE: No! That's so lame! No singing in the - -

**SONG #4: IT ALL COMES OUT IN THE WASH
(JACK, GARY, JILL)**

JACK:

HERE I AM ON A SATURDAY NIGHT,
SEPARATING COLORS FROM THE WHITES.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING HERE.
I'M IN COLLEGE, I SHOULD BE DRINKING BEER.

I STUDIED REAL HARD ALL WEEK.
I WENT TO EV'RY CLASS.
BUT I'VE RUN OUT OF CLOTHES TO WEAR,
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS!

I'M NO DAMN GOOD AT MEETING GIRLS,
BUT WITHOUT ONE I GET LOST
I'LL KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE,
IT ALL COMES OUT IN THE WASH.
OH, YEAH.

GARY:

HERE I AM ON A SATURDAY NIGHT
IN A WEEK OF LOWS, THIS IS THE HEIGHT.
LIFE IS DULL WHEN YOU'RE SINGLE IN THIS TOWN,
SO I THOUGHT I'D GO
WHERE THERE'S PEOPLE AROUND.

I'M LEARNING HOW TO DO THIS ALL.
I'M LEARNING HOW TO COPE.
I'LL WIPE OUT TROUBLE ALONG WITH STAINS
AND I'LL USE A LOT OF SOAP.

MISSING SOCKS ARE A METAPHOR
FOR ALL THE THINGS YOU'VE LOST.
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A
PERFECT MATCH.
IT ALL COMES OUT IN THE WASH.
OH, YEAH.

During the musical breakdown, BIZ, FAB, and CHEER appear and blow bubbles.

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JILL:

HERE I AM ON A SATURDAY NIGHT,
DOING LAUNDRY
TO AVOID A ROOMMATE FIGHT.
OH, SHE IS PISSED ABOUT THE TELEPHONE BILL,
SO I'M HERE WITH SOME TIME TO KILL.

I COULD HAVE DONE THIS AT THE DORM,
BUT SHE'D PROBABLY BE THERE,
SO I'M HERE WITH MY FRIEND JACK.
HE FOLLOWS ME EV'RYWHERE.

YOU JUST HAVE TO DROP SOME QUARTERS IN.
THERE ISN'T TOO MUCH COST
TO CLEAN UP EACH AND EV'RY SIN.
IT ALL COMES OUT IN THE WASH.
OH, YEAH!

PHOEBE: How many songs is that?

BIZ & CHEER: *(Offstage.)* Two.

PHOEBE: How many do I need?

FAB: *(Offstage.)* More than two.

PHOEBE: Shit.

JILL: She's a weirdo.

PHOEBE: I'm a weirdo, huh? Well, at least I'm a protagonist.

JILL: I don't care what religion you are.

Enter HEINRICH.

HEINRICH: Knocken, knocken - - it is I, your favorite employer,
Heinrich Von Baddie! And you are my best employee, Phoebe. I
have come to speak mit you.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER: *(Offstage.)* The Villain.

PHOEBE: What can I do for you, Heinie?

JILL: Did she just ask what she could do for his heinie?

JACK: No, Jill.

HEINRICH: Phoebe, come. We must speak. It may surprise you to
learn that the coin-operated laundry industry does not always draw
the best specimens for employment. Even with the most rigorous
training, only a few persist and prosper. You are that few.

PHOEBE: Heinie . . .

HEINRICH: Heinrich!

PHOEBE: Heinrich, this is a little surreal for me right now. Maybe we
could get together for bratwurst next week or something.

HEINRICH: Phoebe, you are my best employee, und as such I have a proposition for you.

PHOEBE: (*Interested.*) I'm all ears.

HEINRICH: (*Laughing.*) Ach, you are a potato, ha! (*To himself.*) No, no, dat is all eyes . . .

PHOEBE: Look, Heinie, you got a proposition for me or what?

HEINRICH: Ah. Excuse me. (*HEINRICH consults a pocket German/English dictionary.*) Ah! I mistake. Phoebe, you are my best employee, und I am propositioning you.

PHOEBE: What?

HEINRICH: I say wrong.

GARY: No, that's right.

HEINRICH: Danke. Mate mit me Phoebe, und we shall spawn beautiful blue-eyed laundry gods mit cleaning fluid in their veins.

PHOEBE: Um . . . no.

HEINRICH: Say ja, Phoebe. Do not force me to be stringent mit you.

PHOEBE: You'd love it.

HEINRICH: Untrue, Phoebe. It is not conflict, but submission which delights me. But since you have chosen to be so contrary, I must ask you: have you often used the cot und small shower in the back room?

PHOEBE: If you've got me up on the Internet, Heinrich, I swear to God . . .

HEINRICH: Nein. I will not share you so crudely. I mention the cot und shower to recall to you that the rent is due today.

PHOEBE: What rent? There's no rent.

HEINRICH: Ah, but there is.

PHOEBE: I've never paid any rent before today.

HEINRICH: A regrettable circumstance which has only recently come to my attention. I will therefore also collect the back rent. All is detailed in the lease.

PHOEBE: You hired me. I didn't sign any lease.

HEINRICH: Ah, but you did. It is here, immediately below the paragraph entitled, "I wish to have my paycheck direct deposited." Also, a copy was sent to you. It was notarized und clearly marked, "You may have won a million dollars."

PHOEBE: You know what? I quit.

HEINRICH: Ah. Unfortunately your contract forbids your resignation while your accounts are in your rear.

PHOEBE: . . . while my accounts are in my rear?

JILL: I think I'd be putting a palm print on his cheek about now, girl.

HEINRICH: Ah, no. Excuse me. (*HEINRICH consults a pocket German/English dictionary.*) Ah! Unfortunately, your contract forbids your resignation while your accounts are in AR-REARS.

PHOEBE: Contract? What contract?

HEINRICH: Ja. Part 172-f in the ninety-page booklet entitled "Safety in the Workplace." You initialed it.

PHOEBE: Fine. What do I owe you?

HEINRICH: Ah. Two hundred und thirty dollars a day . . . seven months . . . forty-eight thousand, three hundred dollars.

PHOEBE: And if I can't pay it?

HEINRICH: Then, according to the document signed by you entitled, "If I Don't Pay You I Must Be Your Wife und Bear Your Creepy Little Babies," we will be married!

PHOEBE: Where'd you come up with that idea?

HEINRICH: It's fairly new . . . I call it "The Heinrich Maneuver."

PHOEBE: Great! You just crack yourself up, don't you?

HEINRICH: Ja, ja, in my homeland, I am considered greatest of commodians . . . ehh, sorry, I misspeak . . . comedians.

PHOEBE: No, I think you had it right the first time.

HEINRICH: Enough! Phoebe, dahrlink, you must pay the rent.

PHOEBE: I can't pay the rent.

HEINRICH: You must pay the rent.

JACK, JILL & GARY: But she CAN'T pay the rent!

HEINRICH: *You must pay the rent!*

Hearing music, PHOEBE puts hands to ears.

PHOEBE: No, no! Can't you all see? It's just a set up for - -

SONG #5: VILLAIN SONG (HEINRICH)

HEINRICH:

THEY LOVE ME 'CAUSE I'M NASTY.
I'M BAD AS I CAN BE.
I'M MEAN, OBSCENE AND (*Burp.*) GASSY,
BUT THEY ALL STILL LOVE ME.

AND IF YOU WONDER HOW BAD CAN I GET?
LET ME TELL YOU,
YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET!
I'M HEINRICH VON BADDIE,
THE ONE YOU LOVE TO HATE.

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WHEN I WAS A LITTLE BABY,
MY MOMMY LOVED ME SO,
BUT ALL THE THINGS SHE GAVE ME
DIDN'T HELP WHEN SHE HAD TO GO.

ONE YEAR ON EASTER,
SHE WAS LATE ON HER RENT.
I KICKED HER OUT AND
GAVE HER UP FOR LENT.
I'M HEINRICH VON BADDIE,
THE ONE YOU LOVE TO HATE.

(Spoken.) You vill play big finish now!

SO WHEN THEY ASK WHO'S YOUR DADDY,
IT'S HEINRICH VON BADDIE,
(Goose-stepping to exit.) THE ONE YOU LOVE TO HATE.
BOY, AM I BAD!

HEINRICH: *(Grandiosely.)* I shall return! *(Heads to exit then stops and turns. Informationally.)* Near the end of the second act.
(Exits whistling his theme song.)

JILL: Who was that guy?

JACK: Her boss.

PHOEBE: The villain.

JACK: Like I said.

JILL: Do you have forty-eight thousand dollars?

PHOEBE: Well, I get paid every two weeks and I don't get paid again until Thursday. I make a little bit more than minimum wage, so let me do the math . . . NO! You cretin! Of course I don't have forty-eight thousand dollars!

GARY: So what are you going to do?

PHOEBE: He can refuse to accept my resignation, but he can't keep me from walking out. Auf wiedersehen!

PHOEBE walks out the door and offstage and then immediately re-enters. She looks freaked-out for a beat. Then PHOEBE repeats the whole thing.

JACK: What are you doing?

PHOEBE: There is no way out!!

GARY: *(Consoling.)* Things always look bleakest when - -

PHOEBE: No, you idiot. I mean I HAVE NO EXIT! Listen, when Heinrich was here, did you guys hear that song?

JACK: Hell, yes. Always the same old song and dance. You owe me rent, you can't live here for free, this is a storage unit. Yada yada yada.

PHOEBE: But did you hear Heinrich actually singing?

GARY: When?

PHOEBE: Just now. *(Singing.)* I'm Heinrich von Baddie . . .

JACK: Hey, that's pretty good.

JILL: You sounded just like him.

GARY: I love impressions.

JILL: Do Elmer Fudd! He kills me! Do you know the "kill the wabbit" thing?

PHOEBE: Okay, all three of you. Look that way. *(She points toward the audience.)* What do you see?

JILL: The rain stopped?

GARY: That's a very encouraging image, Phoebe. It can't rain forever.

PHOEBE: No. Not forever. But it can rain until you're dead and the rain is going pitter-pat on your bloated corpse and CAN'T YOU SEE THOSE PEOPLE OUT THERE?!

JACK: The babes by the car?

GARY: *(To JACK.)* Is that a Lexus?

JACK: *(To Gary.)* I think so. What in God's name are we doing in here?

PHOEBE: No, no, wait a sec. *(To audience.)* Um, indulge me here a sec, will ya? Applaud for me. Right now. Please? *(Audience applauds. All react to the sound.)* Ah ha, ah HA! You heard it. You HEARD it! What do you think of THAT?!

JACK: Um, I think the storm's coming back.

JILL: They say if you count by thousands after you hear the thunder then when you see the lightning - -

PHOEBE: *(Exasperated.)* THUNDER?! Okay, look.

JILL: Where?

PHOEBE: Here. Ahh! Stop it!!! Listen to me. READ. MY. LIPS. You are just characters on a stage.

JILL: *(Very excited and pleased with herself, raises her hand as if to a class question.)* Oh, I know, I know! All the world's a stage! All the world's a stage!

PHOEBE: Right. Good. Only do you remember talking about metaphors in school?

JILL: Right, homilies and metaphors. That was confusing.

PHOEBE: Sure it was. And do you know why? Because in your case “all the world’s a stage” isn’t a metaphor. It’s true. You’re just a character on a stage. You’re not real.

JILL: (*Distraught.*) I’m not real?

JACK: Oh, come on. I’m not buying this. She’s as real as any of us.

PHOEBE: Nope. And what’s more, your existence in this presentation is strictly as the other half of a love interest, meaning that your only chance for continued existence is to go with Jack here and give yourself to him completely.

JACK: (*Beat. Then sold and VERY understanding.*) Do you understand, Jill? You’re not real. We’re sorry it has to be this way.

PHOEBE: So. Why don’t we let you two get better acquainted, and I’ll just get to know Gary a little better. Maybe you two can have a nice dream ballet or something.

Jack and Jill return to their laundry. The lights shift and they begin a slow dream ballet of doing laundry. They continue this throughout the scene giving counterpoint to GARY’s song. GARY produces a guitar and strums in time with the music.

PHOEBE: A guitar. In a laundromat. Why not? So, Gary. Why don’t you tell me about yourself?

**SONG #6: POPCORN
(GARY, BIZ, FAB, CHEER)**

GARY:

I CAME HOME FROM WORK ONE EVENING;
HER BAGS WERE SITTIN’ BY THE DOOR.
I ASKED MY WIFE
WHAT WAS THE MATTER?
WHAT WERE ALL THE SUITCASES FOR?

SHE SAID IN CASE WE GO ON VACATION
SHE’D BE ALL PACKED AND SET TO GO.
AND I BELIEVED HER EXPLANATION.
HOW WAS I TO KNOW?

BIZ, FAB & CHEER enter and accompany with harmonies.

I WENT UPSTAIRS TO THE BEDROOM.
THE LIGHTS WERE OUT,
THERE WAS NO POWER.
THERE WERE CANDLES EV’RYWHERE
AND A STRANGE MAN IN OUR SHOWER.

LINT! THE MUSICAL

SHE SAID HE'S JUST OUR 'LECTRICIAN
I ASKED HER WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
SHE SAID HE'D WORKED UP SUCH A SWEAT,
HE HAD TO GET CLEAN.

WE HAD OURSELVES A ROMANTIC DINNER:
SPAGHETTIOS FROM A CAN,
JUST ME AND MY BEAUTIFUL WIFE
AND THIS OTHER GUY NAMED STAN.

AFTER DINNER WE WATCHED A MOVIE,
THE SCARLET LETTER WAS ON TV.
MY WIFE SAID SHE LIKED
HESTER PRYNNE.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:
(WHAT A SLUT)

GARY:
I DIDN'T THINK WHAT
IT MEANT TO ME.

SHE AND STAN GOT UP TO
MAKE POPCORN
SO WE COULD HAVE OURSELVES A SNACK.
I WAITED THERE FOR
THREE MORE HOURS,

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:
(WHAT A SCHMUCK)

GARY:
BUT SHE NEVER DID COME BACK.

SIX MONTHS LATER I GOT A LETTER
SHE AND STAN HAD IT HARD.
THEY HAD BEEN ALL OVER EUROPE
BUT HAD MAXED OUT MY GOLD CARD.

SO I REHEATED THAT POPCORN,
A THING YOU'RE NEVER S'POSED TO DO.
IT TURNED ALL BLACK
AND TASTED LOUSY.
I SUSPECTED I'D BEEN SCREWED.

UP TO THAT POINT I'D BEEN HOPING
THAT SHE'D WALK THROUGH
THAT KITCHEN DOOR.
MAYBE I'VE BECOME A LITTLE BITTER,
BUT AT LEAST I'M NOT A WHORE.

When the song is over, the dream ballet ends. JACK and JILL put their heads together and earnestly and quietly talk to each other. GARY returns guitar to hiding place.

PHOEBE: So Gary, may I take it from that pathetic little ballad that you're currently single?

GARY: Well, at the moment, but . . .

PHOEBE: Yeah, I'm sure they're lining up for you, Gary, but the thing is . . . I need you.

GARY: You need *me*?

PHOEBE: You're not gay, are you?

GARY: I don't think so.

PHOEBE: Good. Because I need you.

GARY: What for?

PHOEBE: I need a hero, Gary. I need you be my hero and to save me from Heinrich.

GARY: Whoa. I haven't got forty-eight thousand dollars. I've got maybe a buck seventy-five, which I was saving for a slice of - -

PHOEBE: Gary. You don't need it. You just have to love me.

GARY: Love you? You mean like . . . *(She lays down flat on her back, arms outstretched. He gulps.)* . . . in the biblical sense, I guess.

PHOEBE: So hurry up.

GARY: Hurry up?

PHOEBE: *(Sitting back up.)* Yeah, it shouldn't be too tough for you. *(Lying back down. Pause. Sits back up.)* Hurry up! What's the matter with you? Don't you want to be the hero?

GARY: Actually, I've always seen myself as kind of a sidekick. Kind of a supporting role.

PHOEBE: In your own life?

GARY: Why set yourself up for disappointment?

PHOEBE: *(Upward, presumably to FAB, BIZ & CHEER.)* Okay, he's not even trying.

FAB: *(Offstage.)* You're rushing things, Phoebe.

BIZ: *(Offstage.)* Besides, you need to get all four of you together.

PHOEBE: There's no way I'm in for any of that group stuff!

CHEER: *(Offstage.)* We're not talking about that! This is a musical, not a porno.

JILL: I'm sorry, Jack, I just don't handle disappointment well. I've been betrayed before.

JACK: Trust me.

PHOEBE: Oh, that'll work.

JACK: What? What'd I say?

PHOEBE: "Trust me?" Please! What girl on the planet hasn't heard *that* from a guy before? I'm sorry, Jack, you're probably a nice guy, and Jill, honey, I'm sure whoever this guy was who betrayed you was nothing like Jack.

JILL: Oh, he wasn't. He was gorgeous. He was perfect.

JACK: Hey!

GARY: Were you two together long?

JILL: No. I only met him once. That day changed my life.

**SONG #7: ANSON WILLIAMS
(JILL, BIZ, FAB, CHEER)**

JILL:

ONE DAY WHEN I WAS FIVE YEARS OLD
MY MOTHER TOOK ME DOWNTOWN
TO THIS NEW GROC'RY STORE (AND)
THERE WERE PEOPLE STANDING AROUND.

THE MAYOR SAID, "HERE'S SOMEONE
I THINK THAT YOU WILL ALL KNOW.
HE'S GOING TO CUT THE RIBBON,
AND MAYBE YOU'VE HEARD OF HIS SHOW."

I JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES.
THE GREATEST VOICE I'D EVER HEARD
THERE HE STOOD BEFORE US ALL,
I NEVER BELIEVED HE WAS A NERD.

JILL slides open "rules" board behind counter to reveal large photo of Anson Williams.

THE DAY I MET ANSON WILLIAMS,
MY FAVORITE FROM "HAPPY DAYS,"
HE PLAYED POTSIE WEBER
DURING THAT FIFTIES CRAZE.

BIZ, FAB AND CHEER:

LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

JILL:

I WALKED RIGHT UP TO HIM
AND ASKED HIM FOR AN AUTOGRAPH.
HE PUSHED ME ASIDE
AND THEN I HEARD HIM START TO LAUGH.

LINT! THE MUSICAL

"I'VE GOT TO GET TO MY NEXT
GROC'RY STORE GRAND OPENING.
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS
AND THERE'S NO WAY
THAT I'M GONNA SING."

THAT WAS WHEN I REALIZED
MY WHOLE WORLD FELL APART.
JUST AS HE HAD CUT THAT RIBBON,
HE HAD CUT STRAIGHT THROUGH MY HEART.

THE DAY I MET ANSON WILLIAMS,
MY FAVORITE FROM HAPPY DAYS,
HE PLAYED POTSIE WEBER
DURING THAT FIFTIES CRAZE.

BIZ, FAB AND CHEER:

LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

MY MOTHER HELD ME TIGHT
AND SAID, "MY DEAR, NOW DON'T YOU CRY.
SHOWS GET CANCELLED ALL THE TIME,
CAREERS OF ACTORS GO DRY."

"I'M SURE ONE DAY MR. WILLIAMS
WILL FIND HIMSELF OUT OF WORK.
THEN HE'LL BE SORRY FOR THE TIMES
THAT HE ACTED LIKE A JERK."

I GREW UP A LOT THAT DAY.
MAYBE IT'S JUST AS WELL.
WHEREVER ANSON IS NOW,
I HOPE HIS SOUL BURNS IN HELL.

JILL closes Anson photo.

THE DAY I MET ANSON WILLIAMS,
MY FAVORITE FROM "HAPPY DAYS,"
HE PLAYED POTSIE WEBER
DURING THAT FIFTIES CRAZE.

NOW WHEN I WATCH THAT SHOW IN RERUNS,
ANSON IS JUST A GHOST.
I STILL ENJOY HENRY WINKLER,

JILL produces t-shirt with Donny Most picture from out of laundry.

BUT NOW I LOVE DONNY MOST. (*Kisses t-shirt.*)

PHOEBE: Well, Jill, that was certainly revealing.

JILL: I used to have this therapist . . . Dr. Fishbein.

PHOEBE: Wait, YOU saw Dr. Fishbein too?

JILL: He said I should open up more. It's not something I would usually talk about.

PHOEBE: Sing about.

JILL: It's not something I'd ever sing about.

PHOEBE: Except tonight.

JILL: You want me to sing?

PHOEBE: No. Somebody else should probably go before you go again.

JACK: Go again?

PHOEBE: This is a musical. We're all in a musical.

JACK: I thought it was a play.

PHOEBE: We should be so lucky. Even a Neil Simon is sounding pretty good to me right now. But no. Sorry, the voices in my head told me it's a musical.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER: (*Offstage.*) We're not in your head.

GARY: If this is a musical, where are all the songs?

PHOEBE: Where are all the songs? You just sang one a few minutes ago. As a matter of fact, it kinda went on and on, if you know what I mean.

GARY: You mean when I told you about . . . her?

PHOEBE: Exactly. (*An idea, she excitedly reaches in hiding place for guitar.*) In fact, you even were strumming a . . . (*Pulls out broom.*) . . . BROOM!

He stares at her for a beat.

GARY: That couldn't have been me. I don't play the broom. I don't even know how to tune - -

PHOEBE: It wasn't a broom a second ago, you idiot! It was a - -

GARY: Look, I'm sorry to have burdened you. I don't know what it was. I don't usually talk about it.

PHOEBE & JILL: Sing about it.

GARY: I just felt this overwhelming need to let it all out, to tell the truth about things.

JILL: Do you want the number for Dr. Fishbein?

PHOEBE: Gary, that's just more proof right there. In the real world, men don't have problems lying about stuff. But this is a musical. You had to tell the truth. You can't lie in a song.

GARY: Even if that were true it would only prove something if I usually lie.

PHOEBE: Don't you?

GARY: No!

JILL: So if he were lying about lying, how would we know if he were telling the truth about . . . never mind.

PHOEBE: Gary, how many women have you been with?

GARY: Well, I really don't keep count . . .

PHOEBE: I rest my case. Every guy knows his number.

JACK: I get what you're saying. That's why Jill told us about Anson Williams.

JILL: *Sang* us about. It's true. I'll bet that's why I told you everything with a chorus.

GARY: That's ridiculous. I didn't have a chorus.

PHOEBE: Yeah, I noticed. Why d'ya think the song dragged?

JILL: It was kinda long.

GARY: You couldn't even hear it.

JILL: I mean the - - when you were talking. The . . . whaddayacallit . . .

JACK: Monologue.

JILL: Monologue. The monologue was . . .

PHOEBE: Song.

JILL: Song. The song was kinda long.

PHOEBE: Yes. It was long, wasn't it? You heard it. You know. You believe me.

JILL: I believe you, Phoebe.

PHOEBE: Oh God, thank you.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER: (*Offstage.*) You're welcome!

PHOEBE and JILL embrace.

JILL: Do we have an audience?

JACK: We're watching. But don't worry, baby, we'll be quiet.

PHOEBE: Jerks. She means out there. (*Indicating audience.*)

JILL: In the parking lot?

PHOEBE: No. The parking lot isn't there.

JILL: Then where are the cars?

PHOEBE: You believe me. That's the important thing.

JILL: I believe you. (*Pause.*) Phoebe?

PHOEBE: Yes?

JILL: Why are we in a musical?

PHOEBE: I just don't know.

JACK: Hey, did I sing anything?

JILL: When?

JACK: I don't know.

JILL: Ever?

JACK: No, I know I've sung before, but have I had my own song? In the, you know, in the musical?

PHOEBE: No.

JACK: Why not?

PHOEBE: How should I know? Maybe you have nothing to say.

JACK: I have things to say.

JILL: Maybe you don't, though.

JACK: But . . .

JILL: (*Inspired.*) OR maybe you have things to say, but they DON'T RHYME!

They all stare at her. Then:

GARY: No, she's right. Maybe you don't have anything to say.

JACK: (*To PHOEBE.*) Do I?

PHOEBE: How should I know? Sing something.

JACK: How? I don't know how to sing.

PHOEBE: No, see, your *character* doesn't know how to sing, but that doesn't matter. Any character in a musical can sing. You just have to be important enough.

JACK: What?

PHOEBE: Sure. If you're an important character, you get a song.

JILL: At least one.

PHOEBE: Right.

JACK: What if you don't sing?

PHOEBE: Then you're probably an extra. Window dressing.

JILL: Maybe you're in the chorus.

JACK: I'm not in the chorus.

PHOEBE: So sing something, and we'll all be that much closer to getting out of here. You fall in bed with Jill, I jump popcorn balls, and we're outta here.

JACK: You know what? I'm out of here now. (*To JILL.*) See ya.

JACK attempts to exit the same way PHOEBE did earlier, and is likewise unable to. When GARY sees this, he is intrigued and amused by the experience, exits and re-emerges quite pleased with himself.

PHOEBE: You don't have an exit. (*To JILL.*) Do you want to try?

JILL: No. It gives me the creeps.

GARY: Okay, tell me again why we have to sleep together. Not that I'm complaining, mind you.

PHOEBE: Fall in love.

GARY: Whatever.

PHOEBE: Apparently it's in the rules. I don't know much more about it than you do. All I really know is the only way out is for all of us to fall in love. And because this is a musical, I think we have to do it through songs. So sing, Jack.

JACK: I don't know what to sing about. I certainly don't know how to make someone fall in love with me.

PHOEBE: I think it's kind of automatic. You open your mouth and it spills out.

JILL: What spills out?

PHOEBE: The song. Some part of who you really are inside.

JILL: Gross.

JACK: What if I show you who I really am and . . . and . . .

JILL: Wait! Wait, wait! I get it! Don't you see? It's so beautiful. That's why the songs are so honest and sincere. Because only by baring our souls can we open our hearts. Oh Jack, there's a dignity to truth. Trust that dignity. Trust that no matter what you say, we'll know you are no different than the rest of us. You are a beautiful, unique human being. Trust us. Trust me, Jack. Even if it doesn't rhyme!

**SONG #8: I'M IN LOVE WITH MY HAND
(JACK, BIZ, FAB, CHEER)**

BIZ, FAB, and CHEER emerge to provide backup vocals.

JACK:

BEEN DATELESS FOR THREE WEEKS IN A ROW,
THE PRESSURE'S BUILDING, SOMETHING'S GONNA BLOW.
THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE WHERE I CAN TURN,
I KNOW IN HELL I'M GONNA BURN
BUT WHY DOESN'T ANYBODY UNDERSTAND
THAT I'M IN LOVE WITH MY HAND?
WITH MY HAND.

DID IT CONSTANTLY AS A KID
I THOUGHT I MIGHT GO BLIND FROM WHAT I DID.
MY PARENTS WERE NOT OVERJOYED
WHEN I SHOOK HANDS WITH THE UNEMPLOYED,
BUT WHY DOESN'T ANYBODY UNDERSTAND
THAT I'M IN LOVE WITH MY HAND?
WITH MY HAND.

LINT! THE MUSICAL

EV'RYBODY SAID THAT I WAS SICK
COMING UP WITH THE SHORT END OF THE STICK.
YOU KNOW THEY NEVER HAD ANY QUALMS
MAKING THEIR OWN HAIRY PALMS,
SO WHY DOESN'T ANYBODY UNDERSTAND
THAT I'M IN LOVE WITH MY HAND?
WITH MY HAND.

At the end of the song, JILL goes to the washer to collect her laundry.

JILL: Oh my God, you freak! I'll bet you're here just to fondle my panties!

JACK goes to JILL and hops up on her washer, keeping her from her laundry.

JACK: Jill . . .

JILL: Jack! Off! (*He gets off of the washer.*)

JACK: You . . . but you . . . you said I could trust you.

JILL: But I didn't know you were a sicko.

GARY: Why don't you cut him some slack? It takes a lot of guts to expose your personal deviations like that.

JACK: I'm not a deviant.

GARY: Hey, we're just trying to help you here.

PHOEBE: Look, Jill, sweetie, get over it. You two have to hook up anyway.

JILL: Or what?

PHOEBE: I'm not sure. Either this goes on forever, or if we're slightly more lucky than that, we'll die tragically in the final act.

JILL: C'mon. He's a total perv.

PHOEBE: Don't be such a prude. Look at the dork I'm stuck with.

JACK: Perv? You said I could trust you.

GARY: Dork? You have been on me since I walked into this place.

JACK & GARY: You are such a *bitch!*

BIZ, FAB & CHEER: Now THAT'S a song title!

SONG #9: BITCH

(PHOEBE, JILL, BIZ, FAB, CHEER)

PHOEBE:
SOMETIMES I'M BAD
WHEN I SHOULD BE GOOD.

LINT! THE MUSICAL

JILL:

SOMETIMES I'M JUST MISUNDERSTOOD.

PHOEBE:

BUT MEN WILL POINT THEIR FINGERS
SAYING, "YOU'RE A MESS."

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

"WHAT'S THE MATTER HONEY,
YOU GOT PMS?"

PHOEBE:

WELL MAYBE THAT'S THE REASON
I'VE GOT AN ATTITUDE.

JILL:

BUT MAYBE I'M JUST IN A SHITTY MOOD!

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

PHOEBE:

THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL ME.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

JILL:

THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

PHOEBE:

I DON'T DESERVE IT.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

JILL:

BUT STAY OUT OF MY WAY.

IT'S EASY TO REDUCE ME TO A NAME.

PHOEBE:

IT'S EASY TO TREAT US ALL THE SAME.

JILL:

I NEED A MAN WHO'S A LITTLE MORE ADULT.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

ONE WHO WON'T TAKE YOUR MONEY
AND GO JOIN A CULT.

JILL:

I'VE HAD MY SHARE OF LOSERS.
I'M THROUGH BEING NICE.

PHOEBE:

BUT IF I TURN YOU DOWN,
DON'T ASK ME TWICE.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

JILL:

THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL ME.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

PHOEBE:

THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

JILL:

I DON'T DESERVE IT.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

PHOEBE:

BUT STAY OUT OF MY WAY.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

I'M A BITCH . . .
YOU'RE A BITCH . . .
SHE'S A BITCH . . .
HE'S A BITCH . . .
IT'S A BITCH . . .
WHAT A BITCH . . .

PHOEBE: (*Spoken.*) Alright, I want all you people out there of either gender who have been abused by someone truly bitchy to put your hands together and celebrate a truly American state of being. Because when you run into a real bitch there's only one thing to do . . . Bitch right back!

LINT! THE MUSICAL

JILL:

JUST STAY ON MY GOOD SIDE
AND EV'RYTHING IS GREAT!

PHOEBE:

BUT IF YOU EVER SCREW ME,
BETTER LEAVE THE STATE.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

PHOEBE:

THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL ME.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

JILL:

THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

PHOEBE:

I DON'T DESERVE IT.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

JILL:

BUT STAY OUT OF MY WAY.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

BOTH:

EV'RY MORNING.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

BOTH:

EV'RY DAY.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

BOTH:

WITHOUT WARNING.

BIZ, FAB & CHEER:

BITCH!

LINT! THE MUSICAL

BOTH:

HAVE A NICE DAY!

They all give the “up yours” gesture.

ALL:

BITCH!!!!!!

Lights produce a silhouette effect on the actors as they assume a Charlie’s Angels pose. As the lights come back up, GARY and JACK approach PHOEBE and JILL respectively. On the last note of the song, PHOEBE jumps into GARY’s arms and JILL into JACK’s and they kiss. BLACKOUT.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from LINT! THE MUSICAL by William Arnold and Scott Auden. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

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