

FRANK

We're coming.

MARY

Me, too.

BETH

What about the opening party?

CHARLEY

You two go to the party.

(Hands the tape recorder to FRANK, starts to EXIT, turns back)

Frank, I'll do one more for Joe Josephson. But just one more.

FRANK

(Puts tape recorder down at the side of the stage)

One more. And then it's our time.

(FRANK, CHARLEY, MARY and BETH huddle and jump)

CHARLEY

One more.

(THEY hug. BETH cheers. CHARLEY, EXITING STAGE LEFT, to MARY)

Come on.

In a minute.

start

BETH

(After CHARLEY EXITS, to FRANK)

Frank, I was there for Evelyn's last baby and I want to be there for this one, too. You go on ahead.

FRANK

No, honey, absolutely not. No, no, no.

BETH

Yes, yes, yes. I am so proud of you. If I don't see you at the hospital, I'll see you home.

(A slight pause)

Oh, I love you so much.

Beth + Mary

(SHE kisses him and pushes him into the theater. HE EXITS through the stage door and RE-ENTERS UPSTAGE where he is visible backstage through the scrim wall)

MARY

(Stopping BETH)
Beth, with Gussie there, I urge you to go with Frank.

BETH

(Moving)
Sometimes you have to trust, Mary.

MARY

(Stopping her again)
And sometimes you don't.

BETH

I would never want a man I couldn't trust.

(BETH EXITS STAGE LEFT, with MARY following. JOE comes upon FRANK ENTERING from behind the scrim)

End

JOE

Hey, Big Man! You got a ride to this fancy-schmancy party?

FRANK

I can only stay one or two minutes.

GUSSIE

(ENTERING, seeing them, calling down from a level above)
Oh, was that not why we do all this? Was that not just heaven?

JOE

I gotta go make nice with the backers. You two take our car.
(EXITING, calling to GUSSIE)

I won't be able to afford this Big Man now, you watch!

GUSSIE

Oh, what a blessing it's been to find another pure artist. So often I have just wanted to thank you. But Franklin Shepard, I think there has been a conspiracy to keep you from me.

FRANK

Miss Carnegie, I owe you so much.

Charley + Mary

Start

(MARY hugs him)

CHARLEY

Mary, do not speak to me.

(MARY removes her hands)

This whole goddamn thing is your fault. I don't know why in Christ's name I ever let you talk me into this humiliation.

RU

(ENTERING with beverage tray, handing MARY a drink)

Here's the drink you ordered, Miss Flynn.

CHARLEY

(Taking the drink from MARY)

Mary, how thoughtful.

MARY

Charley, c'mon, I need a drink.

CHARLEY

One drink. What would you like?

MARY

A bottle of vodka and a straw.

(CHARLEY hands MARY the drink. RU EXITS)

Where's Frank?

(Drinks)

CHARLEY

Oh, Frank. Probably off signing to score another movie. Or closing a record deal... can only tell you where Frank *never* is...that's with *me*, working on our show.

MARY

Well, when I called K.T. to set up this interview, I made it very clear that all you two guys were here to talk about was your next show and how long you both have been working on it.

CHARLEY

Grow up, Mary. Since Frank married Gussie, the only 'working' he knows is 'working the room.'

MARY

And just where did he learn that, Charley? Off on that goddamn yacht is where. And who was it who sent him off on that goddamn yacht, huh?

CHARLEY

I say to hell with Frank. I've started a play all on my own. And if Frank doesn't show up in the next thirty seconds, me, I am walking right out that door.

(Looks at watch)

MARY

Charley, I know Frank. If you connect with him again, if you commit the guy today publicly, I promise you, by tomorrow you two are going to be back together working again. You gotta help save him, Charley.

#5 *Old Friends — Like It Was* (Mary, Charley)

(CHARLEY looks at watch: time's up, HE gets up and starts to EXIT. MARY stops him with her hand as well as with the song's first line, as MUSIC begins)

HEY, OLD FRIEND,
WHAT DO YOU SAY, OLD FRIEND?
MAKE IT OKAY, OLD FRIEND.
GIVE THE OLD FRIENDSHIP A BREAK.

WHY SO GRIM?
WE'RE GOING ON FOREVER.
YOU, ME, HIM,
TOO MANY LIVES ARE AT STAKE.

FRIENDS THIS LONG
HAS TO MEAN SOMETHING'S STRONG,
SO IF OUR OLD FRIEND'S WRONG,
SHOULDN'T AN OLD FRIEND COME THROUGH?

IT'S US, OLD FRIEND —
WHAT'S TO DISCUSS, OLD FRIEND?
HERE'S TO US,
WHO'S LIKE US?

(She puts her pinkie finger up. After a beat, Charley links his pinkie to hers)

CHARLEY

DAMN FEW.

MARY

CHARLEY,
WHY CAN'T IT BE LIKE IT WAS?
I LIKED IT THE WAY THAT IT WAS,
CHARLEY —
YOU AND ME, WE WERE NICER THEN.

WE WERE NICE,
KIDS AND CITIES AND TREES WERE NICE,
EVERYTHING...
I DON'T KNOW WHO WE ARE ANY MORE,
AND I'M STARTING NOT TO CARE.

LOOK AT US, CHARLEY,
NOTHING'S THE WAY THAT IT WAS.
I WANT IT THE WAY THAT IT WAS —
HELP ME STOP REMEMBERING THEN.

DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
IT WAS GOOD, IT WAS REALLY GOOD.
HELP ME OUT, CHARLEY,
MAKE IT LIKE IT WAS.

→ Come on. It was so much better, Charley. The three of us.

CHARLEY

And you come on — we're not the three of us any more, Mary. Now we're one and one and one.

MARY

CHARLEY,
NOTHING'S THE WAY THAT IT WAS.
I WANT IT THE WAY THAT IT WAS.
GOD KNOWS, THINGS WERE EASIER THEN.

TROUBLE IS, CHARLEY,
THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE DOES:
BLAMES THE WAY IT IS
ON THE WAY IT WAS —
ON THE WAY IT NEVER EVER WAS.

(MARY downs the drink)

CHARLEY

→ Jesus, Mary. After all these years. You're still in love with the guy.

MARY

(Sbrugs)
You gotta help save *me* then, Charley.

K.T.

(ENTERING D.R.)

Charley? Frank? We're on a commercial break, then it's us. Follow me.

End

CHARLEY

~~Frank isn't here.~~

K.T.

(Panicked)
He isn't here? Where the hell is Frank?

(FRANK, GUSSIE, JEROME, TERRY are all hurried in by RU and the MAKE-UP ARTIST. ALL hug. RU EXITS. TERRY and JEROME move U.S. and confer, whispering)

FRANK

Frank is here. And Frank is sorry. But ever since Gussie and I got married, life is this series of meetings, meetings, meetings.
(Crosses to CHARLEY, hugs him)

Hey, pal.

CHARLEY

Hey, pal. Long time, no see.

FRANK

Oh, and I've missed you, buddy. And Mary. Oh, God, Mary.
(Hugs MARY. Stands back to look)
You look wonderful. Lost a little weight?

MARY

A hundred eighty pounds. He still calls, though.

K.T.

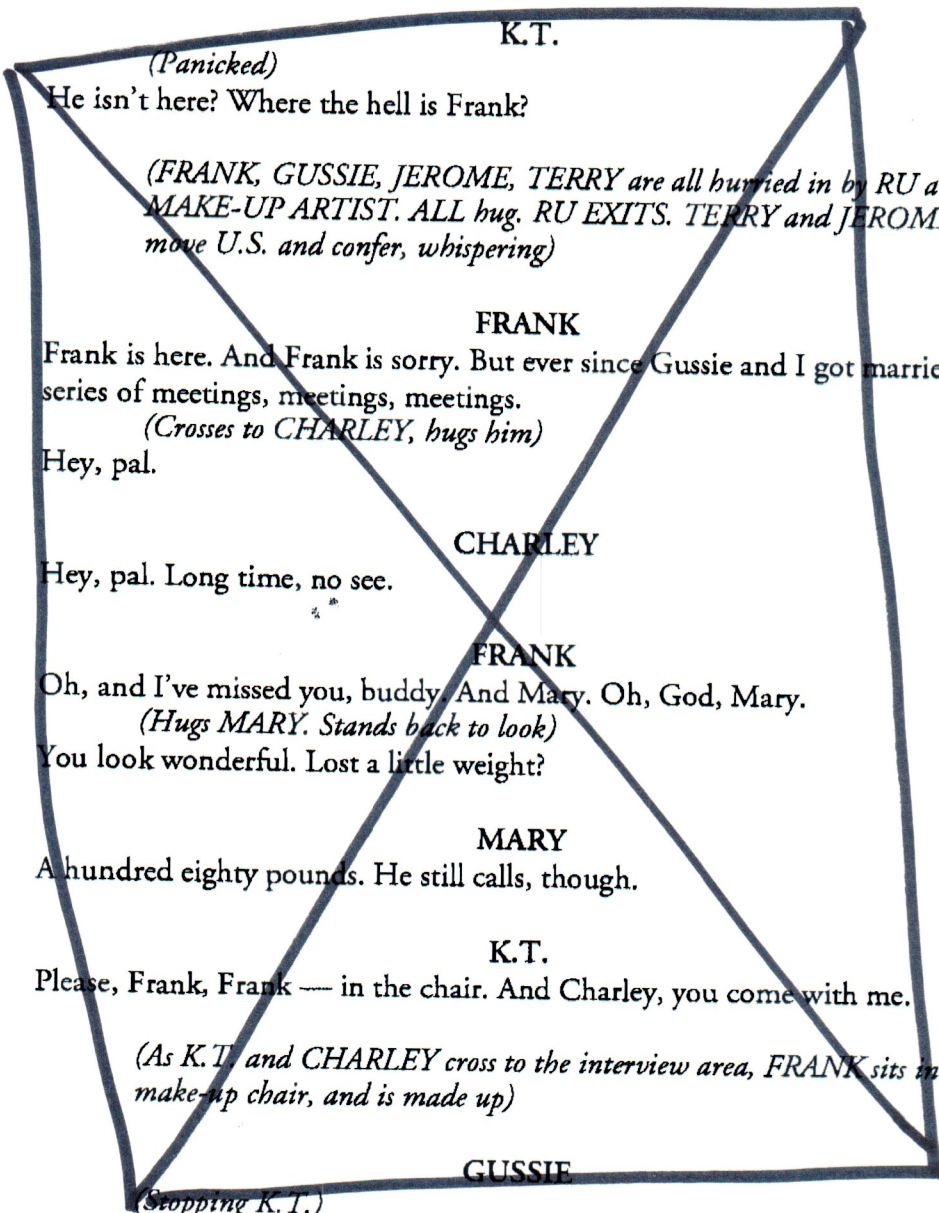
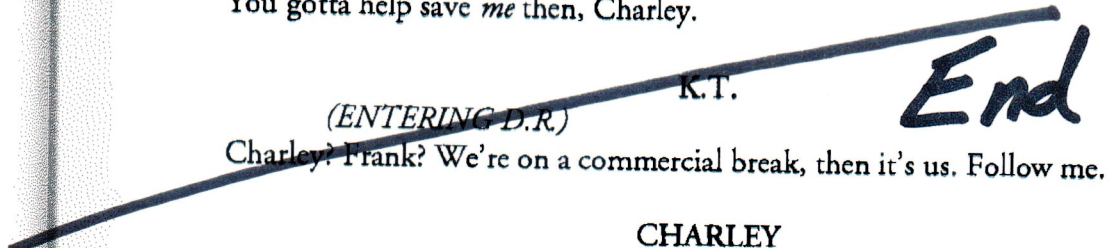
Please, Frank, Frank — in the chair. And Charley, you come with me.

(As K.T. and CHARLEY cross to the interview area, FRANK sits in the make-up chair, and is made up)

GUSSIE

(Stopping K.T.)

K.T., I think I saw my ex-husband hovering around outside. Could you see to it that nobody is allowed in? He's become the eternal sponge.



Now we're one an

y.