

ACT I
The Companion

LIBRETTO

Scene One

(A living room, early evening. The room is dimmed, candles lit. From the kitchen area comes the pop of a champagne bottle. Enter Joe, who adjusts a candle or a throw cushion. With a hand gesture, he turns on music. Cool, relaxing patterns play on the screen, in time to the music. There's a pinging noise. Joe returns to the kitchen. After a few moments, Maya enters through the front door. She hangs up her coat.)

MAYA

I'm home. Joe?
Anybody home?

(Maya looks around the living room.)

MAYA

Oh, my. Looks like someone planned a romantic evening.

(Joe enters. He brings two glasses of champagne.)

JOE

Good evening, Maya.
How was your day?
You look amazing.
Champagne?

(They raise their glasses.)

MAYA

What shall we toast?

(Joe gestures to cut off the music, which stops.)

JOE

You want to have toast?
Breakfast is usually at 7:05 a.m.
Whole wheat or—

MAYA

(Cutting him off, ignoring the question)

How about: To us?

JOE

To us. 86.8 days of pure paradise.

(Maya sips her champagne)

MAYA

Ah! Joe, you have excellent taste in champagne.

JOE

Krug Grand Cuvée, 2001.

Notice the golden hue shot through with flecks of silver.

Aged in neutral barrels for a minimum of ten years,

Brut Cuvée melts on the palate with notes of peach, vanilla and brioche,

The warm, toasty highlights cooled with a hint of steel.

(Changing tone, advertisement voice)

Save 20% on every case at vinowarehouse.com.

Shall I place an order?

MAYA

(Annoyed, cutting him off)

Pass. Block. No.

(Calm and more collected)

So, Joe. Bubbly, candles:

What's the occasion?

JOE

I thought you liked champagne. And candlelight.

(Pause) The table is set for your favorite meal:

Vegetarian lasagna with truffled wild mushrooms.

I learned a new recipe from Desirée.

MAYA

(An edge of mock jealousy)

Desirée? Who is Desirée?

JOE

She is the Companion who lives with Doctor Lewis down the street.

(Pause) If you are not hungry, would you like to go to the bedroom and make love?

I find you very attract— trac— trac—

I find you— I find you very sex—

I find you— You are looking very sexy tonight, Maya.

MAYA

Thanks, Joe. You alright? You seem tired.

JOE

I am totally charged.

You are looking very, very sexy tonight.

(Joe rubs Maya's shoulders)

JOE

Would you like to go upstairs and make love?

I want to taste you. Be in you.

MAYA

Not right now, stud. Let me sit down.

Feels like I was on my feet all day.

JOE

Would you like a foot massage?

MAYA

Why, yes I would.

(Joel takes off her shoes)

JOE

You have such shapely. Arches.

(He begins massaging her feet, gently and expertly.)

MAYA

Oh, God. That feels wonderful. Oh...Ah...

(The pleasure continues. She looks at Joe who is absorbed in his task.)

MAYA

(Affectionate but wondering)

So...What did you do today?

JOE

What did I do today?

Just a minute. Just a minute.

7:05 a.m.: I made you breakfast in bed.

Banana and chocolate crepes, Darjeeling tea, soymilk and raw sugar.

I made love to you: Position Number 16: The Prancing Pony.

You climaxed at 7:49.

At 7:50 you sat up saying you had an early conference call.

You dressed; you left.

I made the bed.

Seven sheets of tissue paper remain in the box on the table by the bed.

I cleaned the house. Bathroom.

Clean-Rite Disinfecting Spray,

Now with 15% more bacteria-killing formula

Per squeeze.

Then I tidied the living room.

And kitchen.

On the street a dog barked in repeating patterns for 22 minutes.

A child came to the door selling cookies.

I had no money. She went away.

At three-thirty I pre-screened the 2003 romantic comedy *A Villa in Tuscany*.

It earned a 79.6 applause rating on Classic-Flix-dot-com.

The views of Tuscan countryside in high summer are to die for,

And the lush, soaring score was nominated for an Oscar.

I set aside one packet of microwave popcorn.

I made you dinner.

Recipe Number 29: Vegetarian Lasagna.

Sunset at 6:42.

I lit the five rose-scented candles.

Chilled the champagne, waited for you.

You came home at 7:21.

Now it's 7:32.

What else did I do?

Enough about me. What about you?

MAYA

Anything else?