**Griffin Hunter**

By Kirk Wood Bromley

Characters:

Griffin Hunter – Under-Secretary of Disarmament for the United Nations

Sophie Berceau – an actress and his wife

Walker – his counsel

Semion Rockwell – Head of Vaad Sirat

Vivian Nash - theater director and Rockwell’s wife

Leveret – Rockwell’s operative

Boa – Rockwell’s operative

Mayumi - owner of the Bluebird Bookstore

Madera – SFPD Detective

Trick and Track – Leveret’s operatives

Jurgen Scheckel - German diplomat

Powers – actor

Xiao – Sophie’s assistant

Peaches – Mayumi’s neighbor

Divers 1 and 2 – SFPD Victim Retrieval Divers

Saiyid Al-Dimmah and Daksh Tanduru – International businessmen

Actors, messengers, stage managers, cops, audience members

*Phase 1, Scene 1. A street corner in San Francisco. Leveret is waiting. Boa enters and draws his gun on Leveret.*

Boa -             Cheat!

Lev -             You fucking psychofant.

Boa -             No sane, no pain.

Lev -             One more time, it’s bullet floss.

Boa -             Cheat!

*Leveret draws his gun on Boa.*

Lev -             Hollow head meet hollow point.

*Enter Semion Rockwell.*

Rock -           Gentlemen, as-salamu alaykum.

*They withdraw their guns.*

Boa -             Heirloom ass salami, Mr. Rockwell.

Rock -           Hold me, Boa.

*Rockwell and Boa embrace.*

Rock - Leveret, do you love me?

Lev -             Like my father, were he not an absent monster.

Boa -             You sayin Rockwell ain’t an absent monster?

Rock -           Shut your cheese hole!

Boa -             Poppin that pill ri’ now.

*Boa pops a pill.*

Rock –          Is your love a pipeline to the molument

                    Of my need or a mere pacifier

In the suck of your spacious inferior?

Lev -             For you who’s lodged me in the we of wealth,

I’d steer clear of myself to kill myself.

Rock -           Waymo yourself, and kill Griffin Hunter.

Lev -             Who?

Rock -           You don’t know the septic bitch martyr

That’s entered my cripple flip with intent

To bombast his gauche taqiyya shalom

Into my so sweet potato funions?

What th’implicit fuck do I pay you for?

Boa -             To cheat.

Rock -           You want I lawn care your lotus?

Boa -             Snip, snip, sloppy sarape.

*Boa pops another pill.*

Rock -           Now surely that who was not owl you know.

Boa - Damn, Mr. Rockwell, you’re good.

Rock - No, I’m bad, but I’d be bad way better

If I knew Leveret’s bedpan had my butt.

Boa -             That Gripey Humper’s all over the news.

Lev -             I don’t watch the news; it makes you old.

Rock -           And?

Lev -             And?

Rock -           Don’t make a man in pain repeat himself!

Boa -             I’ll kill him yesterday.

Rock - Yesterday’s too late!

Lev -             What’s Hunter done to win the cliff?

*Rockwell projects a news clip of Hunter on the wall.*

Rock - Tonight on killer performances…

Boa - Yo, where’s the papacorny?

Rock - You’re lookin at him.

Hunter -        “Esteemed delegates of our United Nations…”

Rock -           United Nations? Fake as “happy husband.”

Boa -             I don’t like the way he hides his backside.

Hunter -        “Today I depart for San Francisco,

                    The birthplace of our pacific ambitions,

                    To meet with 57 diplomats

And sign the seminal Hunter Accord.”

Boa - Semial? Shit stole your name.

Rock -           Shit stole my right

To not stand in the splash-back of this buck

Juicing himself to sallow bumpkin spice.

Hunter-         “An international treaty that ensures

                    Disarmament and non-proliferation

                    Of weapons world-wide thru monitored,

                    Cooperative, incremental actions,

                    Circumventing while confirming sovereignty…”

Rock -           Sir Mawkish Noble Peace Cannon’s sportin

                    So much uplifting adage he could rocket

                    My rage to Oslo.

Boa -             I’ll dust that Osho

                    And his righteous steed, Annoying Nag, too.

Hunter -        “That thru this shared empowering submission

We may beckon peace back to our planet

                    So littered with the refuse of our wars,

Yet now so avid to wash itself of wrath

By dousing the blaze of mass destruction

That we not burn our house to heat our home.”

Boa -             So I can’t have a fire on my couch?

Rock -           Lamah, Leveret: the “everywhere” you misst.

Lev -             Ok, but what will snuffing him achieve?

The UN is an airtight jar of ants,

                    With bosses inside bosses inside bosses,

                    All suffocating the more they scramble

                    To suck up to the queen of compromise,

                    So squash one drone and crack the lid to tweeze

Those drossophiles his mystery hero meat,

They all come rushin out, and victory him;

Yet we, because illicit makes demand,

Now profit his prohibit, so victory us.

Rock -           Do I look like I need a maffs tutor?

                    I strongly advocate a weak UN,

                    Give lavishly to keep my shortlist long

                    In gestures of tenderness torrential,

                    Yet this undiplomatic diplomat

                    Seems violently devoted to himself.

Lev - Thanks to this good guy all fairness fighters,

                    Who’ve outnumbered ever those for freedom,

                    Come knockin on our door to save their souls.

Rock -           Good guy? What offal hath his goodness gorpt!

                    Vaad Sirat supports every people’s need

                    For native autonomy.

Boa - Does good guy?

Rock - Does good guy know the sutra recipe

                    To this gruesome, post-historic era

                    Of biological death concoctions?

Boa - Damn super-dupe dharma bums.

Rock - We take in bread,

Render it for solid, timely exit,

And smoove’s da groove.

Boa - What’s wrong with how shit is?

Rock - Then causy coccus up the legal colon,

                    Jejunating my financial squama,

                    Passes thru some runny, twisted clabber…

Boa - Now with chunks of “justice”!

Rock - Smack on my head.

Boa - Global peace?

Rock - That’s local liquidation.

Boa - Loophole heat?

Rock - Hang the Sons of Liberty!

Boa - Yo, not while Boom-Boom’s in the thriver’s seat.

Rock - This planet may be volatile as hell,

                    But half of hell was unjustly convicted,

Rock - So less the right to fight…

Boa - We all get fried.

Rock - Kill Griffin Hunter, Leveret.

Boa -             Or I will.

*Leveret and Boa point their guns at each other.*

Lev -             The crabs will service you for his dessert.

Rock -           Yjb ‘an nakun ‘iikhwat ‘aw maytana!

                    My sons! Time out for keeps who keeps it up.

*They draw down.*

Lev -             Look, now I seen the news, I know the guy,

                    From long ago, but by a different name,

                    Ghazan Huzala, which ain’t here or there,

                    Cuz it’s a cinch for me to grease him up.

Rock -           Tell us, Leveret, of this ain’t here or there.

Lev -             His moms was a stanny interpreter

Got puppt up by some afro-asian mutt

Drove stretch for the envoy caviar crowd,

So Ghazan swang the diplomatic corps

Whence we met in Kashmir like ten years on

                    When I was stuffin Hong Kong fulla skee;

                    We hung out, had some mei-nu on the chiew,

                    Then one night this jiuba storm got kickin,

                    Huzala killed a local, and by dawn

                    We’re flippin pencils with Malaysia’s tightest,

                    But since he had a life, I took the bill,

                    Did nine months in Kajangi til you bought

                    Me and Boa free, and I’n’t seen him since.

Boa -             He’s a fuckin cheat.

Rock -           Slander him again

                    And it’s the muzzle, baby man.

Boa -             Mmmmuzzle.

*Boa pops another pill.*

Rock -           Leveret, you’re like a child to me.

Lev -             And you’re like

An adult to me.

Rock -           But we’re friends, right? Wrong.

Show me my friends, I’ll count as many traitors.

Boa -             All my friends are traitors.

Rock -           See, you and me…

Boa - And me…

Rock - You and me and Boa, we’re not friends;

                    We’re mushrikun, partners in one purpose,

                    An all-or-nothing, man-to-man pivot

                    Round which the fidget saw of fortune spins,

                    So we, tested by our tenuous trust,

                    Develop in accord returns-refresht,

                    Unlike friends, who shake deals with phantom hands,

                    Agreeing to some shareware giveaway

                    Wherein a debtor’s bonded to a debtor.

Boa - I hate my friends.

Rock - I’m sure they feel the same.

Boa - I know they do.

Rock - See, we’re a nucleus

Whose bond broken injure-snaps destruction,

                    Yet in cohesion spawns all creation:

                    Are we beautiful? I’m crying again.

Boa -             Quit toying with his afflictions!

Rock -           Maybe he doesn’t love me.

Lev -             I love you.

Rock -           Then kiss me, lover, and I’ll tongue you true:

                    Lie to me again of who thou knowst

In the here or there, I’ll burgeon early,

                    Slip on my favorite swishy suit and sneaks,

                    Jog in the crisp morning air to your crib,

                    And with my nine caliber eight fold path

                    Shot-pepper Mr. Yoga Banana

Bandito like a hell-done seitan steak,

                    Cuz, hey, I’m all about the animules.

                    Cool, tool?

Lev -             Cool.

Rock -           Kill Griffin Hunter.

Boa -             He won’t…

Rock -           Khalas! The gate of ijtihad is closed.

Boa -             Cheat.

*Rockwell and Boa exit.*

Lev -             What squalid pool my squalling’s settled to

                    Here boils up, bloodsuckers flit and bite,

                    And hut Phuket now swelts a crocking pot.

                    Kill who? The man I love beyond remand,

                    The peace that palliates my world of war?

He makes aggression good, power placid,

                    Deception pure, and being human not

                    So inhumane? Kill your crooked agent,

                    Your dirty diplomat, your fraud exec,

                    But kill this man, this force, this hope, this dream?

To kill him, O it is to kill myself,

                    And I’m too worthless to decide my worth;

Yet what’s he clockt for me who did his time?

                    I’ll do it, then, and finally free myself

                    From this encagement in the undersmug

                    I loiter just to screen his reputation.

                    Impossible. To slave for Vaad Sirat

                    Is scum enuf, but opting mushrikun

                    For Ghazan is the swap I’d not survive.

                    Something’s off; Rockwell’s never been so rash.

                    So crack the crux, then dab some hoax cologne

                    On this rotten sweat spot. If life’s to be,

                    This boomtown’s big enough for him and me.

*Leveret exits.*

*Phase 1, Scene 2. The United Nations Mission of San Francisco. Enter Griffin and Sophie. Walker is lingering off to the side.*

Soph -           O Griffin, must she really stay so close?

I feel a sous-marine stuck in a trench.

Griff - Forget her, sweet; besides, she keeps us safe.

Soph - From each other?

Griff - From what every safe is from:

The things we cannot know we’ll never know.

Soph - Mais je déplore la séparation.

                    Love’s raw material is time entwined,

                    And lacking this, we make much too little.

                    Oui, you would save and I reflect the world,

                    But what’s it merit sans le monde de nous?

Griff - Mon cher Sophie, je le déplore aussi.

It almost seems this world hates a marriage:

To have and to hold til stress do us part,

                    Glazed in some unechoing monument

                    To schedule, that afflicting quarantine

That sickens those it claims to keep from sick.

Yet time apart must, oui, be part of we:

A coiling together, a rove away,

Love’s braided in a strand of honeymoons,

That from our many panicles of pull

We weave a beautiful réseaux d’amour.

                    En outre, once my Great Accord is signed,

                    We shall vacation sans la chaperon,

                    And grow so worn in love we’ll start a war

                    On stage to merely scrounge a speck of work.

Soph - Amour, tu as pratiqué ton français.

Griff - J'apprends ta langue en rêvant de toi.

*Enter Leveret to the side in the dark.*

Soph -           My lover tells the most alluring lies.

Griff -           Yet you, l’actrice, et moi, le diplomate,

                    Both know that lying love is often true,

                    As to our love we lie to get our love,

                    And of our love we lie to keep our love,

And with our love we lie to feed our love.

Soph - Then let my lover lie; he lies for love.

Lev -             Yet what if out of love your lover lie

                    That dreamy love drip to drams of drama

                  And turn an unrelenting sleeplessness

                    Attempts to find its life in what it lacks,

                    As I love him, tho he love you, not me?

                    So enter the assassin, peacefully.

*Leveret calls from the dark.*

Lev -             Ya habibi!

*Walker moves in, gun drawn.*

Walker -          Step to the light or die.

Lev -             Living by the dark, so succumbs a spy.

*Leveret steps into the light.*

Griff -           Leveret?

Lev -             Hey, if you’re some Griffin Hunter,

                    Then I’m Sophie Berceau.

Soph -           She is taken.

Walk -          You know him?

Griff - I know what I know of him.

Walk - How did he get in?

Lev - Well, it’s kinda sad,

But CCTV’s never found me much.

Soph - May I be introduced?

Griff - Pardonnez-moi:

Sophie, my new wife, Leveret, my old friend.

Soph - As I thought every story’d been divulged,

I will assume your friendship was so brief

And uneventful there’s no menace grave

In my coucou a le vieil ami.

Lev - I saved his life seven times and counting.

Griff - Sophie, your party.

Soph - Griffin, this party.

Old friend, plus sauvetages primordiaux.

Griff - They were nothing.

Lev - Outside Jalalabad,

Red chandoo-smuggling ali baba dwarves

Have big guy crucified to a tractor

In the middle of a flaming poppy field

Cuz they’re all sure he’s tippt the Taliban

To their stash of brothel beads…

Griff - Which I had.

Lev - Copter in, cut the ropes, airlift this lug

Straight to Hilton Kabul for minty dooghs.

Griff - Well, that was fun.

Lev - Or how about the time

You and Kali, the ten-armed kama devi,

Tried to charm a cobra with her pungi

During Durga Puja, and the swamis

Strappt you to a sacrificial vessel

For the corpulent Ganges basin bound,

So I convinced the mob you were deva

By freestyling your Samadhi marga.

Griff - Who said my childhood was childproof?

Lev - Tamil tiger machete storms, Ang Soon Tong’s

M16 toddler troops, Cambodian

Catacombs of hoary singing spice rats,

We fell amongst them all in a shimmy

From amulet to squib to maqbara,

Til all ended on the lam in Kowloon,

Where I, who’d always been the coolie fan

To Comrade Temper, threw myself between

Him and what was keeping him from…

Griff - Nothing.

Nothingness. I was after nothingness,

Which meant it was first, which meant I was mad,

But now satchidananda est Sophie.

Sophie - You said seven, but spoke of only six.

Lev - Griffin?

Griff - A bar fight put me in the books,

But Leveret slippt me out and did my time.

Lev - His freedom’s always meant the world to me.

Griff - Ya habibi.

Soph - Bien, ce qu’il faut dire?

This compte rendu complete, I somehow feel

Evaporated into IndoChine.

Full disclosure? Marry a mystery?

Note it, Walker. Peace has a violent past.

Walker - Noted.

Griff - Sophie.

Soph - Now to Mr. Rockwell.

Lev - Mr. Whatwell?

Griff - Simon Rockwell, the cash

In Sophie’s masque.

Sophie - He’s hosting a patron fete,

And it would be très peu diplomatique

(If diplomat is still a positive)

For the star and her fugee to be late

Après son luxueux générosité.

Lev - Après son hu?

Griff - Sophie stayed with Rockwell

For six weeks while I touted my Accord.

Sophie - His wife, l’incroyable Vivian Nash,

Is directing Semion’s translation

From the Farsi.

Griff - It’s like a passion play.

Sophie - Mais Islamique.

Griff - And Sophie’s doing Allah.

Soph - So I say, “Alla you best follow me!”

*Enter a messenger.*

Mess -           Message from the Secretary General.

*Messenger hands message to Walker and exits.*

Walk -          “Chinese authorities have uncovered

                    Fissile material in an outpost

                    Held by Uighur separatists near Xinjiang.

                    UNSCOM agents trace the substance

                    To an arms bazaar in Al-Fallujah

                    Where dealers had obtained uranium

                    From a French facility in Corsica.”

Griff -           China’s response?

Walk -          A stern demand that France

                    Extradite the Corsican Gouverneur.

Griff -           And what of France?

Walk -          Avers that Corsica

Is independent.

Griff -           I will talk to them.

Walk -          “The Hunter Accord must be prorogued

Until this situation has resolved.”

Griff -           She can’t do this to me. Signatories

                    On site, the treaty set, she can’t do this.

Lev -             I will handle it.

Griff -           You will handle what?

Lev -             I have friends who matter in such meddles.

                    They’ll covert into Corsica, snatch up

The Gouverneur, whisk him off to China,

Y voila, the Hunter Accord is signed

Like a sermon for the deaf.

Soph -           Absurdité.

Griff -           I am not, Leveret, handing my life’s work

                    Over to some drite you met in lockdown.

Lev -             Given said lockdown, you mean our life’s work.

Walk -          Your friends can really do that?

Griff -           Walker, stop.

Walk -          It’s not a bad idea.

Soph -           It’s not a good idea.

Lev -             So it’s a great idea!

Griff -           What if his friends are caught and rat us out?

Lev -             Any friends I had like that got ghosted.

Walk –          Paris would be spared capitulation

                    And Beijing appeased. But can you do it?

Lev -             Can I do it?

Griff -           He can do it.

Soph -           Griffin, no!

Walk -          The signing ceremony’s in three days.

Lev -             He’ll be Chinese in one.

Walk - Welcome, Leveret.

*Walker exits.*

Griff -           Sophie, I know what I’m doing.

Soph -           C'est ce qui est si pathétique.

*She exits.*

Lev –            She don’t like you, Huzala.

Griff -           She loves me,

                    But she’s in the theater, as obsesst

                    Avec intégrité as the huchen

With headwaters, but like we two’ve been taught,

                    Nothing is integral til it’s missing.

Lev -             Then let the thief show his teeth.

*Leveret goes to exit.*

Griff -           Tu, aqui.

Lev -             I’m a key to doors you shouldn’t open.

Griff -           So brief me on these friends.

Lev - They’re just like you, Griffin:

In some so-high-you-don’t-ask-why places.

Griff – Keep me posted.

Lev - You’n the mail already.

*Hunter exits.*

Lev –            “Sophie stayed with the Rockwells for six weeks.”

There it is: like the sulfur out a skunk,

The tool escapes from One Suspicious Square.

That coquette’s joli feutre may not glow

In my black light, but Rockwell’s one fat beater,

And I can but imagine his frisson.

Could this whole cyclone spin upon the eye

                    Of a crush? Kill Griffin Hunter for a crush?

                    Insuperant Simon witcht by sibyl crush?

                    I bet she asht in his gas can. I bet

                    Her l’angoisse grande over intégrité

Is façade for being quatre cents sortes

De frommages to Simon’s bunker-busting

Toothpick, cuz flirt is every actress’s

Middle emotion. She plays the upshot

In Sir Civil’s lame cremaster cycle,

But if he’s rich (and Rockwell’s richer than

All krispy kream), that backstage patron pass

Devolves might quick to Big Bang, the remount.

Proof or doof. To Rockwell’s, then, in my best

L’ambassatrix du Anonymia.

Law damn, what one must do to love a man.

*Phase 2, Scene 1. The House of Semion Rockwell and Vivian Nash. Enter Sophie and Griffin.*

Sophie - Your oldest friend? Why hide your oldest friend

Save what he hides could hurt your newest love?

Griff -           Those were my pirate years, when rout to rout

                    I smashing sailed on nitrous to careen

                    More storied loot. Sophe, the mix I muted

Of such toddled forage to not detune

                    Your solar octane production instincts

                    With my low-fidelity gaucherie.

                    Allons, it was wrong, but the gag was good,

                    Partook for fear you'd judge the present me

                    By gifts returned, then, feeling bilked, unsend

                    Your love, both element and suspirance

                    To my arcade foray at captious peace.

Soph -           Guess what I like best about you, Griffin.

Griff -           That I like you best?

Soph -           Your integrity.

                    Unlike most politicocks, you appraise

                    Opportunity beyond th’opportune,

                    Pursuing earnest hunch, consensus-carved,

Despite, and often due to, resistance,

                    Surging when you would, yielding where you ought,

                    Yet always navigating toward a truth

                    That you for group, not private, gain have sensed

                    To be worth any risk it may arrest,

                    A largesse seeming native to your nature,

                    And yes, mint heroic, tho packaged plain.

                    To an actress, who must be anything

                    The anarchs of appeal whip her to,

                    Such integrity is musk, hypnosis,

                    A roaring river right before the falls

                    That swirls you round, yet only teases plunge.

                    And why? Because love’s a music that swings

                    When we accord upon our contradictions.

                    You are vérité; I, réalité,

                    Or truth consistent with itself, and truth

                    Consistent with all else, our mouths athwart

                    So we can cup, not clank, the perfect kiss,

                    For commitment's lifting a jewelled egg

                    All pieces must be in, or all's in pieces.

                    Withhold one lip, tremmed of wound or wounding,

                    From an exchange of equal eagerness,

                    It's quick to banging brows and fitching chops,

                    And then's occision certain. Lies are germs

                    We gestate in our mouths and spread with shield,

                    As of ourselves sick, we sicken others,

                    A balance thought to tail brutality

                    By lowering the target temperature

                    Of supplication, yet which more inflames

                    The delving rage. Give all you are to me,

                    Our love shall be the peace that sets you free.

Griff -           All I am is yours and will ever be.

*Enter Vivian.*

Viv -             Sophie?

Soph -           Vivian.

Viv -             Girl, you très tard.

Soph -           Griffin's plane was delayed.

Viv -             Call me a cot,

                    It's Griffin Hunter, the Missile Slayer,

                    General Omnissimo, Mr. Meaty

                    Peace Treaty. Gotta hug the Hunter man!

                    Would you look at me roll; I’m smiling tires!

“She’ll never see another man again

Who can’t unsee the matador of men.”

Griff -           How top that, save to say, ma femme discernant,

                    Who rarely grants directors much beyond

                    The decency of an impacted molar,

                    Says Vivian Nash could school a croissant

                    To fly for grass jelly at Jiumen Snacks.

Soph -           Je pense it was bagel at a mitzvah,

                    Mais peu importe; you're magic out of tricks

                    Til Vivvy smoojes, "Throw it all away!"

Viv -             No, no, and I hate surprises, so no.

                    Directing Sophie's simply snatching diamonds

                    Out the fission ball of perfect extra.

                    I mean, your wife, Griffin, wow, can she act!

                    The vital options of our bind she fleets

                    Synousial into mimed emotions

                    Both saddle far and overpass old hat,

                    Emulating by her brisk absorption

                    Of intricate, near-told anomalies

                    Our play-for-pay design, that each desire,

                    Relation, flourish she emancipates

                    In aerial bombardments cross the norm’s

                    An evangelic knockout of the dream

                    That artifice contemporizes nature.

                    With what éclat conscient she can cavort

                    Unconscious brut, her freedom in my form

                    Shall herd our horde into its finest swarm.

Soph -           O Vivian.

Griff -           I’m dying to see it.

Viv -             Now, you two mingle, but séparément!

                    This here's a stand of tycoon sugar trees,

                    So'f I'm to tap em, drain em of their sap,

                    And boil me down some syrup for our cakes,

                    Ms. Berceau needs to slop her cool whip wide,

                    Not blow it all on Guru Favorite Scoop.

                    Get me?

Griff -           Places.

Soph -           Places, if shame's a set.

Viv -             O, I know, it’s just so damn degrading,

                    Mais rappellez: less you playin, ain’t no play.

*They exit. Enter Leveret, disguised as a female caterer.*

Lev -             The loam turns oat, upswells into the funct,

                    And dawns a daint hors d'oeuvre to hot diversion,

                    Or more, a conflagration of misfires:

                    Theater lives, but death's its life-support,

                    A fay concern, soldered by the conflict

                    It would snap. Why purge the kickback passion

                    In chipper, futile, boring ceremoan

                    When all we uber off rolls back again,

                    Pinged by our thing for sprite rebuttal?

                    This cutting community fakes its fights

                    In guise of ending that, the real, which cooks

                    Incessantly the shifters up its crust.

                    So what’s so shock that in this shimmer pit

                    Of grubby golden charity that funds

                    A fiction for conviction, Rockwell came

                    To love a woman thru her love's unmanning?

                    Yet I'm called to the stage to save that man

                    And end that love, so slap the slut I am,

                    Tosser, target, En Boucle Throwzini,

                    For here he klinks avec La Luxe Basenji.

*Enter Rockwell and Sophie. Leveret steps to the side.*

Rock -           Sophie, welcome home.

Soph -           C’est ne pas my home,

Simple.

Rock -           Oui, ma reine, but why not have two,

                    And why not call them one? I have nine cars,

                    Yet as I screech in each, I shout, "My car

                    Could outstrip contrast to the chequered flag."

                    "My ravioli" is a plate of six,

                    Yet I slurp every clump like it's le seul.

                    Homes are so sweet, let us have loads, and with

                    Our grubby stubs go twisting candy knobs.

Lev - A bit far gone for don’t go there, I’d say.

Soph -           My home is with my husband.

Rock -           Et où est-il?

Soph -           Là bas, squeezing some stern Accordion.

Lev - Emperor Cha-Ching of the Hung Dynasty

Puts all his troops on the scenic border.

Rock -           So welcome home.

Soph -           This is a place of work.

Rock -           Superb! Let’s set up shop and sell my smell

                    To you for low’s you’ll go.

Sophie -        Semion, please,

                    You know what I mean.

Rock -           Your meaning’s too mean,

Sophia stern, for I have no accord

Til you squeeze me.

Lev -             Such congress sits so pretty

                    In the siphon, I might's well pop the cork

                    On my suspicions, which, miss this remiss,

                    Were free as the sparkle in the bubbly.

*Enter Jurgen Scheckel, Saiyid Al-Dimmah, and Daksh Tanduru.*

Tanduru -      The starlet and reactor gives her heat

                    Have been spotted!

Jurgen -         Bitte, Simon, acquaint.

Rock -           Sophie Berceau, the three callowize men:

                    Jurgen Scheckel, Germany's Liaison

                    For Culture to our United Nations,

                    And, more to my dammit than his credit,

                    A showdown rocketeer of your husband.

Jurgen -         I engineered Griffin in Geneva,

                    Launch-controlled his Voyage à Consulat,

                    Und settled him securely in good orbit

                    Of zie Secretary General's apprize,

                    Ensuring zus his now polarical

                    Pathfinder status.

Soph -           Griffin speaks moonshots

                    De toi souvent.

Jurgen -         I'd once have said his gifts

                    For seduction vur most exampled in

                    His having gained sufficient signataires

                    For his Accord, but now you shimmer um,

                    I see the charging port of his dark charms.

Soph -           That man could tempt a surfer to a shark.

Rock -           If he's on the board, I’ve got just the jaws.

Lev - What men see in women, I’ll never know.

Jurg -             Hermione in Rome? O how I vept!

Rock -           Perdita in my home? I never slept.

Saiyid -          You're bogarting, Jurgen. Semion, moi.

Rock -           Sophie, of Dubai, Saiyid Al-Dimmah,

                    Oil exec, Al Ikhwan apologist,

                    And plushy bum whose wallet’s half its fat

                    From a photo de toi.

*Saiyid pulls a picture of Sophie from his wallet.*

Saiyid -          Look how it frays

                    With all the times I've teased it out and swore,

                    "I shall not leave la sofa save for Sophie!"

Soph -           Bravo!

Saiyid -          Will you sign it?

Soph -           J'adorerais.

Lev - Like inter-tangled anacondas wasting

Precious entrepreneurial spittle

In the fabled swamps of Goopeevulvagumbo.

*Sophie transcribes Saiyid’s wishes on her photo.*

Saiyid -          "To my beloved Saiyid,

The irresistible sheik

                    Of my Jebel Ali urges,

The sexy nectar bomb

                    I most picture when forced

To milk the treacherous thistle

                    Of a physically and financially

Inadequate scene partner,

                    And - should I ever waken

From my satanic, colonialist sadisms

And crave a high-rise hajj

To shabbah filled with endless

Grammable tangalangs

                    Along the sukuk Straits of Hormuz,

Pardon the French - my servant,

Master, husband, and mastiff.

Jacuzzically, equestrianly,

Agent provocateurishly, Sophie

(The Illicit Pleasure Princess

Of Negrotastic Saiyid's

Five Story Tentickle)."

Jurgen -         This photo is too small for your passions.

Soph -           I think I got it all, mais garde ça secret.

Rock -           Her mari's over there. Go body bomb.

Tanduru -      May I have a moment with her fairness?

Rock -           One I would know more, one I do not know.

Lev - Giant fruit bats frying in bug zappers;

Bugattis circling hairy cul de sacs;

What do men see in women? Their demise.

Tanduru -      Madame Berceau, my sincerest baise-maine.

                    I am Daksh Tanduru of Gujarat,

                    And whilst you do so mesmerize sur scène,

                    Nothing compares to l’excitation

                    Of meeting you au vrai et en ami.

Rock -           Save meeting her au boudoir.

Soph -           O Simon.

Tanduru -      May I humbly ask one portrait with you?

Soph -           Only one?

Tanduru -        See me shake!

Jurgen -           Gib mir dein phone.

*Tanduru gives Jurgen his phone. Leveret approaches Rockwell and they talk aside.*

Lev -             Champagne, sir?

Rock -           No more sham than that vintage.

                    Gimme the bottle; this flute's way too trite

                    To trill the healing shrill I need tonite.

Lev -             Not enjoying yourself?

Rock -           I am espoused,

                    So all I fucking do’s enjoy myself

                    In the joyless jam of self-jacking fruit,

                    But let me jones my junk on that sweet jezz

                    And I will jaup the jet no jerk can jolt.

Jurgen -         Wo zie button?

Saiyid -          His fingers are too small

                    To make it click.

Jurgen -         I click what I can find,

                    But where is anywhere in zese trap toys

                    Zat box zie intuition out of life?

                    Zey swamp us marvels, but at vut expense?

                    Knowing is now knowing how to use them,

                    But ve're zie ones sind used; used to bumbling

                    Herum zer minecraft empty hyper nest

                    Zat seeking ist un dankening of code

                    Und all vee ever find our confounding.

Tanduru -      I will show Saiyid, then he will shoot us.

*Jurgen poses with Sophie.*

Lev -             She’s something.

Rock -           She’s the sum of things, and then some.

                    Cerrulean spiders spinnet thru her veins.

                    She swims in laser sheets. The Bog-God spits

                    Up Star Wars, all you chopshits go lamental

                    With amplitubic frustra, still her revox

                    Swoozes fuzzy Israel out the phaser,

                    A paramuting warmer plush with fobs;

                    That confit mim on boner stilts doth shoot

Juilliards out her ass when we so much

                    As muse if she might not be every bus.

Saiyid -          You're too small, Jurgen. Come closer. Closer.

                    Still too small. See, the viewer is blinking:

                    "Object is too small. Object is too small."

Tanduru -      Jurgen, just use yours and send it to me.

Jurgen -         Ich bin inspirationslos.

Saiyid -        Mine is good.

Jurgen -         If yours took zie pixel in your pocket,

                    Too small Ich denke.

Sophie -        Messieurs, s’il vous plait,

                    My power is a powder; it must mix.

Saiyid -          Mine is very big.

Jurgen -         Too small.

Tanduru -      Take the shot

                    And leave talk of size to puzzled plumbers.

*They pose again.*

Lev -             Too bad she’s married.

Rock - Hey, I said married,

She said, “merd, the show must go on.”

Lev -             Go on?

Rock -           Like puffy on a pastry.

Lev -             She said that?

Rock -           Midst manic humps-n-bumps of inbetwaxt.

Lev -             You did her?

Rock -           Yo, did's just roach for diddle,

                    And I'nt smoke that or anything it rhymes,

                    But if you can't feel free unless you're fenced,

                    I offered her the role of a lifetime,

                    She took it, got it deep in her physique,

                    Then opening, the raves just came and came,

                    And when she bowed, there poised I in the pit,

                    Handing her my signature standing O.

Lev -             Clap, clap. Looks like the Hunter lost his game.

Rock -           To’n aboriginal crypto-savant

                    Who, on my overseas, will have that diva,

                    By time this glare goes dark, for his kiva.

*Enter Vivian Nash and Griffin Hunter.*

Vivian -         Patrons! Patrons, please! Quiet in the rear,

                    Or I’ll recast with Costco Holograms.

                    Now, you bring the bread, so I make the toast,

                    Thus up your cups and blindly follow me

                    Off the precipice of sloppy palate.

Rock -           Waiter, quit waiting and refresh my stink.

                    Wife's on mic, so my comeback’s at the board.

Viv -             First, to my dear husband, Simon Rockwell,

Who funded and translated our creation,

                    And sans whose love...

Rock -           Or, in Flubbish, wallet.

Viv -             I'd be producing...

Rock -           80 proof grogurt

                    For La Leche League.

Viv -             You're the shits, baby.

Jurgen -         How sad zie man who lives visout a vife,

                    For union is zie levity of life.

Rock -           Then weddings are Fort Sumter’s resupply.

Tanduru -      Tell us how you met!

Viv -             Twas in old Mashhad,

                    Farming for the Peace Corps.

Rock -           I plundered her

                    For my harem, she talkt my other wives

                    To death, tilled my core, and wild went to weed.

Viv -             Our first date was a local Persian play

That launched an interest in our current work.

Rock -           Its title: "Giddy Gelds the Golden Goof."

Viv -             It was an iteration of Ta’ziyeh,

                    Or get this phrase - Condolence Theater -

                    Showing muqawama, or resistance,

Via hero myths recounting the death

                    Of Hussein, the Holy Prophet's grandson.

Rock -           While we have tragedy and comedy,

                    The burn and aloe of the careful life,

                    Shia Persians single out Ta’ziyeh

                    As neither both, for in this procession

                    The hero, Hasan, gets the girl and kicks,

                    Defeating thus his foe - a long marriage.

Viv -             Given the Muslim practices ikhlas -

                    Loving only one, not loving many -

                    Which they call shirk - nailing thus our spirit

                    In its prostration to the Church of Cheat -

                    Once the girl's got, what's a man to do

                    But kick?

Saiyid -          Ikhlas requires iiman, or faith,

                    Which in his living for her comes to life.

Rock -           Yet keeping faith takes force, and force of faith

                    Lies in three components for the Muslim:

                    Kawl, or total acquiescence; amal,

                    Or th’identity of intention,

                    And yakim, deep enjoyment of the real,

                    Yet what is acquiescence to a wife

                    Save losing deep enjoyment of the real

                    By misidentifying her intention,

                    Which seemed to be to give, but was in fact

                    To take the very force enables faith?

Viv -             O my God, no more God! But speaking of

                    Happy couples, who are the Gods of God,

                    We're glorified to have with us tonite

                    Our wowzy starlet, Miss Sophie Berceau,

                    And her Hendrix pedal, Griffin Hunter.

                    May her talent non pareil pour fabuleuse

                    Astride his urge to pacify the planet

                    Mouth off a mixolydian that accords

                    Tomorrows free of war and full of play.

Rock -           Hell yeah, let's talk of something interesting

                    Don’t spank my bottom line for stupid change.

                    From where I'm swerving (sorry, no free seats,

                    Cuz we all sittin shiva for freedom),

                    The Hunter Accord’s mighty discordant

                    What with this nasty Franco-Sino belch.

Griff -           The party's for the play.

Rock -           Aw, come on, Gunter,

                    We artsy types, bein, ya know, artsy,

                    Would just be brasioned pink to hear a saw

                    Du côté sexy de l'agressivité.

Griff -           Aggressivity has no sexy side.

Rock -           Your wife two-times your word: I've seen her geld

                    A staging stud with such voltaic steam

                    I longed to spread my hunch before her blade

                    With "O madame, do me to dementia!"

Griff -           Such is theater; it keeps us crazy.

Soph -           Such is politics; it keeps us sneaky.

Rock -           Such is la querelle; it keeps us peacy.

Griff -           This fracturing will be reset; I own

                    With both France and China some special in.

                    My father's mother was a stalwart stock

                    From troweling Manchu roots; that same chi hé

Whose yuanchi caifu richly feeds the globe

                    Runs qualia thru my blood, so Zhōngguó's needs

                    Are native to my raft as dear nai-nai

                    To her toned convictions. And as for France,

                    I'm still in school, but my rogue professor,

                    Une fille tres ingenieux de Provencal,

                    Has taught me this: her people understand

                    We must not burn our house to heat our home.

Rock - I got just the slow gun for that slogan.

Sophie -        Tho, grâce a les Anglais, we’ve also learned

                    To heat our home by burning another's house.

Rock -           Ah Sophie, you earn your name.

Viv -             I, for one,

                    Am on the nuts for the Hunter Accord,

                    Cuz way too many weapons and more hugs.

Rock -           Progressives love the bow and hate the rain,

                    But ‘muricans know that arms are all we've got

                    To keep arift that gaping conscient gulf

                    Which, once traversed, the antipathic tribes

                    Of thought to total border war descend.

Griff -           Arms cleft that gulf and fight to keep it wide

                    By selling blasts in brands of paranoia,

                    And by that crass recidivistic fetish

                    The bridge of pathic will is retro-bombed

                    By arsenals and their delivery systems

                    That for profit semble mass destruction

                    The best they can to block oblivion;

                    Yet what of humanity's future place

                    In sharing love? It's this chemic stockpile

                    That crosses rifts and ends defensive holds

                    That served us once, yet only to ourselves,

                    For there's still no rescue in recursion.

Rock -           You cannot shell the paradoxic base

                    Of heart in hope to supplant paradox,

                    As that base is but strengthened with each shell,

                    For life is made of a truth - every man

                    For himself; and life is made of a lie -

                    Every man for himself. Mired and free,

                    Ambitious, submissive, more mcmansions,

                    More arcosantis, wilder, kinder,

Gitarama or Bhagavadgita,

                    Our gorgeous dianoia of noetic

                    Tantrums over-choosing wise delusion,

                    And in this ever enabling, crippling

                    Conundra every creature seeks a condo

                    Wherefrom it can define defying crowds,

                    So what are weapons? Merely mud and sticks

                    We cuddle throw, for grunts a good enough.

Viv -             What my badder half means to say is we

                    Are all quite hopefulessly inter-trappt

                    In some impending, scripted, ad lib crisis,

                    Playing ungiven parts in untold tales,

                    Our motives masht, our commitment iffy,

                    So we term our endowments our offense,

                    Craving resolve, yet also knowing conflict

                    Only ends with curtains, so on we act,

                    Nearly insane with our kink for features.

Rock -           My ‘terpreter is my intent, thank you.

                    He wants inspections and disarmement,

                    Mais I j'accuse! Inspect the inspectors,

                    Disarm the disarmers, righteous hypocrites!

                    It's all a ploy to dominate the trade.

                    Trust is market crunch, and his trick Accord

                    An act of war against what keeps the peace.

Griff -           What then is your prescription but to kill

                    To find the urgency for more research

Into what can kill us ever faster?

Rock -           Every hand a gun, every mouth a heart,

                    Cuz only then is life, that winfluenza,

                    More than some ol’ nainai's timid wishing

                    Where thoughts are coppt and strength shame's underbitch.

Viv -             Would you look at the time!

Griff -           I say we wish,

                    For when has wish not been the way to why

                    We found a better way? So let us wish,

                    And if we fail, our wish was still success,

                    For what may be can't be until it's wisht.

                    Since our strange species' first attempt t'untie

                    The knot of reason whence we loopt ourselves

                    For safety's sake into society,

                    Our world's swirled more and more to wish.

                    How much should we restrain? How much indulge?

                    Shall we price the jackass delicacies

                    Of independence over the staples

                    Of loyalty? Ought we be raging tools

                    To our single abandon or rather

                    Engage in a common evolution?

                    Shall we call parity polarity,

Wincing under the Banner of Instead,

                    Premier security in sacrifice

                    Of all to one or one to all or none

                    To who can know? How know? We know thru wish,

                    As there we feel the data on warfare

                    And are convinced this fair war’s ever foul.

                    The Hunter Accord is our top effort

                    To realize a planet unbereaved

                    Of its animating wish...excuse me.

*Walker whispers in Hunter's ear.*

Rock -           A pungent cheese that fats the morbid rats.

Viv -             Simon, shut.

Griff -           Forgive me. Something's come up

                    I must tend to.

Rock -           Huzala! Huzala!

Griff -           What was that?

Rock -           O just chanting the fight song

For my elite alma mater, I No U.

Viv -             Well, unsparing patrons, squat on the clocks,

                    But dress rehearsal’s set for cuss a.m.,

                    And I must rest. As for this battle chat,

                    The sift and shift of blame merely forebodes

                    A horror we with splendid make-believe

                    Shall wrest from dire dictates of the real,

Conveying space to liberties of play.

                    So let it go - this game we're too game for

                    Upon a tipping board of random rules

                    And pieces with a mindless all their own -

                    And think upon the piece we'll soon present,

                    The, if you will, Sophivian Accord,

                    Cuz there's no bomb or germ or gas can rip

                    You from your seats when we two hit the floor.

                    So stay, and smile, and mill, but I am off.

Tanduru -      To Vivian Nash and Sophie Berceau!

                    Should we concede our fears to govern us,

                    All governance shall tromp arrayed in fear,

                    Then what we fear, we are, and thus confer

                    On cadence terror's goal: the end of play.

Sophie -        Vous l'avez eu contre les cordes, mon homme.

Griffin -        Walker needs to talk.

Sophie -        When will you be back?

Griffin -        After my talk with Walker.

Sophie -        Walker, Walker, when will she run away?

Griffin -        That is your producer?

Sophie -        I told you he was Vivian's husband.

Griffin -        You forgot to mention he's a bellicose pervert.

Sophie -        And a drunk.

Griffin -        On you.

Sophie -        It's strong stuff; you should hit it.

Griffin -        You stayed with that?

Walker -       Griffin, this needs you now.

Sophie -        O let him satisfy his wife for once.

Walker -       I'll be outside.

Griffin -        Rockwell's rubbed off on you.

*She slaps him.*

Sophie -        O mon cher amour, je suis terrible.

Griffin -        You are no more terrible than justice.

*He exits.*

Vivian -         Sophie, are you ok?

Sophie -        Je ne me sens pas bien.

Rock -           I'll drive you home.

Sophie -        No, I'll get a car.

Rock -           We miss you round the house.

Viv -             It was nice having someone here.

Sophie -        Merci. Soirée super, bon soir.

Rock -           Bon soir.

*Sophie exits.*

Viv -             You fuck.

Rock -           Darling, please, the children. O, what children?

Viv -             The party is ruined.

Rock -           Yeah, so are we.

Viv -             What is this new mania for weapons?

Rock -           My wife is a fight choreographer.

Viv -             Stop hitting on Sophie.

Rock -           Stop directing my dick.

Viv -             We are married.

Rock -           N’est-ce pas vos francais pour “Find the loot

So I can find myself, but should I learn

Where you acquire and plan to land that loot,

All I can find’s the time to say you’ve been

Feminist defunded”? Ser’ously, mate:

I been a-thinkin we ought leave the bar

Where every fookin drink’s a bloody married.

Viv -             I’m leavin first.

Rock -           Simon says his lawyer

Will push you naked on a hateboard down

The decline of his choosing.

Viv -             Have you no

Humanity?

Rock -           Why’n’t come in close and see?

Viv -             We loved each other once.

Rock -           Oops, we have a loser:

Simon did not say go soft on Simon.

*Rockwell exits.*

Viv -             It starts a summer wind, so fresh and warm,

                    Supercharging every field of feeling

                    With an electric passion to preserve

                    A tender, complex, wistful, moral touch,

                    A wedlock of no taint in its containing,

                    And then - O that we ever chose to roll

                    Around in such quivering extractions

                    That putrefacients so pervade the house

                    With rot it’s for leveled – then enters in

                    An interstitial buzz, a bluster snuck

                    Converging other fronts, and slow, yet soon,

                    What soothed conspires wide into a starving,

                    Vicious funnel cloud of unresponsive

                    Cross-destruction, hyper and horrific,

                    A gouging maturation every swoon

                    Cheers as if it knows not where it's clipping,

                    That sends us cowering into dank seclusion

                    To sit and wait, and maybe chat or game

                    To razz the time, while love, once so serene,

                    So richly called upon, devours our homes

                    And rips our torsos, should we brave a squinch

                    Above to snap the demolition, headless.

                    ‘Tis then the season: Cyclone Semion’s

                    Now making landfall on the land it made,

                    And all are litter. Should I seek survive,

                    I must in this show's bunker stay dl,

                    For if it's rhapsodized, I can emerge

                    And stumble on my own beyond its wrath;

                    If not, they'll rummage for me down the path.

*She exits.*

*Phase 2, Scene 2. Leveret is standing in an alley. Enter Jurgen Scheckel.*

Scheck -        Hello?

Lev -             Botschafter Scheckel, step into my shadow.

Scheck -        Who are you?

Lev -             Salubrious Muck.

Scheck -        Vut do you vont from me?

Lev -             Consider the sizzle.

*Leveret projects a video onto the wall.*

Scheck -        Vut is zis?

Lev -             Zis is ein film, like you get on your tongue after rimming your mother’s compulsions, entitled Wienerschnitzel Sushi Crumpet, starring Jurgen Scheckel (any relation?) and his big (tho minor) no-no onna noko, Squeaky Suki. This spycam classic of urp-stewing bawdville follows that dynamic blockchain duo as they share tender Spank-Me Teddy Bear time during last year's UN Save the Children convention in Kyoto. Available now for private screenings, it could soon be beta-released - pending contract negotiations with talent – for a friends and family round, which somehow still includes Frau Scheckel, Scheckel Junior, and the UN Ethics Commission. Enjoy the ho, and thanks for playing the rice is ripe.

Scheck -        O liebe Suki.

Lev -             Herr Scheckel, please.

Scheck -        She is seventeen.

Lev -             Herr Scheckel, focus.

Scheck -        Mein Frau vill mich abschlachten.

Lev -             Saudi security forces will soon parade six Shiite rebels on charges of abducting the Governor of Corsica and transiting him to China. You will supply evidence to BND corroborating the allegations. Are you laughing or crying?

Scheck -        I am German!

*Enter Boa.*

Boa -             Your tracker’s on, Leveret.

Lev -             Boa, go away.

Boa -             Why are you watching breeder porn in an alley with Vermin Schmeckel?

Lev -             Am I not allowed a private life?

Boa -             You kill Hunter yet?

Lev -             Muzzle!

Boa -             Just do like Rockwell says!

Lev -             Sorry, Scheckel. In the know, off the ledge.

Scheck -        I vill do vut you vish.

Boa -             Uh oh. I hear an accident.

*Boa draws on Scheckel.*

Boa -             Kneel, immanent slime, and I fix you up.

*Scheckel kneels and Boa pees in his mouth.*

Boa - Open your mouth. I take grave inception to this speaking with an accident. How can we communerate if we don't denounce our words with prevision? What you need is some accident remover. Open! The architexture of the tithole must always be mashibizing to the jinguistic duct tapes of the American mocking pop, cuz then, when you talk, people say, I ain’t caught nuthin, and the blank motor of contention will chuckle from here to paternity. Open! There ya go. Clean as a Mormon outhouse.

Lev -             Are you thru, Boa?

Boa -             I dunno. Speak, immanent.

Scheck -        Vy are you doing zis to me?

Boa -             Yo, his accident got worse! Guess you can give a man your water but you can't make him think. Plan B for backward. Repeat after me, with no accident. Wee Willy Winky.

Scheck -        Vee Villy Vinky.

Boa -             I hear an accident.

Scheck -        Vee Villy Vinky.

Boa -             Last chance at the accident latrine.

Scheck -        Vee Villy Vinky.

Boa -             Three strikes, you're kraut.

*Boa kills him.*

Boa -             Now that was an accident.

*Rockwell calls from the side.*

Rock -           Boa?

Boa -             Over here in Leveret's private life.

*Enter Rockwell.*

Rock -           This better be a coon in the coop. It's like 4 in the fuckin…holy shit, who shot Scheckel?

*Leveret turns off the film.*

Lev -             I was trying to stop the Hunter Accord.

Boa -             You stop the Accord by killing Hunter.

Lev -             Howbout you stand in?

*They draw on each other.*

Rock -           Do it! Shoot! Let cancer cancel cancer, and I'm free!

Boa -             I'd rather not put him outta my misery.

*They withdraw.*

Rock -           O brooks of patience, swell to rage and flood me in my justice. Fitnah! Fitnah! Up, didg, and thrive a cudgel! Fitnah! My gifts beget ingratitude, my labor waste, my kindness nothing kindred, and every soul mate screws me for my soul. Did he who gave you godhead acid ask for but one tab? Action is the answer fit: Kill Griffin Hunter.

Lev -             I can't.

Boa -             Cuz he loves him.

Lev -             No, I love his wife.

Rock -           You what?

Lev -             I love his wife.

Boa -             You love his wife?

Lev -             I love his wife.

Rock -           You love his wife?

Boa -             She's a woman, Leveret.

Lev -             Yeah, but what an accident!

Rock -           Boa, did you put paxil implants in Leveret’s gimme perimeter?

Lev -             Nah, her snazz just stent me where I stir, and I figure, don’t married morph to martyred when a worthy man goes down, taggin him for good on the spousal scale? Ah, but if he cheats, his account’s deleted, and I know just the thing to half that bake.

Boa -             My ears don't believe what they're seein! Hunter cheat on Saucy? They just left the microwave, she's apparently every man's dream jeep (though I wouldn't ride her out a collapsing kindergarten on San Andreas Day), and Groupy Zilcho got more scroobles than you got screwy schemes.

Rock -           Boa's right. No circumstance exists wherein a man would cheat on Sophie.

Lev -             I make circumstance.

Boa -             You love his wife?

Lev -             The Bluebird Bookstore in the Mission is run by a woman named Mayumi, or Hunter's ex from the happy Hong Kong days. Thru twists too tight to untie now, he thinks she left him and vice versa, so all I gotta do is crosscut Griffin with that panda, et la sirène éloigné est libre en le sachet.

Boa -             A clip of Hunter schlogging a panda in French? Too far fetisht.

Lev -             The panda's a metaphor, you retard.

Boa -             No, it's a marsumial, you leotard.

Rock -           What makes you think this will work?

Lev -             He's my friend.

Boa -             The cheat confesses!

They draw on each other.

Lev -             I am not a cheat!

Boa -             I say what ain't or isn't!

Rock -           Both you, drop it! Allah kiblat al-naya!

They withdraw.

Rock - Shalom Shedu hereby reminds you lunkhead peckers that he bought you from that Malaysian man can on a poppy-back guarantee, so he can return you any time, fully unsatisfied. Leveret, you got 48 hours to roll a Hunter dumpling and leak that pupurazzi to the press. Fail me, and Boa gets the gig.

Boa -             At your surface.

Rock -           Eesh. Did you treat this birkenstock with urine?

Boa -             It just comes out when you pop a pedo.

Rock -           Well, bodies in the streets is bad business. Deep-six this sauerbraten; O, and boys: work together, or work for the worms.

*They exit with Scheckel's body.*

Rock -           "I love his wife." My operative unknowing

                    Speaks for me, and seeking his delicious,

                    Accords me mine. The fig is in my bowl.

                    The puss undamps her downy to the sun

                    On my veranda. Singing in my shower,

                    Avolokoteshvara Baby Shotgun,

                    Skimpy toweled, scampers from bath to bed

                    Whilst I, who charge the world free of charge,

                    Fidget round her like some teenage shoplift

                    Splitting his skull bisecting his gaze,

                    One eye on the cam, one on the candy,

                    To snatch my love, unknown til creme Sophie.

                    And now he comes, and she no more with me?

                    No more inside my house? No more non non?

                    Who calls himself a bighorn yet backs down

                    Before the butt? What komodo gayly

                    Disgorges the boar? How to crimp the clamp

                    That flumes the tube that moogs her to my tank

                    Where we shall splash the act amphibian?

                    I'll show the ballsy scenes to her myself,

                    And, as in all, her wail shall be my wealth.

                    O yeah, I am the terror in this play,

                    Whose cause is common: I will have my way.

*Rockwell exits.*

*Phase 2, Scene 3. Enter Griffin and Walker in Golden Gate Park.*

Walker -       I've never seen such a spotless sweeper.

                    In only half a day, the Governor

                    Of Corsica is secretly abducted

And woosht to Beijing, appeasing China;

                    Then huffy France’s wrath recircuiting,

                    The Saudis shuffle out six Ismailis

                    Who, believe it or shot, did the whole do

                    To flog some megacorp for cancelling

                    Its centrifuge commitment to Tehran.

                    All totally illegal, shadow cranked,

                    Fabricated, and incredibly clutch

                    For the Hunter Accord. I mean, why learn

                    If it only lines your limitations,

                    But where'd your old friend Leveret cut his keys?

Griffin -        Last night’s the first I've hung with him in years,

                    And I know well as you what he's bent on,

                    But back the day, he could smuggle club chairs

                    Into Mysore, hand Tokyo to the mutt,

                    Clear a Thai casino with a whisper,

                    And as his simply being here attests,

                    Super Max is no match for Slender Man,

                    But this feat shows he's been advanced so far

Up the flexors of th’invisible hand

                    His flipping finger now flies to the spot

                    Whence the whole planet sings to just one bird.

Walker -       Let's keep him on our barge.

Griffin -        He's so dead bolt,

                    The only danger's in his over-give.

*Leveret enters on the side and calls Griffin's phone with Scheckel's phone.*

Lev -             Kill Griffin Hunter? Call Griffin Hunter.

*Griffin answers his phone.*

Griffin -        Well, Jurgen, you're up drinking in the dawn;

                    Nennst du es “last call” or a “start too soon”?

Leveret -       Ach, Griffin, I have been avake all night conferring mit das Bundesnachrichtendienst, und I must meet you sofort persönlich to exchange much kritische information um zese recent schlamassels.

Griffin -        Name it, and I'm there.

Leveret -       Do you know zie Buddha Vut Sits Through Sun und Rain Vissout Shelter in zie Japanese Tea Garden im Golden Gate Park?

Griffin -        I do and am very close.

Leveret -       Komm alleine.

Griffin -        Geht es dir gut?

Leveret -       Mach schnell!

*Leveret hangs up.*

Walker -       I'll trail from a distance.

Griffin -        He said alone.

Walker -       Your safety dictates my locale.

Griffin -        Were it not for Jurgen Scheckel, I'd be fetching coffee for the Committee to Get More Sleep. We go way back, and I roll to his wrist.

Walker -       You know him well as Leveret, then?

Griffin -        I need a first lieutenant, not a second wife.

Walker -       You need intelligence and cover from its dearth.

Griffin -        I am your superior.

Walker -       Then leave the part of inferior to me.

Griffin -        Triplingo, please: no speak lowkey contempt.

Walker -       I was going to spare you this spoiler, but after his paltering display of fastigial subrage, I brusht Rockwell's snifter for prints and found some bone yards neath that daffy topsoil. Simon Rockwell is Semion Al-Hillel, the Unrisen Promontory of Vaad Sirat, which gene-curdling cognomen comes from Vaad, or Hebrew Authority, and Sirat, the bridge over hell whence righteous Muslims walk to Jannah but off whose somma sinners fall to flames. This paranational frathouse of biocidal jewrabs has its forkt tongue way up the bunghole of hecatomb – bilateral machete sales to warring tribes on a cash-per-corpse basis; munitions fairs where haggling rogues barter over chemo-tipped no-dong missiles; uranium shipments from defunct labs to jihadi training camps - all government-sanctioned chaos highly threatened by our Accord.

Griffin -        Sophie stayed with that?

Walker -       Vivian seems clean, so chance confers your call: close to me or close to him. This town may seem a playground, but there's a killer in every kid, especially with the toys you mean to nick. Fine, you trust Jurgen, and I'll mirror that trust, but at least admit my hi-sec bad vibes outbrass us both.

Griffin -        Apologies. Sophie and I banged heads tonite, and it has me teetering thru a labyrinth of self-entangling loyalties that twists the more I turn. You know the ropes that hold from wreck, so run the rig, but hear me out: Jurgen’s good people.

Walker -       Then hear me out: If my partner threw such flamingo, they'd get treadwelled by Smoky the Unbearable. When love ain't a lullaby, it's an alarm.

*She exits.*

Griffin -        Huzala. Rockwell said Huzala. But how?

                    ‘Less Leveret...ah, a slope too steep for thought;

                    Backseat, too-terraining, mispromoted,

                    Beginner thought, so stiff and dumb it breaks

                    Its head trying to beat its ass. Yet here

                    Is Leveret, and what he's pulled takes power,

                    Semion Al-Hillel level power;

                    But why would such a butcher free the cow

                    That beefs his feast? Money murks all motives,

                    And those who look, which only looks like looking,

                    Find but the bust of unbillable hours.

                    Should my Accord be saved by Vaad Sirat,

                    It’s far more iron rule than irony,

                    For what is my success save the ransom

                    I pay myself for abetting myself

                    In the failed kidnapping of myself

                    By one huge selfish murderous mistake

                    Escaped alone thru Leveret's selfless love,

                    Which, had he not forced me to swear to sail

Westmost and call him dead, I’d have repaid,

                    Yet now Huzala! Huzala! rings around

                    My public cavern carved by endless spans

                    Of secret guilt dripping thru my granite,

                    Malignant soul, so ungraciously safe,

                    Which finally means deformed. And there's my twitch.

                    No! The past is past. Narcotic fiction,

                    Echo self, loopy feeble remnant, yes,

                    But a blown inner spot I'll no more shine

                    Cross the stage, so should that form-devolving,

                    Damning in(re)surrection once occur,

                    ‘S’all the heave of underfound conundra.

                    Leveret will not crack. His love is his lymph.

                    So then I've nothing but myself to fear,

                    And why fear that wraith? I am the usher

                    To what I was, and we are oversold.

                    Fear, off. You are a broken theft device

                    That shoots red paint into your placer's face,

                    So like a bride whose parents want no part,

                    It's only I can give myself away,

                    Yet I'm already given, so all good.

                    Huzala! Huzala? Sophie, Sophie...

*Enter Mayumi.*

Mayumi -      Ghazan?

Griffin -        Mayumi?

Mayumi -      I can't believe...

Griffin -        Be...leave.

Leveret -       Pounce and Punch, in.

*Enter Leveret's two operatives, Trick and Track, as thieves, Pounce and Punch.*

Pounce -       All assets in the pouch, or I price you at a loss.

*Griffin drops his wallet and Mayumi drops her purse and book into the bag.*

Punch -         That watch tells time to run.

Griffin -        Nah, it’s a knock-off.

Punch -         Knock it off into the pouch.

Griffin -        Please, it’s a gift whose value is only in the feelings it confers, which can’t be yours, so it’s just more heavy junk whose pawn’s unassailable as what makes me a pawn to it.

Punch -         Yo, I’m a snip, so your loss emotes my gain, and the street don’t know a knock off from a put on, so put it in the pouch.

Griffin -        Fine, you win my fist.

*Griffin hits him. Pounce grabs Mayumi.*

Pounce -       Godzilla’s got your geisha and he’s horny in the gnash, so lose the watch or she’s jumbo lizard lunch.

*Griffin drops the watch into the pouch. Punch hits Hunter.*

Punch -         Only a bloody lip cures a bleeding heart.

*They exit.*

Mayumi -      Are you hurt?

Griffin-         I’ve hurt worse at the hands of those who felt I wasn’t worth a fight.

Mayumi -      Should I get help?

Griffin -        Can the mugger be the medic?

Mayumi -      You should never fight back.

Griffin -        When someone means to take something of value to me, I reflexively resist, unless that someone is that something and the taking serves the meaning, whence I can only resist my reflexes, which is screaming at silence to return its futile fruit.

Mayumi -      You talk as if…

Griffin -        As if is all you left me, but I let that go, as you did me, and this time will get better besting you.

*He goes to exit.*

Leveret -       Nice and Not, in.

*Trick and Track enter as Officers Nice and Not.*

Not -             Freezerize!

Nice -            Sorry to bust your Bodhi Zone, but officers just apprehended two suspects fleeing the vicinity in possession of this wallet and this purse. Might you have been denuded of such necessities?

Griffin -        Yes, and they took my watch.

May -            And my book.

*Nice and Not give the wallet to Griffin and the purse to Mayumi, in which they have planted Griffin’s watch.*

Not -             Coherulate to the interrogature!

Nice -            We can certainly report and hopefully restore your outer balance. Let’s start with how you met.

Griffin -        Let’s start with name and number.

Not -             Let’s startegize with we’re top cops and you’re bouncy bottoms, so our relationshipage does not include a suggestion box of your stylification.

Mayumi -      We met six years, three months, and nine days ago.

Griffin -        At 7:08 pm in the Rare Book Room at the Hong Kong University Library.

Mayumi -      He says, “I’m looking for something incendiary yet reclusive, that overturns the shroud of caprice to uncover the body as a battlefield of florigens, something in the way of everything that lacks any bad reviews for obstruction, something that hates squeaking more than it loves the grease.”

Griffin -        And she says, “The Sufis are dizzy with waiting for you.”

Mayumi -      “I know it, and so rue it, but what term can one so speechless with unknown allure truly use – especially when that usage interrupts the being it reveres for being all he needs before he was ever truly used - save what’s overused by those who risk it all to be nothing in blind enthrallment to the world that daily scans what it should newly see?”

Nice -            Wo, and she says?

Griffin -        “All speech is common, desire invasive, rarity rote, yet every love invents one word that teases all away, and by such is universal memory written into touch.”

Mayumi -      After that, it’s all a blur.

Nice -            Damn, you two could make a stickman blubber.

Not -             Status: married.

Mayumi -      Not by law.

Not -             Then by law, you’re under arrestment.

Griffin -        What for?

Not -             Lying to a police officer, cuz there’s no way you two ain’t Mr. and Mrs. Bend Over Backwards Into Each Other if that’s how you inceptionated.

Griffin -        She left me.

Mayumi -      What?

Not -             Break it up, kismet killers, or I’ll cuffulize your mental to your temporal.

Nice -            Officer Not, I will examine the male perp in iso.

Griffin -        Perp?

Mayumi -      We were robbed and assaulted.

Not -            Stop biasizing the probulession, or it’s nako-a-nakem.

*Officer Nice and Griffin step to one side, Officer Not and Mayumi to the other.*

Nice -            Look, much as you think it may tapioca your troubles, nay to inserting Officer Not’s extra fat bubble straw up your obstreperous clique port. He’s a rage artist. That Bwahaha would rather live under a bridge with a plaque that says “Beware World’s Lamest Troll” than grant you a parsec of Miranda. So, let’s just make this easy so I can get back to cruising the green for Polish tourists with a badge fetish, cuz, hey, that’s my Mr. Rogers on a couple cordials. Confess: you love this woman.

Griffin -        What does that have to do with the crime committed against us?

Nice -            Dude, don’t stir me sugar just cuz I’m sweet. This is Sandman Disco, City of Plug and Play, so I do more than hand out optional tickets for triple homicide; e.g., I serve the community, as in it’s a disheveled unity I comb. Cute, right? Like we even got our own department motto: “Make Love, Not Excessive Force.” You likee?

Griffin -        It’s forced, excessively.

Nice -            See, you can unman my mantra, but I still wanna pet your spirit animal with my triple lutz purr stick, cuz my job is to get you back where you belong, which is with Miss Yonder Hither.

Griffin -        I’m married.

Not -             Yeah, and I don’t grazeify the tenderloin for quotality!

Nice -            How’s marriage workin for ya?

Griffin -        Great, thanks.

Nice -            But?

Griffin -        No but.

Nice -            Marriage: sexless.

Griffin -        I didn’t say that.

Nice -            Because you know as a married man that not saying things is the only way to get them heard, but I hear you longing for her.

Griffin –        I’m not longing for her.

Nice-             Then you’re short for someone else.

Griffin -        She left me.

Nice -            Hey, just cuz it left don’t mean it ain’t, ya know, not left. Leaving feels the opposite of loving, yet the negative sows the positive, for the greater a love, the more it leaves, each lover fearing the loss of itself, so leaving to love it, loving to leave it, the leaving but increases the loving, as each longs for, and so loves, what is left, a living that’s become a micro buzz of all you have is all you just let go. Describe your wife.

Griffin -        Beautiful, powerful, brilliant, perfect.

Nice -            Not much room for you in that one woman limo, eh?

Griffin -        It’s a mutual limo, and there’s lots of room, thank you.

Nice -            Mutual limo? You won’t last a run to the dump.

Griffin -        O, and why?

Nice -            Mutual limo like shared guitar: jams get jammed. For a marriage to shine past the outburst, you gotta have one in the spot and one in the shade and a big wide wall of lethal understanding between them, else all you do is fight for the light.

Not -             He confessionize yet, or I gotta boot up my orthodox inclinationals?

Nice -            Pretty much, but I’d like some time with the female.

Not -             Fine, but if things ain’t addin up, Imma crunch some knuckle math.

*Mayumi and Griffin switch places.*

Nice -            So, we have a small problem: he’s still crazy bones about you.

Mayumi -      Crazy bones without effort to connect is crazy broken.

Nice -            And pride is the fear you’re not welcome in the prideless parade.

Mayumi -      Not welcome? I swaddled my abdomen in that man’s mind and sent it down the nullah of dreams to be raised by an extinct species of symbol-making cashew milk, then poof, he disappears, and I text and text and text, and he’s like, “we’re not good for each other.” How can we not be good for each other when we’re so good at each other unless someone in that session doesn’t wanna be beautifully played?

Nice -            Why do people choose to live in a structure they themselves have condemned to spontaneous demolition?

Mayumi -      To be crusht by an untenable dream is often preferable to memento-sitting a prefab insomnia.

Nice -            So sleep with him.

Mayumi –     Excuse me?

Nice -            I’m only following your metaphor to a land where images aren’t ungrateful people.

Mayumi -      He has a bed bug, and I’m sure her bite’s got swell.

Nice -            According to him, they’ve been diagnosed as erogenously incompatible.

Mayumi -      Really?

Nice -            It’s a not so hot disorder sweeping the nation of dusty douvees, but I swore I wouldn’t tell you, so mum.

Mayumi -      Whatever. They can fund the fix.

Nice-             The fix is you.

Mayumi -      Like I’m an aphrodisia cream for his sleepytime tea so he can fat off my meals on feelz in peace?

Nice -            He loves you.

Mayumi -      Then his manhood should meet his mouth and the two of them can gurney his head into the yard for some she-shine.

Nice -            You might as well wait for the lightning to call a strike. You know him: will’s his antidote to the ills of will.

Mayumi - Yes, but how do you know him?

Nice - His profession, which grounds him in a drought of desire, so he fights his inner fires with a calm chill. You’re a sand trap and he’s got shots to make, but the course is not natural to that krakatoan peacock, so the master craves a putt with wood or a hole in the rough. Under every power suit there’s a wild boy strung up with notifications, but for all of us the rush is slow and certain to gracious malfunction. All you gotta do to get what you want is be what he wants. It’s called compromise, and it’s the clinch between a lonely amateur politician and a professional non-stop avocado smoothie.

Not -             If she ain’t talkin, I’m keen to teach her to dogpaddle to Alcatraz for a teethe on my dirtball biscuit.

Nice -            You data his detes?

Not -             All over my sire cutters.

Nice -            Then it’s time for the sentencing.

Not -     Anybody move, nutjob seeks a promotionobble.

Nice -            After long investigation, I can say with the surety that something has happened here. A crime? Yes. But what crime kind? A theft? Yes, for precious objects have been unfairly removed from their rightful sich, i.e. bestride each other. A rape? In a sense. For sensuality has been insensitively forced into the desensitizing service of sensational hurt. A murder? Tho a stretch, not a stretch, for is it not murder when two people who are the harbingers of more people conspire against enpeopling? There has been a crime, and where there is crime, there must be punishment, or crime is all there will be, yet we must punish the culprit to relieve the victim or we ourselves are the culprits, and to do so, we must understand the offenders, the offense, and the offensive. So, my judgment: the offenders are you, the offense is your separation, and the offensive is your immediate and uninhibited proximity to each other, in short, it lies in thee, my friends, it lies in thee. You are the victims and the culprits, you have robbed yourselves of years of bliss, you have raped yourselves with pride and negligence, and you have murdered each other with a brutal absence. The only correction is a life sentence in each other’s affections, for only you can atone for the crimes committed by and against you. So, sure as a yogi’s got his own back, I can apb this 10-13 or whatever lingo makes for killer programming, but that trail will lead in loops, and greatest guilt shall fall on innocence. Find then your justice in reunion. A watch, a book, a wallet, a purse, these but the baubles of #soberoctober. The valuable invaluable is love. Officer Not, let’s roll.

Not - Rehabilitative cohabitationation, or you suck my motion sickness.

Nice -            It lies in thee, my friends, it lies in thee.

*Officers Not and Nice exit.*

Griffin -        That’s your law enforcement?

Mayumi -      That’s our love enforcement.

Griffin -        What are you doing here?

Mayumi -      This garden stands between my home and work, which I could intimize, but that it stands between them, and the walk’s my higher wage.

Griffin -        I came to this garden for work, but fear I’ve found my home.

Mayumi -      A sense of home that starts in fear generally portends a problem with the gaslight.

Griffin -        Yet there’s something in this particular dwelling that makes me feel betrothed to it by a sense that predates any fear I may confuse the problematic for the portentous.

Mayumi -      Perhaps the Buddha Who Sits Through Sun and Rain is Sophie’s newest role?

Griffin -        That may be the only character she can’t nail.

Mayumi -      You’re unfair to her. No one can nail anatman, as the cross is the hammer.

Griffin -        I am unfair, and should go.

Mayumi -      Who’s nailing you?

*Griffin starts to exit.*

Leveret -       Dream and Deep, in.

*Enter two operatives as Dream and Deep.*

Dream -        Blessed be, my beauteous bipedal bebop belugas.

Deep - It’s a sumptuous sunsplash smoochdown in the city of the siliconscious.

Dream -        I’m Dream.

Deep - I’m Deep.

Dream -        And together we gweme.

Deep - In your fleep.

Dream - Dot orgulloso!

Deep - This next song is for you.

Dream - Cuz everyone needs a song, and you are so everyone.

Deep - Listen

Dream - And glisten.

Griffin -        I’m sorry, but I have somewhere to be.

Deep - You have some here to be.

Mayumi -      Do the song for me, as I’m less taken by what I can’t control.

Dream -        This one goes out to all the graveyard day-shifters headin the wrong way down Tied-up Turnpike.

Deep – Colder, colder.

*Dream and Deep sing.*

*Love can’t forget. No, love can’t forget.*

*Its memory gets younger with time.*

*It dies in your arms, but lives in your head,*

*You flee but you follow the sign.*

*Love might forget. Yeah, love might forget.*

*The wilds of the heart will not tame.*

*It hides in your head, but falls in your net;*

*You sleep and it cries out your name.*

*Love must forget. O love must forget.*

*As glories must close with the sun.*

*It falls in the West, but East it has set,*

*And there it will rise once again.*

Griffin -        I should have signed the Accord in Boston.

*Enter Walker and Detective Madera.*

Walker -       I told you he’s meeting with Scheckel.

Dream -        Dream.

Deep - Deep.

*Dream and Deep exit.*

Madera -       Jurgen’s had a race lift.

Walker-        Griffin, who is that?

Griffin -        Nothing, no one, old friends, great, nice to see you, keep in touch.

Mayumi -      I should have walked around the world to work.

*Mayumi exits. Leveret, Trick and Track talk over their headsets.*

Leveret -       Ah, crotch shot. It’s Defective Mascara.

Trick -          You want I pop him?

Leveret -       Chill, fireball.

Walker -       Where is Scheckel?

Griffin -        He never showed.

Madera -       Lucky sucky for you, I guess.

Griffin -        Howbout I suck the luck outta the hole I put in your head and spit it down your mama’s mouth so she can reabsorb her biggest mistake, you little racist bitch?

Walker -       Griffin, back.

Madera -       I’m an ecofreak who runs on yuck, not luck, and my mother’s passed, so if you’re going in for the spill, don’t mistake her lowest chakra for your kundalini with charred necrofilet.

Walker -       This is Detective Madera, SFPD; he’s investigating Scheckel’s whereabouts.

Madera -       His wife’s filed a missing person.

Walker -       And Scheckel’s last call was to you.

Leveret -       You told me that call was untraceable.

Track -         Only the network knows the network, and the network knows nothing.

Walker -       What happened to your lip?

Griffin -        We were mugged. The cops came. It’s in the system.

Madera -       The only crime reported in the park this morning involved a flasher on molly and a group of Tahitian “ambi-bassadors.” Which are you?

Trick -          Just to be clear, that wasn’t me.

Leveret -       You are not in the clear.

Madera -       What did Sheckel say on the phone?

Walker -       Don’t answer that, Griffin.

Griffin -        He asked to meet but didn’t say why.

Walker -       Shall I leave you two alone so your pillow talk can grow even more self-incriminating?

Griffin -        No, I’m thru.

Walker -       Are we thru, Madera, or shall I sue the department for medical inattention?

Madera -       We’re thru with our speed date, but now my vodka’s met the red bull, don’t expect me not to stalk you like a gmo peavine.

Walker -       You get one star so you can reach for it and fall on your face.

Leveret -       The book, the book!

*Enter Trick.*

Trick -          Mister, esta su libre?

Griffin -        Si, gracias.

*Trick gives him the book and exits.*

Madera-        Great meeting you, Mr. Hunter. I’m a huge fan.

Walker -       Then blow yourself and leave my man alone.

*Griffin and Walker exit on one side, Madera exits on the other. Enter Leveret, Trick, and Track.*

Leveret -       Good work, minus the bad parts.

Track -         Dude, your humpty buddy nearly crackt my fancy brain case.

Leveret -       If you’d stuck to the script…

Trick -          Glue trap alert!

Track -         We’re complex artists, man. Deny us the spur of the moment, and your horsey’s goin headlong into monotony knackers theonomous.

Leveret -       Then thanks for the fuck-ups.

Trick -          Don’t thank me.

Track -         Bank me.

*Trick and Track exit.*

Leveret -       You think I’m cool to do the thing I do?

        So which of you would want it done to you?

        Exhume the pre-school paintings of your passions

        And lay them out, like post-traumatic rations

        Shining trite thru lifting, lowering fog

        To actinize with sensuous dialogue

        The lovey-shovey photosyntheses

        Of all you cloak to not be shown a sleaze,

        Til your puritan thespophobia

        (Yes, you misheard me right) hurls off its bra,

        Drops trou, and dies a dream. My productions

        Merely offer stage to their seductions,

        Conducting thru new channels old desires;

        Stirring sparks from long-forgotten fires,

        I soften the cordelian irony

        Of lunging at a coded liberty

        Because your biological septics

        Think they’ll flush by flash dancing with metrics,

        And remember: I’m saving Griffin’s wish

        Returning him unto his rightful swish,

        The woman he’d have married had I not

        Disarmed their clasp to give my grasp a shot.

        I did it for love, and do it again,

        So antibac your claps, or we on friend.

*Leveret exits.*

*Phase 2, Scene 4. Enter Sophie and Xiao at the Mission.*

Sophie -        Xiao, have you seen my sneakers?

Xiao -   Monarch, have you seen your feet?

Sophie -        Ah, merci.

Xiao - I worry for you, mon étoile.

Sophie -        Worry is idle sport. I’m simply sideswiped by my pinpoint; so many lines running thru my head, I feel like a drum and bugle corps drilling on a distressed plane.

Xiao - Tu as besoin de dormer.

Sophie -        I would have slept better had I stayed awake.

Xiao - Griffin is still out?

Sophie -        Oui, silly me: I thought my husband being here would mean by husband being here.

Xiao - He works too hard.

Sophie -        It’s where he puts the hard that leaves me wanting.

Xiao - The party did not end in you?

Sophie -        It ended with a giant misdirected claque au son visage, and were my life in rehearsal, I’d seek a second, kinder take.

Xiao - He deserved it, peut-être.

Sophie -        No, it was from my being too long across the pond. In France we understand that questions of trust are how lovers grow close, but Les États-Unis is one giant cineplex on mass domestic shootings.

Xiao - Quelles questions de confiance pourrait-il y avoir entre vous deux? Griffin is as honest as lift-off and smart enough to know any other woman a demotion.

.

*Enter Griffin (carrying Mayumi’s book) and Walker.*

Walker -       Sleep. I’ll wake you if there’s news. Morning, ladies.

Xiao - Morning.

Walker -       Sophie, how was your night?

Sophie -        Lonely. Yours?

Walker -       The same.

*Walker exits.*

Xiao - That one I wouldn’t trust with the shoes I never wear.

*Xiao exits.*

Griffin -        You shouldn’t snap at her.

Sophie -        She stole my husband. What should I do, her laundry?

Griffin -        You’re too much.

Sophie -        Am I?

Griffin -        Not for me.

Sophie -        Then why are you acting like I’m some sex shop that doesn’t have what you’re looking for?

Griffin -        Sorry?

Sophie -        D'où je viens, you kiss for hello or you let it all go.

Griffin -        I was hiding my wound.

Sophie -        O Griffin, did I do that?

Griffin -        Yes, but it’s fine. I should have known if I gave you lip you’d split it with me. Très genereux!

Sophie -        Will you ever forgive me?

Griffin -        Perhaps.

Sophie -        Did you buy a book?

Griffin –        Yes. *Sufi Teachings*. Sufi, like Sophie. To more breathe your secret wisdom. Let’s go upstairs.

Sophie -        I’m going swimming.

Griffin -        Swim with me upstairs.

Sophie -        Maybe. What time is it?

Griffin -        Time for laps upstairs.

Sophie -        Griffin, where’s your watch?

Griffin -        I took it off.

Sophie -        Where?

Griffin -        Before my shower.

Sophie -        What shower? You’ve been out all night, and you wore it to the party.

Griffin -        I don’t believe I did.

Sophie -        I know you did. Je l'ai admiré sur toi. O, Griffin, please don’t say you lost my wedding gift to you.

Griffin -        Of course not.

Sophie -        Then where is it?

Griffin -        Ah, now I remember. I removed it during my meeting.

Sophie - Pourquoi?

Griffin - It was itching.

Sophie -        It never itched before.

Griffin -        It got hot, so it itched. Walker will get it.

Sophie -        Walker. So you’ve taught your bitch to fetch?

Griffin -        Sophe, arrête ça.

Sophie -        Griff, why do you think I gave you that watch

        On our wedding day? To pretty your wrist?

        To keep you punctual? To shackle you

        To me? Of course, all those, pourtant un de plus:

        To keep you ever watchful of our love,

        For both are one precarious allotment.

        Their tick-tock is powered by rewinding;

        Tho beautiful, they would never be made

        Were such not also useful to the trite

        D'être sur l'argent; Love and time perdure

        But by the proper motion of their hands;

        Accuse them of being over-precise,

        And there’s no perfect chance you will not miss;

        Connecting you to the hustle pattern,

        Ils libèrent félicités uniques.

        Hold fast to them to profit what must be,

        Dance round their ring to operize what may,

        And take them off only to protect them

        From loss or damage, yet the danger past,

        Stick that buckle in, resserrez bien,

        And off you scram, in the band, on demand.

        Cette minuteur à la mode dit “pas le temps”:

        No time like the present. No time to waste.

        “No time for fake niggaz, uh hu uh hu.”

        My Sophie teachings? No time for no time.

        Breathe it deep, my love. J’suis dans la baie.

*She exits.*

Griffin -        What must I be to be what I am not?

        Untolds ago, my life became a lie,

        A guilt I feebly quilt into reserve,

        But now, guilt gives good chase, and I am caught

        In more me than I know: last night, two lies,

        This morning, twenty more. Tomorrow, what?

        I will not know the story from the spoof.

        After all my scraping thru the firma,

        Blindly carving out the sight-splurging light,

        Must I return as empty as I went

        To the burrow of my birth? How live anew?

        The past’s a driving virus that creates

        Its own defense to mutate prior to

        Identity, yet made to kill its host,

        In its upper hand arrives its fail,

        And so it dies, and takes its source along,

        A happy couple, vigor-victimized.

        I am so deeply basted in deceit

        That every smirking probe emerges drencht

        In truth-corrupted bunk. O sacrifice,

        You’re nothing in yourself; they make you mean.

        This Walker talk has clogged my cribration

        For trust and chat. My loll of judgment’s basht

        By fact I suspect of being fiction,

        By fiction I must force into some fact,

        And in this paragenesis, my mind

        Fulgurates dioptricious crystals,

        Enlight’ning to see, madd’ning to see thru,

        All skewed and hued by dark stenecious growth,

        Its cells fabricating and dividing

        A heavy, fervent, raw duplicity,

        That I am crafted of my self-distortion.

        Round me, deceit convects, and thru me too,

        Yet how can I be free of this affliction

        When truth now seems an advertising trick

        Burning the bridge that brought me to my sense?

        Lies over lies over lies, O let me out!

        Perhaps to leave a lie, one has to lie,

        Much like a life-raft off a sinking ship

        Is a lesser craft, but at least it floats,

        And once on land, it’s fondly set aside,

        Then on good ground you stand, which after all

        Is but another respite from the sea.

        To know you lie’s to know you know the true;

        Yet what if you know two, and can’t decide

        Which is the truer? Truer is the truth,

        As less is but a lie. O fatal fact.

*Griffin gets a text from Mayumi. He reads it.*

“Leveret sent your number. I have your watch.”

She is where I lie, so to my salvage.

*Griffin exits.*

*Phase 3, Scene 1. Enter Sophie at the bay getting ready to swim. Detective Madera enters.*

Madera -       Ok day for a sway in the bay, I’d say.

Sophie -        A clap for your rap, but on with my cap.

Madera -       May I fix your strap?

He fixes her strap.

Sophie -        Yap, snap, and in I dive…like…

Madera -       A slap in a flap?

Sophie -        Elle rechappe.

Madera -       Ms. Berceau, before you go: Detective Madera, SFPD, and I have a few questions concerning your husband.

Sophie -        Well, Detective, you can’t have more questions than I, so if you’d like some of mine, buy quick, as my asking price is bullish on his having priceless answers. Bon jour.

Madera -       Did you sleep with him last night?

Sophie -        I’m Sophie Berceau, the vixen myth, the simulacra of insatiable sensuality, the fleshy fireplace – you give me wood, I give you warm. Comment aimes-tu my French for none of your business?

Madera -       Not as much as I like your “visa revoked” for failure to cooperate with an officer of the law.

Sophie -        I know enough OG to plead the fifth, and its only rhyme, fuck da police.

Madera -       Ms. Berceau, my concerns concern you as they concern your greatest concern, your husband.

Sophie -        My greatest concern is myself, so ply your concern for my husband with my husband. I have a sea to assault.

Madera -       No sea could hold its salt with such a fresh water fish fondling its foams.

Sophie -        Don’t let your offstage activities create a personal drama detrimental to the success of the overall performance.

Madera -       I’m a one-man show; everything I do benefits my performance.

Sophie -        You do seem like a man who could pull one off on his own.

Madera -       I am, but it’s so much better when you come too.

Sophie -        If I came too, you’d get your come-uppance. Est-ce que la phrase?

Madera -       The perfect phrase.

Sophie -        Made in the U Blasé. Au revoir, Detective Boolala.

*A diver exits the water dragging a headless body.*

Diver 1 -       When your hero beams on high for draggin your friend from the bar, but you know deep down he’s already scalped.

Madera -       Where’s the other diver?

Diver 1 -       Sifting for the top of this zesty pickle jar.

Madera -       I’m sorry you had to see this, Sophie.

Diver 1 -       Wo, it’s Sophie “She Puts France in my Pants” Berceau. I’m surfacing so fast into the Paris of the West the bends in my wave organ done trolleyed the Tendernob up my Loinhill. Ms. Berceau, I’m your biggest fan, next to my friend here, who’s so star-crusht, he’s lost his head. Like I seen all your films, but if you don’t mind my sayin, and I know my friend don’t mind cuz he ain’t got one, I’m partial to your deep fakes: Long Johns Dangereuse, Lady Banana Legs Goes to Splitsville, and the Amateur Gynecologist; “If you won’t love me, Serge, at least do me the honor of jumping my Peugeot.” Yo, Detective, can I borrow your pen so Ms. Berceau can sign my rubber suit?

*A second diver enters out of the water with a bodiless head.*

Diver 2 -       Noggin Accomplished!

Sophie -        C’est Jurgen Scheckel.

Diver 1 -       And that’s Sophie Berceau.

Diver 2 -       Wo! “If you won’t love me, Serge…”

Madera -       Take him…

Diver 1 -       Them…

Diver 2 -       Just cuz I’m detached don’t mean you can leave me out.

Madera -       To the wagon.

Diver 1 -       Hey, brainy. Wanna neck?

Diver 2 -       Sorry, but I like a man with a head on his shoulders.

Diver 1 -       I’ll let you be on top.

Diver 2-        Fine, but I only love you for your body.

*They exit.*

Madera -       Forgive them, Ms. Berceau. The pressure cooks their brains and out pop words so uncouth they burn like toddies in a handle shortage.

Sophie -        How did this happen?

Madera -       That is the million sand dollar question. Scheckel’s wife reported him missing this morning, we found his Benz at the pier, and this note was pinned to the steering wheel.

Sophie -        “I met a dead man who bobs in the bay / said, Griffin Hunter threw my life away – Salubrious Muck”

Madera -       Is that name familiar to you?

Sophie -        No.

Madera -       The last call on Scheckel’s phone was to your husband.

Sophie -        And?

Madera -       And they were to meet in person this morning, but Scheckel never showed.

Sophie -        And?

Madera -       And I found him there with someone else.

Sophie -        And?

Madera -       Varietal, woman.

Sophie -        It must have been his counsel, Walker.

Madera -       Must have been?

Sophie -        Was it not?

Madera -       Ah, fog city. Look how the day on-slithers thru her streets, chimeric sun malingering in freakish haze, churning wind that peaks in lull, making sense but a version of obscure. Like some motley, shamble jewel she kelters, a beautiful beast of haggard vibrancy whose cool pacific blur yet tempers a head that can scald the yearning hand. Such tips and dips, such murks and gleams, her lazy manic magic leaves you wondering: Might pewter loathens lurk in painted ladies? Might her gate be golden but to gobble what it lures? What awful avarice struts her hippy enclaves, turning peace and love to war on the Haight? They say the crust beneath her’s soon to shake with an ancient, unforgiving fault, knocking all her spiraled dalliance off its darling plates, so might she compensate this shifting random terror with a rampant ease that hennas pretty patterns on munition? Yes, it is too true: So many gorgeous contradictions grace her pied peninsula, all one can do is celebrate suspicion.

Sophie -        Answer my question, Detective.

Madera -       Like you answered mine? Ok, OG. Fuck da police.

Sophie -        I am tamed, so let us trade.

Madera -       It’s not my place to put your husband in his place, Ms. Berceau, unless that place is in cuffs.

Sophie –        My husband is far more innocent than you will ever be.

Madera -       I’m sorry to hear that from his wife.

Sophie -        I didn’t speak as the woman who loves him, but as the human who hates you.

Madera -       The human you hate is trying to save the man you love, so maybe you should repartition your drives so your calculations favor your estimations.

Sophie –        You’re out to save him like Scheckel’s got a headache.

Madera -       If he is true, the truth will save him. If he’s not, what’s to save?

Sophie -        If he is not, you and I will hold hands at his beheading.

Madera -       I accept the invitation.

Sophie -        But if he is, he’ll hold your head in his hands.

Madera -       I’d rather you do the holding in that case, but my healthy head shows I don’t quibble with the queen.

Sophie -        Keep it up.

Madera -       What about your swim?

Sophie -        The thought of it disgusts me encore plus que toi.

Madera -       Now, Sophie, don’t be squeamish. The ocean is a bouillabaisse of bodies, decomposing, feeding nibbling creatures, which we then nibble in return, drenched in lemony butter.

Sophie -        Je le reprend. You disgust me more, but no.

Madera -       Do not bodies and death make such a fine couple, the French say petit mort when the body is most alive?

Sophie -        Shut up.

Madera -       Let me watch you swim.

Sophie -        It’s unclean.

Madera -       It’s a self-cleaning organ.

Sophie -        I hate you.

Madera -       Still I need to see you swim.

Sophie -        And why is that?

Madera -       I bear a certain guilt investigating your husband. These matters are potentially scoliotic to the UN skeleton and could gravely cripple him and his ambitions for peace. Your swimming would proxy-pure me of this transgression; to see you stroking the surf, lunging thru the surges, throbbing in the broth, aka swimming; it would toss fresh shrimp to a gull who far too often feeds on stale horn dogs.

Sophie -        So much sense in a simple swim.

Madera -       So much truth in a simple man.

Sophie -        Then in honor of your truth, let me swim.

*She gets into the water and heads out.*

Madera -       Let you swim.

Sophie -        Will you be here when I return?

Madera -       No, but I’ll be many places later.

Sophie -        Purified?

Madera -       Thanks to you.

Sophie -        My husband had nothing to do with this.

Madera -       Then I’ll keep it between us.

Sophie -        What?

Madera -       How’s the water?

Sophie -        No, I’m fine.

Madera -       8:02.

Sophie - Profitez des non-partagés.

*Sophie swims away, Madera exits.*

*Phase 3, Scene 2. Leveret is at his place. Griffin enters and hands Leveret Mayumi’s book.*

Griffin - Leveret, up.

Leveret - Tomorrow already?

Griffin - Yesterday again.

*Griffin hands him Mayumi’s book.*

Leveret -       Thanks, but reading puts words in my mouth.

Griffin -        Take it to Mayumi and get my watch.

Leveret -       What am I, a fedex truck at the tip of your tongue?

Griffin -        As a favor for a friend.

Leveret -       Favors ain’t so friendly on friendship.

Griffin -        Just this once.

Leveret -       Just this once? And last night? And mahjong years ago? Man, this ungrateful needs an off switch. Plus, I got a job, sellin crap to carp, so swap yourself.

Griffin -        I can’t.

Leveret -       Why not?

Griffin -        It is Mayumi.

Leveret - And you are Griffin Hunter.

What power wields that woman over him?

Sure, her licorice hair, a roused anemone

Swirling in the neap of euthermic seas,

Stains your gentry core. Yes, her homemade scent,

Mountain Mint with Punica Reduction,

Infused in lotions, rises kneaded, set

Into the salty, red rock smooth abutments

Of her indian summer skin dripping

Into a crown of moist and limber reeds

That all entanglings on an up note end.

And sure, her nuna eyes, deep as grottos

Where secrets go to scrub away their shame,

        Her downy depressions, her tottering crests,

        Her smattered chocolaterias unfoil

        A basho sweet that swells with every swipe

        Of your bottled gastropod – yes, all these

        Could stun a man to thinking that one dough

        Can make all kinds of cake, but yo, that thought’s

A draft got optioned so it don’t get called.

        You have a future, that future rules you,

        And that rule says, “No candy for daddy,

        Less he wants to lose his ministration.”

        Griffin Hunter? That woman has no thorax

In him, cuz he’s a firm of strategy

        That has a case on every mystery.

Griffin -        Know thyself? It’s cuddles with a killer.

Leveret -       But what the yuck, I’ll do it.

Griffin -        You will?

Leveret -       Anything for world peace! There’s fungus in the fridge.

Griffin -        Wait! How do you think she’ll take it?

Leveret -       Her book?

        Those paper-softened fingers will reach out…

Griffin -        How will she take my sending you?

Leveret -       She’ll be devastated.

Griffin -        Why?

Leveret -       She’s in love.

Griffin -        With who?

Leveret -       With me.

Griffin -        With you?

Leveret -       With you, Huzala.

Griffin -        She left me, Leveret.

Leveret -       Yeah, because she loves you. She told me it was too intense. It scared her, but now she’s at home in the brave.

Griffin -        So is Sophie.

Leveret -       True, but different.

Griffin -        How?

Leveret -       The land of the free offers two career tracks to the gender whose freedom’s low supply jacks up exaction: a great waitress or a weighty greatness.

Griffin -        Sophie’s both.

Leveret -       Mayumi’s neither.

Griffin -        I love my wife.

Leveret -       I love salt and pepper.

Griffin -        What are you doing?

Leveret -       Saving my best friend.

A man convicts himself in perjury

Against a system that demands the truth

To preserve sanctimony from rigor

By denouncing his desires on the stand;

Then, like rotting flesh clears a pricey beach,

The waste of it converts to energy

That hurls forth the opposite compulsion

For paradox as pure democracy,

Where you vote you, empowering your vote

Against yourself, which disempowers you

And propagates diverse constituence

Whose only goal’s to stir up stalemates

Whence governance and impotence collude.

Griffin -        I am all candidates in such a race.

Leveret -       You love her?

Griffin -        I don’t know.

Leveret -       Good! That’s progress.

        Better not to know than to know too soon.

Griffin - How can I know? I’m masted neath myself

And roll the more I try to fill the sail.

Leveret - So lash yourself to me, and dead’s the run.

Griffin - And scend’s the deck.

Leveret - Then face how things stack up,

Cuz you ain’t on the wind; you on the wall.

        Your feels may be fly, but your fixations

        Keep chocking you to alternate wedges

        That gronk your driver down some billboard cliff,

        And bam, you’re screamin cross the sharpest slab,

        Cheese-grating a cwm of crumpled cravings.

The map to what you want is in your mind,

        But backwards til reflected in your heart.

*Griffin grabs him.*

Griffin - Do as I ask of you, or we are done.

Leveret -       Ah, you vicious fraud! Where in making peace

Sits throttled honesty in rightful perch?

I am not your quarry, Mr. Hunter.

Griffin -        For all the love my wife preserves me with,

        I will not, in the eons of my urge,

        Allow one subtle chink to brittle in,

        For once the fissure slots, there’s no stopping.

Leveret -       Subtle chink? That’s it, you’re off my top rope.

        How dare you derogate her pedigree

        With such defamating filth? I thought you

        Understood her individual force,

        But you’re just all about that yellow fever,

        Like she can’t wait to drink your soapbox down;

        She sets, you rise, eyes aslant, lips agape,

        Some love-you long-time guradoru doll,

        You scream banzai and wax her ears to wet.

        Man, you’re an embarrassment to basic.

Griffin -        I’ll stop falling when you stop pushing me.

Leveret -       I’m saving your marriage. I’m on your side,

        Sophie’s side. Sophie, Sophie, say it

        Til you sicken. I’m here for her, but you?

        O no, your brainhand’s elsewhere, groping round

        Some jasmine bungalow for lily pops,

        But I’ll stop speaking now, cuz it is clear

        Me and Sophie don’t get union wages

        In your erotic picture. We got cut.

Griffin -        It’s you suggested I cheat on Sophie.

Leveret -       Cheat? Did I say cheat? Cheating’s far too cheap

A shortcut for so temerare a man;

Sides, you go to Sophie thru Mayumi.

Griffin -        What?

Leveret -       You fantasize about her?

Griffin -        Everyone does that.

Leveret -       Don’t make it right.

Griffin -        Exactly.

Leveret -       Just makes it common.

Griffin -        And?

Leveret -       And you ain’t common. You and Sophie have

        A love above, but something holds it down,

        And for her, for that love, it’s got to go,

        Cuz fantasies only end in action

When they believe reality lives up.

Griffin -        And what if it doesn’t?

Leveret -       What if it does,

        And you never had the guts to pluck it?

Griffin -        Why do I listen to you?

Leveret -       I’m your friend.

Griffin -        You were my friend.

Leveret -       O when the were get in?

        When I stopped serving your prison sentence,

        Or when the Governor of Corsica

        Landed in China and saved your Accord?

Griffin -        You are my friend, so help me one more time.

Leveret - Ok, fine.

Griffin - Thank you.

Leveret - But what do I say

When she asks why I’m doing it for you?

Griffin - I’m busy.

Leveret -       Yes.

Griffin - Very pressing business.

Leveret - Very pressing pacification business.

Griffin - I’ll wait here.

Leveret -       Cool.

Griffin -        What?

Leveret - Fuggedaboutit.

Griffin -        Tell me.

Leveret -       Nah, it’s nothing.

Griffin -        Leveret, tell me.

Leveret -       I’m sad.

Griffin -        Why are you sad?

Leveret -       Cuz I’m no help.

Griffin -        What? I owe my entire life to you.

Leveret -       Tho not a parent, I can imagine

        A constant frustration borne out of love,

For it’s too much a generous do-it-all

        That generates maladroit do-nothings.

        See ya.

Griffin -        Wait.

Leveret - What?

Griffin - I’ll go myself.

Leveret -       You sure?

Griffin -        Give back book, get watch, head home.

Leveret -       I dunno.

Griffin -        Why not?

Leveret -       She’s awesome.

Griffin -        I love my wife.

Leveret -       And this is for her.

Griffin -        This is for her.

Leveret -       The only way around a fear is thru it.

Griffin-         You taught me that.

Leveret -       We taught each other that.

Griffin -        Ya habibi.

Leveret -        Ya habibi.

*Griffin exits. Leveret gets on the phone.*

Leveret -       I need cams at the Bluebird Bookstore, stat.

Trick -          On it, boss.

*Leveret exits.*

*Phase 3, Scene 3. Enter Vivian, Sophie, Powers at the theater.*

Powers -        Your silence most confuses me, beautiful Fatima;

Come and name my crime, or I shall die of peacefulness.

Viv -     Sophie, cue.

Sophie -        I’m sorry.

Viv -     Powers, take ten.

Powers - Someone I know can’t keep her pause off me.

*Powers exits.*

Viv -     We open in two days, honey. Care to join us?

Sophie -        I’ll be there.

Viv -     How be there when you ain’t here?

        Sophie, I’m rich, but I don’t have all day.

Sophie -        I’ll be there.

Viv -     What’s the problem?

Sophie -        It’s personal.

Viv -     This is theater; it’s all personal.

Sophie -        I think Griffin may be cheating on me.

Viv -     Duh. Cheat on wife or cheat on life.

Sophie -        Vivian, no.

Viv -     Men are engine blocks on an efficient assembly line: quickly bored, their butcher minds barking day and night, “Fresh meat! Fresh meat!” But they’re selling to themselves, so it comes as fast as it goes.

Sophie -        Griffin’s different.

Viv -     So why you think he’s cheating?

Sophie -        Late meetings, strange smells, sketchy excuses, all adding up to some je ne sais quoi.

Viv -     Je say quack quack: He’s cheating on you.

Sophie -        Griffin didn’t marry me for nothing.

Viv -     It’s for nothing men get married. By wanking a woman into a wife, he gets a scene partner for that droll bedroom farce, No Sexit. And action: center stage, a darling house, aka the prison that jack-off built. Enter Sir Reptitious and Miss Leading: “Hello, dear. I’m tired. Goodnight. Sleep now. Wake now. Bye now. Back now.” Wince and Repeat. This nothing farm grows nothing so its hands can have the time to pick something fresher, like a dead drummer or mermaid scale tea. Finally, standing in for making it, Confession enters and torts: “I’m seeing someone else because all I see is you and you’re someone else.” And there it is – the nondramatic climax, the conflict sans uptick, the nothing that makes marriage a vain transfusion.

Sophie -        Simon’s got you cynical.

Viv -     Simon’s gagged me on the truth. Once upon a lie, I found a good man, a hearing man, a man who gave his mind and time to me alone and askt only questions in exchange, but lo how time doth fuck the brains of love, cuz now he’d rather deep fry his ding-dong than look my way. He’s vile, rude, sneaky, vindictive, and at you like a stoner on a slice. But who’m I? If that’s your bag, shop til he drops you. I got Powers, so more power to ya.

Sophie -        Vivian!

Viv -     Who could it be…Walker?

Sophie -        No.

Viv -     Why not? They travel, share hotels, a common cause, and behind every huffy there’s a hussy.

Sophie -        She’s his advisor.

Viv -     Advisors are attractive in allegiance, and that’s one uppity prigolo. How’s that make you feel?

Sophie -        How’s that make me feel?

Viv -     Right now, on his desk, Griffin and Walker are two wet fishies floppin in a bucket, mixin up their tickle with their tackle.

Sophie -        Silence, catin puante! C’est impossible!

Viv -     The only impossible’s avoiding the worst.

Sophie -        I’ve met the worst, and it is you and Simon, with your disgusting swap meet marriage; you call the world ugly so it looks like you, but Griffin and I will not be corrupted.

Viv -     Now we’re getting somewhere.

Sophie -        O je vais mourir.

Viv -    Feel it, Sophie. That is true emotion.

Sophie -        It can’t be true.

Viv -     Of course it ain’t true. It’s theater, but it got you going.

Sophie -        Excuse me?

Viv -     My failed marriage may be my biggest success, but I can spot a milk and cookies couple mid-sneeze. No way would Griffin cheat on you. And with Walker? That male impersonator could sue herself for sexual abandonment. Like if she found her chuchu she’d probly bug it to keep it loyal to her frigid state. My only goal, Sophie, was to goad you to real dramatic depths so you can play your part in our consortium, for herein lies such rage-affirming power, if it can fly the realm is ours wherein we rouse the worry, so grip your talent like your man and love it.

Sophie -        I will, Vivian.

Viv -     Powers to the stage!

*Enter Powers.*

Powers -        Powers on the stage.

Viv -     From the top, people, and this time I want a massacre of marital proportions!

*All exit.*

*Phase 3, Scene 4. Griffin enters the Bluebird Bookstore. Mayumi is behind the counter.*

Griff – Sorry, can’t stay, big meeting, gotta rush, here’s your book, need my watch, and xiè xiè.

She holds out her wrist with the watch on it.

Griff - Mayumi, don’t.

May -    If it’s yours, take it back, unless you’re being dishonest and like it on me. Do you like it on me, Ghazan?

Griff - I don’t like that I might.

May -    Did you read my book?

Griff - Yes.

May -    Then you learned there’s no deeper like than not liking what you might like cuz you’re afraid of liking it.

Griff - It’s a wedding gift from my wife.

May -    Do you want it cuz you love it or cuz she’d scold you if you lost it?

Griff - I’m not here for sangha games that show why games should not be played.

May -   Then why are you here?

Griff - To get my watch.

May -   And here it is. Take it, if you’re honest.

Griff - Honest in what?

May -    In your urge to pull it off me and then put it on yourself for her.

Griff - I’d put it on myself for me.

May -    Yet who would you be putting on by putting it on yourself?

Griff - Mayumi, as my dreams are my witness, I have never felt such a connection of intimate, altering, beautiful strength as I once felt, and may still feel, with you, but it’s too late. I have found commitment that thralls me over avid, and I will never wander from my word, for when I lose my word, I lose myself.

May -    You didn’t read my book.

Griff - I drank your book.

May -    Then you must have slammed it and let the part about how when you give your word in love you lose the self that love had given word of its commitment sop your chin.

Griff - It made it down, as did its finish – that when we give our word to one we love, our self becomes the words they use for us, words like husband, faithful…

May -    And honest.

Griff - Ah, but why be honest? Speak your mind, you lose it. Invest in truth, you’re consumed by its losses. And reacting honestly to conflict eradicates all chances at resolve.

May -    Only honest offers the freedom of keeping your given word.

Griff - Then here is honest: I love my wife.

May -    May she love you.

Griff - She loves me.

May -    In that she’s not alone.

Griff - I love her back.

May -    That’s not what I meant.

Griff - I shouldn’t be here.

May -    Ghazan, look at me.

Griff - I can’t. I look at you, I lose myself.

May -    So look at me, and in the self you lose, gain the self you are in love.

Griff - Give me my watch.

May -    O she has ruined you. Hiding from desire, you think to skip the thought of it, wend that you might never cross its way, and dream in defamation of its repute. If you can’t touch me without wanting me, then you don’t truly want the one you touch.

Griff - Hold it out.

May -    O my god, get it off me.

Griff - I am inexplicably altered by your presence.

May - How can anything be duly settled when pattern holds no charge on history?

Griffin - The discreet shambles of our decisions shimmer in an evocative despair that gives the flesh we first exonerated from impenetrable a smooth tribal savor.

May - Only a manifold anomaly abides, crimping us in its raw jewelry, calling calmly, unclip.

Griff - To wander thru an orchard of obsessions without the residence to pick and chew is only having heard of Hanakoa.

May -    True hunger never lacks a following.

Griff - Yet the narcotic papoose of your veins is but a temporary clemency to the clashing unities I cannot quit.

May -    It’s always time for something oddly gripping.

Griff - And when it’s not?

May -    We marry in reverse.

Griff - The narrows of your pulse are forming junctures of secession.

May -    Must you manhandle me with my own hands?

Griff - The meadow finds another summer thru our breath.

May -    What’s that song?

Griff - Succumb, divisive ruby.

May -    I could eat seven soccer star muffins.

Griff - Then O what a nest of troubles we’d pour into the most recently discovered organ of interconnectivity.

May -    So take it.

Griff - I wish we could move to aphasia and live in a silent field.

May -    I wish you were the pilot in the widow, pulling her homeward to banditti.

Griff - It’s like roller-skating, but we’re infamous missing raspberries and the rink is ursa major.

May -    It’s coming off.

Griff - Your prison colors are running.

May - Is the man of the house now the mood of the moon?

Griff - Our tension siphon’s always been so smoothly allogeneic.

May -    That’s because we snuck into each other before the work began.

Griff - Let it come.

May - But it’s bound to me.

Griff - And I am bound to more than me and must break free to merely be.

May - I thought you got us tickets to the cross-intubation.

Griff - Stop.

May - Let us transcend this secret satiricon.

Griff - It’s coming.

May -    O how could you?

Griff - With this watch, I thee unwed.

*He takes off the watch.*

May - We cannot live apart.

Griff - Yet we must, if even dead.

*Griffin exits. Mayumi exits.*

*Phase 4, Scene 1. The theater. Enter Powers, Vivian, Sophie, actors, stage manager. Rockwell is to the side.*

Viv -     Powers, I need more. You are the Prophet,

And not only is it forbidden for you

To represent him, but you’re preparing

The audience for the entrance of Allah,

Who’s a woman, so go big or go broke.

Powers -        I need intrinsic reason, Vivian,

Not some political press kit bongo:

        An actor’s motor is his motivation.

Rock - Your motivation is to satisfy

        Thru obedience the goddess you love,

        Who’s waiting on your word with Izrail’s sword

        To cleave the planets that it crush her choice.

Viv -     Cast and crew, our patron and translator:

Let’s hear it for the one who sets the stakes.

Sophie -        O venture mensch, wire us your wisdom:

        If Izrail’s way is mine, why do I choose

        To murder Ibrahim and save Husain?

Viv -     A fine question not on the schedule.

Rock - If it’s not on the schedule, I question

        Where this train wreck’s headed on my dollar.

Viv -     Due to circumstances in our control

        The director’s part will be played tonight

        By understudy, Scheduled Trainwreck.

Rock - What choice has God thrust upon his prophet?

        To choose between two loves, and still we think,

        How could he? If he loves them equally,

        And he must, for every word accredits

        Into equality all it prehends

        And owns its meaning only by this boon,

        He loses both by holding one above,

        For any living love will see this act

        As brutal judgment, not ungrudging urge,

        And leave him thus that only then he’ll know

        He loved the sacrificial most of all,

        So he loved neither, and so God loves him,

        No prophet, but a fraud. And thus we think

        How shot thru must he be, distresst, destroyed,

        Warring for the lie of mutual peace,

        Two urges in his heart of even heft,

        His fractured life a sulking to the pit,

        Tears in nascent eyes, drowning neath a rare,

        Superfluous bliss, no more useful than

        A lion hunting with the hope of wings.

        And on we think, “sad man,” yet we think wrong.

        The love that thinks it loves all equally’s

        A lying love, for love is a decree

        That subtly works t’ensure the rule of love,

        And could the sophic prophet face himself

        With zeal equal to the faceless lord

        That faces him with teaching none can teach,

        He’d see that this Husain, this Ibrahim

        Would gladly for the other give his life,

        But how they’d give it forms the variance

        That makes Husain the one evades the sword,

        For Ibrahim’s a frail cretin for peace

        And views his death as oblation passive

        To a daft ideal which, if lived by all,

        Would relegate reverence to expunction,

        Yet this Husain, thespian and soldier,

        Who fights to save his brother and his tribe,

        Is for that ardor ever scion chose.

Ibrahim -       “So I, beneath the riches of despair,

        Now drift into the sea of sorrow, where

        I am by many loved, for death alone

        Makes of its heart a home to more than one.”

Sophie -        I will proceed with your words at my wheel.

Viv -     Hit the here-not, then we’re back tomorrow

        When we will go for broke to reconvert

        The mighty dollar to mightier drama.

*Vivian turns to Rockwell.*

Viv -     Tween you and me, I would have killed Husain.

Rock - Tween you and me, there’s no tween you and me.

*All exit. Sophie and Powers are backstage.*

Powers -        I just feel, Sophe, like we need to connect

        In the subwoofers, at the verve level,

        Where bedrock talent finds its baby digs

        And turns them into scrappy scimitars

        Of mass enthrallment.

Sophie -        O, Powers, unplug.

Powers -        I thought you wanted this show to blow up.

Sophie -        Bien sur que oui.

Powers -        So let it blow, baby.

Sophie - Let it blow, baby?

Powers - Like do what feels right

        For takin it to where we do no wrong.

Sophie -        Powers, you’re being really greasy fries

Right now.

Powers -        Those fries are French.

Sophie - Et c’est aussi:

Prophet’s yuge, but it ain’t fuckin Allah.

Power - Yo, why you gotta cheapen it like that?

        I’m crying out, “I wanna learn from you,

        Feel you, get onto you so I can get

        Into you so I can get outta me

        Whatt you need to get the most outta us,”

        Cuz ain’t that what this magic’s all about,

        And now you…

*Enter Rockwell.*

Rock - Sophie, can we speak alone?

Sophie -        Powers, out.

Powers -        Mull it over, Moana More.

*Powers exits.*

Rock - Are you ready to choose, Sophie?

Sophie -        Choose what?

Rock - Husain or Ibrahim.

Sophie -        God does not choose,

But is the cause of choice.

Rock - Yet you prefer

Husain; it’s in the text.

Sophie -        I sense Husain

Transcribed the text.

Rock - And faithfully.

Sophie -        Ha, tu ne fais rien fidèlement.

Rock - Save worship you.

Sophie -        Gentil.

Rock - Choose me, Sophie.

Sophie -        Simon, no. This is not the place for this.

Rock - Is not a child’s place in his mommy?

        And is he not displaced – is not the world –

        Until he has replaced himself therein

        By dispersing all those interlopers

        Who think she has no place reclaiming him?

Sophie -        O, Simon, c’est pathétique.

Rock - No, this is love.

        Still sweet the milk upon my inner cheek;

        Still warm the patch where you would pamper me;

        And now that I’m your chosen, are you not

        New heavy with the urgency to nurse

        The restoration of my shiny sword,

        Or did you raise me up to put me down?

Sophie -        You raised yourself.

Rock -   Not true! Those furtive eyes

        Rhapsodized my rapture; those fecund buds

        Suckled me; and in your pink potential

        You wrappt me that I mite be born of you.

Sophie -        Simon, get off.

Rock - Not til you let me in

        That I return to life thru your narrows.

*Sophie hits him.*

Rock - O swat me, mommy, yes. Your chafe is salve.

Sophie -        Simon, I will scream if you continue.

Rock - Then do it and rue it, for it would be

        Your last event in this house of arrears.

Sophie -        What are you saying?

Rock - I’m saying you know what.

Sophie -        Your force destroys the tenderness you seek.

Rock - Your fight destroys the victory you seek.

Sophie -        My victory is in our work together.

Rock - All work, no play.

Sophie -        I thought you were decent.

Rock - I am in decent when I think of you,

But I want out.

Sophie -        And I want my husband.

Rock - So tell me where your husband was today,

And we shall see how much you’re wanting him.

Sophie -        He was at work.

Rock - Ah, so he has a snow job

        At Infidelity Trustless Fund

        Where, paying lip service to faith’s façade,

        He gets double time shorting your good stock?

Sophie -        You know what Griffin does for his living.

Rock - But what does Griffin do for his loving?

Sophie -        Moi et moi seulement.

Rock - You trust him?

Sophie - Oui.

Rock - But do you trust him more than I trust cats

To scream all stuck and poking neath the porch?

        Cuz that’s where he’s headed, shooshy pussy.

Sophie -        What do you know?

Rock - What do I get for knowing?

Sophie -        You get far with me: prove that he’s off track,

There’s a gap to fill.

Rock - Ok, I know this:

        Your hubby’s hot; like cruising Chinatown

        For soluble pink kimonos, sizzling

        His peeking duck in shaggy oyster paste,

        Or, to be blunt, he spent near half the day

        At the Bluebird Bookstore in the Mission

        Cooing, “Mommy, may I?” to Mayumi.

Sophie -        Mayumi?

Rock - Just some kawai mew mew doll

        From his not merged with your majesty days,

        Getting back in touch.

Sophie -        How do you know?

Rock - This city is my eye; I see thru it.

Sophie -        Is she his lover?

Rock -   If you call that love.

Sophie -        Est-ce vrai?

Rock - Did he say where he was today?

Sophie -        Yes, but he lied.

Rock - We lie to hide the truth.

Sophie -        I cannot live.

Rock - You cannot live with him,

        But I will fluff your pillow all night long.

I’ll keep the seat down; Hell, I’ll be the seat,

        Just waitin round for you to squat and rule.

        You’ll eat, wear, and toss only the finest,

        And I’ll be true, so true you’ll float about

        In molly chiffon, tinkling “O, daddy,

        Fuck me to the floor.”

Sophie -        Simon, lâchez-moi!

*Enter Hunter, who throws Rockwell off Sophie.*

Sophie -        Do not come home, unless you’re hot to heed

        The hatchet your deception’s made of me.

*She spits in his face and exits.*

Hunter -        Sophie!

Rock - Let her go; she’s already gone.

Hunter - You trying to fuck my wife?

Rock - I’m trying

        To love your wife.

Hunter -        By trying to fuck her?

Rock - Hey, don’t you show your love by fucking her?

        O rite. Forgot the “over.”

Hunter -        You are dead.

Rock - What, for trying to worm into a woman?

        That’s life, at least til worming stirs the worm.

Hunter -        That woman is my wife.

Rock - O that she weren’t,

        So I could be like you and try to fuck

        A woman ain’t, cuz then we both could die

        The death of fucking men.

Hunter -        You’re drunk again.

Rock - I’m drunk on trying to fuck a woman,

Not your wife, and I see you’re on that glass.

Hunter -        How is that?

Rock - Do we both not love your love?

Hunter -        My love has the right.

Rock - My love has it wrong,

        Yet still I love, and therein we are one.

Hunter -        We are as canyon-spanned as pole and pole,

        And when we rim, the earth shall vaporize.

Rock - Then take a long drag off the final fire,

        Cuz we just rimmed.

Hunter -        I’ll kill you here and now.

Rock - You killed me when you crookt your wife from me.

Hunter -        You are the crook.

Rock - Uh hu, and what’s my crime?

        Wanting what you want? Loving who you love?

        Be flattered, then, and finally admit

        That your wife pleasing others pleases you

        As much as you with others please yourself.

Hunter -        Your crapulence confuses me with you.

Rock - Round here we call that “playing may you me.”

Hunter -        What do you know?

Rock - What do I get for knowing?

Hunter -        Just talk.

Rock - I know you exude frustration.

Hunter -        I do?

Rock - Of course you do, but that’s marriage normal.

        Some fruity taboo gum on the counter

        Has caught your eye, but mommy says no sah.

        The candy’s there. Forego it or filch it?

        Forego it, mommy wins, you got no chaw,

        But filch it, and that snooky’s in your snout,

        Splashing sweetly up and down, in and out,

        And Mr. Hunter, let me lube your hunch:

        Mommy just filcht some juicy for herself.

Hunter -        Get up.

Rock - No, I’ve changed my mind. Please, kill me.

Hunter -        I’m not going to kill you. Get up.

Rock - No.

        A love abated is a life despised.

Hunter -        A love abated? Quit acting and get up.

Rock - Quit acting and get up? I’m a husband,

        And we get up only in our acting.

        We act as if we’re thinking just of her,

        We act as if her interests interest us,

        We act as if monogamy improves,

        Then after so much acting, we begin

        To crave reality beyond our role

        And go in search of ripe fiducial pipes

        To get up in, cuz she ain’t what she was,

        And we, my man, have so much more to be.

Hunter -        Your marriage is sour, but mine is fresh,

        And love infuses lovers with their youth.

Rock - O marriage is a milk that cannot last,

        Cuz the hotter it gets, the quicker it spoils.

        I pluckt the ripest peach, now it is rot.

        I swam the shimmering streams, now they are schmootzt.

        The smoothest skin I stroked, now wrinkly waste.

        Sure, your chain starts out some cool new music,

        But soon she’s just more nasty naked big mouth,

        Her howling bliss become an odium shrill,

        And that Coachella bag? It’s fatted up

        To some undoable mortgage on maa ganga.

        A marriage, see, is much like a vacation:

        Fine in theory, planning, expectation,

        But once you’re on it, boring, trite, and costly.

        Get out while Shenandoah still hardwood.

Hunter -        Many marriages last.

Rock - And last is last!

        Why choose to spend the best years of your life

        In nuptial holocaust just trying to last

So you can come in last when all aboard

        My scar-proven scenic train enrapture:

        Leave your wife, live your life, and die happy.

Hunter -        Just shut up and get up.

Rock - Help me. I’m old.

*Hunter helps him up.*

Hunter -        How did you find out about Mayumi?

Rock - A little bluebird came to my window.

Hunter -        Vaad Sirat.

Rock - Hey, now, don’t make me kill you.

Hunter -        Will you lay off my wife?

Rock - Mr. Hunter,

        Why’d I strike a bargain with my better

        When he and I both love to fight it out

        For all the wealth and wisdom it accords?

        Steely clowns own and juggle many balls

        In bafflement of even their own hands,

        Cuz there’s no finer feeling than the fear

        Of dying not to die before a crowd,

        So let’s revel in the kick do’ richness

        Of being human, aka at war

        In unreadable ways, while still unique,

        Or as the Persians say, if you’ve two loaves

        Of bread, sell one and buy a hyacinth,

        And what is there to say to that but yes?

Hunter -        I embrace in peace, not in partnership.

*Enter Leveret.*

Lev -     I’d believe my eyes if I had one left.

Hunter -        Leveret, Semion Rockwell.

Rock - Yeah, we’ve met.

Lev -     We have?

Rock - You did stand-up at one of our events.

I’ve often stolen your best joke: What flies

On brooms but falls off bridges? Chappaquidditch.

Hunter -        You’re a comedian?

Lev -     Not on purpose.

Rock - So what do you do?

Lev - I do what all do:

Get rich men laid.

Rock - So you’re a vacuum cleaner.

Lev -     How’s that?

Rock - You suck at your job. Mr. Hunter,

I’ve enjoyed our little summit, and tho

I revile your Accord, I’m glad to see

        We crave the same peace.

Lev -     Break a leg tomorrow.

Rock - Hey, get me laid, or I will break em both.

*Rockwell exits.*

Hunter -        I shouldn’t like that gun rise, but I do.

Lev -     You score your watch?

Hunter -        Yeah, but ref cleared the board,

        Cuz Rockwell told Sophie bout Mayumi.

Lev -     How’d he know?

Hunter -        S’pose he’s got spies in the stacks.

Lev -     But why bread you?

Hunter -        Vaad Sirat.

Lev -     Rockwell’s that?

        I got ganked by those hantu zerkers once

So bad, took a chi transplant to start me.

Hunter -        They’d love some infidelity to mud

        My Accord, tho why they don’t just zap me

        Is in the clouds.

Lev -     Some insider must be

        Aroused enuf to counsel them against,

        Cuz killing you would guarantee its life,

        But infidelity?

Hunter -        I am in loves.

Lev -     Dude, the check is down: time to subtle up.

        Why let the system counsel suicide,

        Like some drowsy farmhand to a thresher,

        When once our gut is hit, we will bellow?

        Your longbow compass spins way outta wack,

        Tacking hard at attractants in the east,

        So go for stoke, break thru the fitful screen

        Of your fulig’nous, news-cycle-scrambled

        Inner text to be the hub where conflict

        Creates comfort. Re-orient yourself.

        Skirt the pacific rim. Leach some water

Out this heat wave, i.e., locate and pierce

        That source-forcing fluxion, then set your gauge

        Homeward to friendly port d’attache Sophie,

        True north to your chivalrous bateau ivre.

Hunter -        Mayumi left me, Leveret.

Lev -     Is that it?

Hunter -        Yes, that’s it. That is th’impregnable reef

        Whereon my surging vessel ran alist,

        Capsized, and went down, there, now, forever.

        Commitment, Leveret, is the open sea

        Whereon Sophie and I sail; were our skiff

        Overturned by some upsneaking breaker,

        A starving anonym I then would float,

        Gnawing at myself, drinking seasoned death,

        So’f you don’t mind too much, I must now go

        Save my marriage from myself.

Lev - Wait…

Griff - No more!

Lev -     She didn’t leave you.

Hunter -        What?

Lev -     I hackt your phones.

Hunter -        Leveret, don’t.

Lev -    It was me talking to me

        Pretending to be her talking to you

        So she wouldn’t get you and I would. Yep.

Hunter -        You destroyed our love?

Lev -     To preserve our love.

Hunter -        Our love? There is no love between us, man.

Lev -     What call it then that I would die for you?

Hunter -        A lie, Leveret, a lie. O Mayumi.

Hunter exits.

Lev -     All may be false, but there’s one truth in life:

        A man is married much before his wife.

*Leveret exits.*

*Phase 4, Scene 2. Madera is standing on a street corner outside the theater. Enter Sophie.*

Mad -    Well, hello, Ms. Berceau. How goes the show?

Soph - Quand le soleil dissolu s'éveillera-t-il

Dans son vagin vengeur et fondra-t-il

Les cubes entrelacés qui me maintiennent

Enfermé dans l'igloo de ses caprices laborieux?

Mad -    Sorry, took me some French in cadet school,

        But the market was cold, so I chuckt it.

Are you ready to open? The play, that is.

Sophie -        Je préfère aller à la guerre en étant

Une vieille femme. Au moins on a la dignité

De te tuer sans te garder en vie.

Mad -    Is everything all right, Sophie?

Soph - Rien

Que je suis d’accord avec mon instinct,

Mais que ne plaît pas à une pâtisserie

D'amour remplie de haine?

Mad -    So sorry, but

This crash course is too much head-on for me.

Soph - Grenouille pauvre, I will assay franglais:

        Griffin is a liar; Jurgen, un cadavre;

That one died en moi; the other en le havre.

O my, that went so well, it’s best I now

Go finger myself in the fervent hope

Of puncturing the bountiful bag of sad

That keeps me breathing too successfully,

Sauf si, sot vie, Sophie…

She exits. Enter Griffin.

Mad -    Ah, Mr. Hunter, you just missed your wife.

Hunter -        I’ve been missing her for years, yet I’ve had

        Her all the time.

Mad -    Perhaps you need a detective.

Hunter -        I know where she is, but I know she’s lost.

Mad -    Has something happened between you and her?

Hunter -        Yes. Her.

Mad -    Elle semblait assez agitée.

Hunter -        Would you not be if you had lost the love

        Of your life t’a lie neither ever told?

Mad -    She in fact mentioned lying, and Scheckel.

Hunter -        Right, Scheckel. Wie ist mein liebe mentor?

Mad -    As well as can be expected after being

        Disconnected and fed to the morays.

Hunter -        Ah yes, the mores. They’ve eaten me too.

Trust this, Madera: the greatest shit pile

        In all the world is trillions of lionized

        Jabs at changing others’ legal being.

*Hunter exits. Madera picks up the phone.*

Mad -    “Cops seek anti-weapons activist Griffin Hunter

        For polygraph in fishy headless diplomat death probe.”

        Leak it like a holey pail.

*Enter Walker.*

Walker -       Detective M, what are you doing here?

Mad -    I came to get a ticket, but it got

        Me first in the form of your leading man.

Walker -       The only man leads me is Mister E.

Mad -    If that’s Hunter’s rap handle, I mite have

A sheet for him.

Walker -       You just spoke to Griffin?

Mad -    We exchanged words at a conversion rate

That left me feeling flat in the truth fund.

Walker -       Care to share?

Mad -    I care too much to share.

Walker -       Drive me home, care-keeper.

Mad -    Get in the car,

And we’ll see where going home takes us.

Walker - Oui.

*They exit. Enter Vivian and Powers.*

Powers -        Dammit, Vivvy, I won’t be typecast as your sex toy. Give me a larger part in your heart, or GoPo’s booking a conflict.

Viv -     Poor tower of power, you’re so much more than my sex toy; like you’re also my sex sippy cup – mmm, sweet potato puree with a splash of eagle’s brand – my sex kid lit anthology – O the places we’ll sneech on the beach neath the truffula hunches from way beyond zizza-ma-wizza – and my sex chop chop puppy potty trainer – so, come on, gopo, let’s stain the crib.

Enter Boa.

Boa -     You are fumbling a married woman.

*Boa separates them.*

Power -         Help! I’m being bullied!

*Boa pulls his gun.*

Boa -     Would you rather be bulleted?

*Powers exits.*

Boa -     In diffidence to your genius, I’ll see I didn’t say that.

Viv -     My genius?

Boa -     I am a demoted fan of your dramatic oeuvaries.

Viv -     My what?

Boa -     Your theatrical destructions, which, in my fumble opinion, televate the human spirit to a place of profound obscollectivity.

Viv -     Well, aren’t you a confused and steel-woed hunk of hardcore wubba wubba.

Boa -     Forgive me if I deplore the wrong word; I have a foreign omelette in my skull and my nerfebellum before your revoked presence exacerrates the symptoms.

Viv -     Have I met you before?

Boa -     Perhaps with your husband.

Viv -     You know my husband?

Boa -     He is like a mother to me.

Viv -     He is like an abortion to me.

Boa -    I understand your marriage may be a bit schlocky at this mummenschanz, but the dancer is not a doll tree.

Viv -     My husband is a predacious cyst: he gets in under your skin – some fancy stinking bishop to buffer a deep, random irritation – then next ya know, he’s ballooning thru your blood like an Albuquerque helium tank afternoon freestyling into a festival of rot – invisible, acceptable, cheesy, sudoric rot.

Boa -     He enstables your dreams.

Viv -     He flips fake dick rigged to come up me, but now I wanna pop some tail when I call heads, y vice-a-voozy.

Boa -     Are you insurpolating we cheat on Mr. Rockwell?

Viv -     To bust the bard, our cheat is cheat for cheat,

        Nixing crime where greater crime compels it;

        The moral strut doth crawl down balance beams,

        Propping self to force the fall death knells it.

        If freedom genders harm less than would be

        Had freedom hid its head, tis double harm,

        A wronger wrong, so let the hand go free

        That hurts too long for some “unhand me” arm.

        If greatly wronged, make thy wrong the greater

        And grind the doer into dust uncut

        With pity or the lefting of the fader,

        Cuz slutting’s guts when you outslut the slut.

        No loyal’s lost by leaving rancid meat,

        And appetite is saved by hero cheat.

Boa -    With all due neglect, mam – what?

*Enter Rockwell.*

Rock - Vivian, come.

Viv -     I’m busy.

Rock - No, you’re drunk.

Viv -     Drunk is the new busy.

Rock - No, drunk is the same old shit. Come with me.

Viv -     I tried, but you’re too quick.

Rock - You, leave.

Boa -     Yes, sir.

Viv -     About face, boy, as in Imma sit on that face and teach Mr. Softspell what showdrunk’s all about, cuz your med-blooded young actor whack just nailed a part he’s too unflufft to fill.

Rock -   I said leave.

Boa -     Yes, sir.

Viv -     And I said stay, fireman. My kitty’s up a tree, and I need your flaming red truck to shoot its long ladder into my bushy wishbones and snatch that sticky fluff to safety.

Rock -   Vivian, come to bed.

Viv -     Sophie’s bed.

Rock - Our bed.

Viv -     That marriage morgue? That world fade center? That lack of concentration camp? No, thanks. Jerks who jerk themselves til jerks applause give me below the belt brain freeze.

Rock - I need you, Vivian.

Viv -     Go knead yourself, you doughy blob. But trust me, he won’t rise.

*Rockwell hits her. Vivian gets out her mace.*

Viv -     Let the devil burn.

*Boa grabs the mace from her, and it sprays in his face. Rockwell hits him.*

Rock - Fall down.

*Boa falls down.*

Rock - Don’t you ever touch my wife.

Viv -     Simon, stop.

Rock -   My wife was coming to me.

Boa -     To hurt you.

Rock - No, she wasn’t.

Boa -     I thought…

Rock - Here’s your pay for thinking.

*Rockwell kicks him.*

Viv -     Simon, don’t.

Boa -     I was protecting you.

Rock - From my wife?

Boa -     Yes.

Rock - Are you suggesting I can’t take my wife?

Boa -     No.

Rock - She was bringing her love to me.

Boa -     It don’t feel like love.

Rock - What you know about love, you full-stop incel trog?

Boa -     Nothing.

Rock - Sir.

Boa -     Nothing, sir.

Viv -     That’s enough, Simon.

Rock - Shall I kill him, Vivian?

Viv -     No.

Rock - I would for you.

*Boa starts to get up.*

Rock - Down!

Boa -     I need water.

Rock - Here you go.

*Rockwell pisses on him.*

Viv -     O, Simon, you’re so vile.

Rock - No, I’m sick.

Viv -    As am I, of your sickness.

Rock - I’ve made you sick?

Viv -     Yes. Are you sorry?

Rock - My sorrow is so stufft in me, I move,

        It overflows its lip, and thru the glass

        Of memory stares sadly at itself,

        Which separation only strikes my urge.

Viv -    I loathe you sometimes, Simon.

Rock - Love me now.

Viv -    Sorry, honey, you blew the audition.

Rock - I say give up acting and play dead; there’s scheckels in it.

Boa -     Thank you, Mr. Rockwell.

*All exit.*

*Phase 4, Scene 3. Enter Leveret on the phone.*

Lev -     You punks in place?

Trick -          Scamera’s rolling.

Track -         The victim advances.

Trick -          Over and ouch.

*They hang up.*

Lev -     Operation Disarm Hunter, take two.

*Enter Griffin outside Mayumi’s place.*

Griff - Mayumi! O Mayumi, where are you?

        The world has rolled off us, and we survived.

        Mayumi! O come out, my love, there’s news

        That frees us of the lies that froze our lives!

        Mayumi!

*Enter Peaches at their window.*

Peach -         Yo, you and me gon’ mayhem

        Less you roll off that unallowed speaker.

Griff - Sorry, but which window is Mayumi’s?

        I was told she lives here above the store.

Peach -         Yeah, but so do I, and it’s shut-eye time,

        So shut it, ai’?

Griff - Ai, but please, which buzzer?

Peach -         You got a permission slip?

Griff - For what?

Peach -         To buzz her when that buzzer be a bummer.

*Enter Mayumi, at her window.*

May -    It’s ok, Peaches, I’m up.

Peach -         Taint no k,

        Cuz I’nt, thanks this climate range denier.

Griff - Forgive me, sir mam.

Peach -         Sorry submitted.

*Peaches exits. Hunter climbs the fire escape.*

May -    What are you doing?

Griff - Looking for my wife.

May -    Then turn around, cuz she’s the turn you misst.

Griff - No, she’s the sign that was hidden from me,

        So I took a wrong turn, but on the way

        I discovered the truth, and turning back

        The one I should have taken first is found.

May - Something’s happened.

Griff - No, something’s unhappened

So we can.

May - Your marriage…

Griff - Is not honest.

May - So is it over?

Griff - It never began.

May - Be fair to me, Ghazan.

Griff - And no more far:

You never left me, I never left you,

        We never left each other; it was all

        A Leveret hack to save me for his love,

        And we have played his puppets, until now.

May -    No.

Griff - Like two wedded slaves, we were traded

        By recreance into our separate glooms,

        But O emancipation is proclaimed!

May -    Is this true?

Griff - He just said it to my face,

        And my killing rage brought no retraction.

May -    I thought you left me.

Griff - I thought you left me.

May -    You didn’t.

Griff - No more than you.

May -    O my love,

        Don’t play me, please. I will not withstand it.

        If this is true, then everything is good,

        But if it’s just some trick to get with me,

        I don’t know what.

Griff - I am here, Mayumi,

        And were your scape the most elaborate maze

        Sense has time to scan, just say to me

        The possibilities it ambulates

        Chapel you in love’s encircling logic

        That answers when? now; how? in every way,

        And I will go declare to my fake wife

        That I am for the truth, and we are one.

May -    I feel like I’ve forgotten how to stand,

And everywhere I look, I see the face

        Denied of me too long.

Griff - He cries, “O come

        And be the lost returning force of love.”

This bliss is our rebirth, now at the source

        Of pure renascent ancient provocation

        We suckle on our full-taking nurture

        And share the kindness we have ever craved.

May -   Remember how completely, frantically

        We pre-approved for every gracious gift

        Of spirit that descended on our bed

        Til you in me, I in you went missing

        To fold innate esteem about the night?

Griff - Remember being transfixed in the hunt

        Whereby each lover strives to thrive enslain

        Repeating mumukans of adoration

        That lunging at one urge might make unique

        A curve retraced, a never taken took,

        Each mouth the other’s only sustenance,

        As hunger-making kisses gorged to taste

        Something new to prove that loves needs nothing?

May -    Remember…

Griff - O, but look at us! So set

        In what we couldn’t, now that we so can,

        We rotely recollect on when we did.

May -    And can again.

Griff - And so let us begin.

May -    Pawning stolen pasts for present stipends.

Griff - Reclaiming claims of renewable dig.

May -    Getting back on the horse we never quit.

Griff - Being what we are.

May - Having what we have.

Trick -          Here it comes.

May -    Yet do we have what we have?

Track -         Kissus interruptus.

Griff – We do.

May - I mean,

Have you with your fake wife undone “I do”

        So you can say to me what makes us true.

Griff - Honest?

May - Honest.

Griff - No.

May - Where’s the real relief

        In a hoppt pool?

Griff -   Only in th’escaping…

May - So?

Griff - So I’m running to my phony home,

        Telling my null wife she’s been pre-empted,

        Then returning here, where love is as real

        As the un-unscramblable smell of you.

May -    You promise not to change your mind?

Griff - How change

        What I leave here with you? My mind is yours,

        And every choice I make refurbishment

        Of any think-me-down you may proffer.

May -    Leave more. I love your mind, but mind’s a rind;

        It gives a glisten, sparkles us to buy,

        But quick we rep it off for inner pith.

        To keep in mind beyond what mind can hold,

        Leave love’s gorilla glue – a simple kiss.

Trick -          This is it.

Griff - No.

Track -         Damn, they’re fogging my lens!

Griff - O Mayumi, we’ll be stuck forever,

And my love for you says be done with her

        Before we do what cannot be undone.

May -    A cordial kiss for luck. Upon the cheek;

        Sophie will understand. C’est très francais.

Griff - Let’s kiss when we are free to kiss again

And again and again I gotta go.

May -    Why slap a wrongful death suit on a kiss?

        Pears while we savor, tumblers when we sip,

        Flutes as we play, trophies after winning,

        All are kisst, none wronged, in this elation.

Griff - O Yumi, you have changed my mind, so take

        My mouth for purse.

Trick -          She can’t say no to that!

May -   I changed your mind?

Track -         Her yes is no in prep.

May -    See how your mind’s a mother, native set

        Wherever her beloved boo runs to?

        Why should I believe your seeing Sophie

        Won’t show you flipping back into her sack?

        No, no, stay. Forever, or if you leave,

        You’ll find me in a hot take turned to cold.

Griff - You changed my mind on one thing – kissing you,

        So hot take it.

Trick -          The shot!

May -    First, its meaning.

Track -         The shoot.

Griff - It means complete is nothing more

        Than squeezing you when summer’s all away,

        The trust a snail tenders to a leaf

        Its slightest near significance attends

        As if, no, more; as is, each placement soaks

        The incognitosphere in foster slurp.

        It means the lid is off and we are air,

        Our elements congealed into a quoit

        Of qualified carouse, a sealed note

        That never must be opened to be read,

        Remembering as sliding down a rock

        That isn’t there.

May -    It means dinner’s on me.

Griff - A rhyming dictionary writ in spit.

May -    Never knowing again what we came for.

Griff - Discovering a lost habitation

        With all the remnants of our next desire.

May -    Smacking to be soft.

Griff - Snacking to be stifft.

May -    Quaking from the center to the semblance.

Griff - It means lockt, but only rare and whiling.

May -    Racing at each other, bumpers blushing.

Griff - Picking the right tomato for the job.

May -   Nen and no nen, spinning out of the bowl

        To be the meal.

Griff - Wet ferrets on the fly.

Griff - Fishing for muck.

May -   Operating heavy

Machinery…

Griff - While drunk on heavy machinery.

May -    It means we’re glad it left the door open.

Griff - It means greeting with the proper muscles.

May -    It means nowhere to go and staying there.

Griff - Roads of no return turning into loops.

May - A free day for a few seconds, it means

The world is winding thru you and me.

Griff – No matter what it means, a kiss means this.

*Track falls over.*

Trick -          Dude!

Track -         Guess they won me over.

*They exit.*

May -    What was that?

Griff - Cameras.

May -    Paparazzi?

Griff - Maybe.

May -    Are you worried?

Griff - About what?

May -    Your appearing here appearing elsewhere

        And negatively impacting your Accord.

Griff - UN stands for ulterior nuptials.

        Best thing I could do to steal the deal

        Is cheat on my wife, cuz to diplomats

        There ain’t no rub unless you’re in the club.

        C’est très francais.

May -   Cheat on your wife?

Griff - I mean…

May -    You mean no more than a meaningless kiss,

        Which shows how mean your great means have made you.

        Go home to your wife, you foul diplomat,

        And may she rub your club down to a gas.

Griff - Mayumi, look at me.

May -    Which one of you?

Griff - The one that knows you are my wife. The one

        That misspeaks, yet whose intent’s a canon

        With but one message: you. The one that’s off

        To end his marriage that he might meet you

At 9 am at the Bluebird altar;

        And the one that asks your trust be certain as

        Your hand, which, back, he’ll hold as hard and long

        As was the endless absence from our love

        That, save one errand, quick, stops here and now

        And sets in motion gifts of reclamation

        And prospectus, never to be severed.

May -    Consume within two hours of opening,

        Or drink the warfarin of the best gone bad.

But my dove, I am too hawk. One more kiss.

Griff - Action now, kisses later.

May -    Kisses now,

        Action now, O kisses, action, kisses.

Griff - I’m going. 9 am.

May -    My company

        Will be the thought of what we will be doing

        At 9:01.

Griff -   The thought so keeps me here

        I must go, go, go.

May -    Keep your word.

Griff - I go

        To get my word to give it back to you.

*He exits.*

May -    So on a given word again I wait.

        Might love be better, death-like, being late?

*She exits.*

*Phase 4, Scene 4. Enter Walker and Madera at the Mission.*

Walker -       Coffee?

Mad -    Thanks, but I don’t jump off cliffs to feel speedy.

Walker -       Juice?

Mad -    Why squeeze and suck what you can bite and chew?

Walker -       Klonopin?

Mad -    When will Griffin be down?

Walker -       Come on, Madera. What styptic fume consumed you in your sleep? I thought we’d agreed to climb in bed together, unstiff that swastika taijitsu-style, and let business and pleasure join at the head lest separation snuff them both.

Mad -    I agreed to consider your offer by accepting it. Several bad scrapes have taught me to wreck a ride before I sign, but my storm-dancing flag remains unmoved by the juvenile birthday wishes blown its way. What began as a routine inquiry into Hunter’s communications with a man right prior to his chashu immortalization in our municipal ramen is now, in no small part due to your charge’s strange behavior and various other on-site fossils discovered while hounding about his two medicine formation, a full-blown investigation that not only involves said soupified euroslag, but deeper ethical concerns over his extra-marital hoolahoop, his role in the convenient kidnapping of the Governor of Corsica, and his ties to an organization known as Vaad Sirat, all of which, my department believes - and I am but a shadow bruh of her righteous gang symbols - are critical gyoza of information to those interested in the culinary normalization of his Accord and the integrity of the United Nations’ prix fixe. So, I enjoyed our little bed hike, but that don’t make you the mountain.

Walker -       Then let me light a cig under your flat, wet ass, Mr. Better-Never-Than-Early. You’re in over your head, again, cuz the Sec Gen assigned me to safeguard Griffin, and if my job’s to make the world stand still, shit’s fallin into space.

*Enter Sophie.*

Soph - Bonjour, Detective Madera. I’m glad you’re here, for my husband is dead, I fear.

Mad -    Dead?

Soph -   Or perhaps only missing.

Walker -       Is he not here?

Soph - Dead, missing, not here, mon dieu! This English has too many words for the same mistake. Laissez-nous consolider and call the whole mess Griffin.

Walker -       Do you know where he is?

Soph - In Asia, in an Asian, in evasion.

Mad -    How can we reach him?

Soph - The only way to reach that man is to grab yourself by the throat.

Walker -       Sophie, please, this is no time for theater.

Soph - Theater, like marriage, is whatever there’s no time for.

Walker -       Is Griffin up?

Soph - I’m sure he’s up to something.

Mad -    Is he coming down?

Soph - Once he’s done, I’m sure he’ll come down.

Walk -          Done with what?

Soph - Stop her, she’s improper! It’s “done with whom?”

Walk -          Who?

Soph - Maybe you, maybe me, maybe Mayumi.

Mad -    Did Griffin sleep here last night?

Walk -          Madera, wait in my office.

Mad -    I like it here.

Soph - No, et c'est un autre indice: if he didn’t sleep here with yours truly, he must have slept elsewhere with hers newly, so cuff me now, for in no time, aka theater, I am going to kill him.

Walk -          Sophie, come with me. My office.

Mad -    Ms. Berceau, I am here to administer a lie detector test to your husband, so if you have any questions for him…

Soph - I do have some questions regarding what led to his taking and failing me: who is she? Mais nous savons. She’s the yellow onahole that runs the Bluebird Bookstore in the Mission. What is she? Mais nous savons aussi. She’s his back in vogue vagine. But why is she? Ah, there’s no test for taste, même quand c'est détestable. So I am at a loss, unless you want to ask him where he was on our wedding night, because if he says with me, we know he’s lying, since j’etais la, and here I am, Atta Loss, the fake peacefucker’s bad wifi.

*Enter Xiao.*

Xiao - Griffin just keyed into the compound.

Mad -    I’ll be in your office.

*Madera and Xiao exit.*

Walk -          You listen up, stargoyle. That man is here to filet Griffin, so I don’t need you stropping his bowie.

Soph - Au contraire, clit-bull: I want that son of seventeen bitches sliced into so many savory steaks he could feed my appetite for vengeance and still leave some for you to slobber off.

Walk -          Excuse me?

Soph - Slobber, slobber.

Walk -          Sophie, I am not sleeping with your husband.

Soph - O, I know that. You’re too empowered for love. But sleeping with your boss? That’s promotion.

Walk -          My promotion comes of my performance.

Soph - And I’m sure you perform like a soupy whorvette.

Walk -          You think I’d copulate on some big desk to gain my little desk, which then must serve as stage to ever ranker copulations? Your success may be catalyzed by sex, and thus I pity you, but my career is a polymer chain of principles that scotches unprincipled submission to false-promising power; win by shame, you win a scam, and I don’t smoke that skunk.

Soph - Then pass it on; at last I’ll die high.

Walk -          Sophie, I will fix this, if you trust me.

Soph - Comment puis-je vous donner ce que je suis hors de?

Walk -          Tell me what you know.

Soph - I know he has lied repeatedly about his whereabouts.

Walk -          And you know his position often necessitates obfuscation to maintain confidentiality.

Soph - Then why was he at the Bluebird Bookstore visiting his old girlfriend unless she’s now privy to his position?

Walk -          Who told you he was there?

Soph - Simon Rockwell.

Walk -          Then you should also know that man is a maze of motives whose deadly ends – after snaking thru your signature scent - lead straight into Griffin.

Soph - I know he was out all night doing something he felt the need to hide.

Walk -          Yet you don’t know that means he was cheating, so what do you know?

Soph - I know he’s made me unable to know what I know, and so I’m done knowing him, save one final no.

*Enter Xiao.*

Xiao - Il monte sur le trottoir.

Walk -          Wait in your room. I will talk to him, and after his test, send him there. I’m certain your suspicions will be quiesced by a complete accounting of all he’s done as serving his Accord.

Soph - Devrais-je, Xiao?

Xiao - I say let him show his best,

        Even if the worst he has requests it.

Soph - How sad am I that she I still suspect

        Of sacking my love is all my love has left.

*Exit Xiao and Sophie. Enter Griffin.*

Walk -          Where have you been?

Griff - Where I have been.

Walk -          Madera’s in my office.

Griff - Call an exterminator.

Walk -          He wants to give you a lie detector test.

Griff - How neighborly! But what would I do with it? I could wear it as a hat, and when people say, nice hat, I can say, “you’re lying!” Or I could set it on the floor and play horseshoe pretzel, and when I get a ringer, it’ll beep, “lye, lye!” No, I know. I’ll wear it as a cup and when I pass the sunbathers in the park, I’ll slav squat in their personal space and vocal fry; “I detect a lier.” Nah. Too monkeypox. Tell you what, tell him this, from my rap-beating heart: I don’t take tests from those who need them more.

Walk -          He’s linkt Corsica and Vaad Sirat.

Griff - What?

Walk -          That would explain Leveret’s raptorial prowess.

Griff - Why would Vaad Sirat help my Accord?

Walk -          Sometimes help is the quickest way to hurt.

Griff - O this is too much. I quit.

Walk -          If I’d known you knew that word, I never would have known you.

Griff - You taught me that word when you advised me to lie, so at your word I quit my word, unmindful of my better self driving hard at defeat in a race you rigged.

Walk -          O, so now you’re the vengeful victim? What the fuck has gotten into you? Diplomats are flying in from around the globe, the Accord is set for signing in two days, and now, because you’ve apparently found some other peace to fight for, you’re ditching your life’s work?

Griff - You mean my lie’s work.

Walk - Control your voice.

Griff - How did I get to this misbegotten place?

Walk -          By passing test after test.

Griff - Lie after lie.

Walk - Your ability to spin an asymmetry is your greatest strength, so get in there and dance like a slick attaché, cuz then at least there’s a chance you can reason this eruption.

Griff - You keep telling me to save myself, but there’s no self to save.

Walk -          Then save me. I have given my life to you. My integrity, my ambition, are but refractions from your effusion. Save me cuz my saving you deserves it.

Griff - I will fail.

Walk -          To refuse to try is to fail beyond resurrection, but to fail trying creates the circumstances whereby the crucifier can be called into question.

Griff - Just daydream, right?

Walk -          Warm summer night, drinkin a beer, sittin there with the one you want, and all the while, your mouth just moves to the music no one hears.

Griff - All I hear’s my inner ear screaming for a hit.

*Walker exits. Griffin enters Walker’s office.*

Mad -    Ah, Mr. Hunter, I was about to write you off.

Griff - Write me off what?

Mad -    The cover of my new book: *You Can’t Get Down If You Don’t Show Up.*

Griff - I’d tell you where I was but it involves a bliss too large for bottom-feeding brains.

Mad -    My brain may be bigger than it looks from your diminishing vantage.

Griff - Deformity is the one prerequisite for work like yours.

Mad -    I prefer to think of myself as a pioneer on evolution’s plain.

Griff - Your branch is but a short and weak dead end.

Mad -    My branch is long enuf to reach the sun, strong as it’s stuck to the central trunk, and it dead ends into you.

Griff - So we’re attacht, and if I fall, we go together.

Mad -    If you fall, we’ll see who’s had the foresight to order foils.

Griff - I’d rather blend with the torpor than flee from the faster.

Mad -   Then let’s dragrace that camaro. Your left arm, please.

Griff - Why not my right?

Mad -    It’s a trick question. To a cop, you’re all lefts, no rights.

Griff - You’re good; too bad you waste it on yourself.

Mad -    May I begin?

Griff - In service of our estrangement, yes.

Mad -    Do you know who killed Jurgen Scheckel?

Griff - No.

Mad -    Did you order the abduction of the Governor of Corsica?

Griff - No.

Mad -    Have you communicated with anyone affiliated with an organization entitled Vaad Sirat?

Griff - No.

Mad -    Did you sleep at home last night?

Griff - No.

Mad -    Where were you?

Griff - Visiting an old friend.

Mad - Mayumi?

Griff - Maybe.

Mad - Yes or no.

Griff - Yes, sir, no.

Mad - Is that old friend Mayumi?

Griff - Is that question relevant?

Mad - Everything is relevant to an open investigation.

Griff - Then everything’s Mayumi to a closed incrimination.

Mad -    Did your interactions with this old friend compromise your marriage?

Griff - No.

Mad -    Have you partaken in activities that violate the UN’s Code of Conduct since arriving in San Francisco?

Griff - No.

Mad -    You may go.

Griff - How long til the results?

Mad -    The results are in, but the jury’s out.

Griff - Thank you.

Mad -    Thank you?

Griff - For showing me the liar’s only lesser: Who goads a truth to which they have no right.

*They exit.*

*Phase 4, Scene 5. Enter Sophie in her room.*

Sophie -        He cheat on me? He flout my ignorance?

        He swab, he stab, he smear, he slam, he spill,

        He…what are words when sickness sets the sign?

        Je vomis’n imaginant ce qu'il a fait.

        When to le Lascaux scellé of my soul

I did admit him, gave him membership,

        Heard him swear un vraie confiance éternelle,

        To romp about but not six months behind

        Y vondre cruellement our sacred love,

        Mutually derived, for some crass caress,

        Self-hoarding to then toss off my returns,

        Rompre notre lien et shattering

        The very squelette fragile de mes sens,

        But I am wised up. No more respite fear,

        Socialiser avec l'isolement,

        My hush his after voice, for en ce jour

        I’ve come of rage, my inborn bombe de corps

        Flammé par son viol. Yet have I made

        Malice of a mere malentendu?

        Then why the absence? Pourquoi les mensonges

        Amidst what should still be our magnet months?

        No wise in wife; être fait avec lui!

        O sad undarning to a joyful snarl.

        Be done with him? Ha! He is why you do,

        Et donc, be done with him, be done with you.

*Enter Griffin.*

Griffin-         Sophie, comment allez-vous?

Sophie -        O, Griffin, si triste, si triste.

Griffin -        There’s something I must say.

Sophie -        I recall when you could choose your words.

Griffin -        I have chosen them.

Sophie -        But what if something comes between the choosing and the saying, yet you stick to the saying to stake the choosing, as-tu choisi?

Griffin -        Nothing could happen to change my choice.

Sophie -        Then nothing will: I am leaving you.

Griffin -        You’re what?

Sophie -        The lie you are is not the man I met.

Griffin -        Sophie…

Sophie -        Sortez!

Griffin -        Sophie, please.

Sophie -        I said get out before I scream and wake vindictive truth that you have doped and duped la dernière fois.

Griffin -        What have I done?

Sophie -        What have you not undone with your mucky fucking hands? Ne parle plus!

Griffin -        I will not be silenced by your lack of specifics.

Sophie -        Mayumi, may you adultery, may you never again be in me? A mon abondance de details enfin silenced your refusal?

Griffin -        Walker!

Sophie -        No, you speak for yourself.

Griffin -        You do not understand my situation.

*Walker enters.*

Walker -       Yes?

Griffin -        Tell Sophie about Mayumi.

Walker -       Griffin, no.

Griffin -        Do it. She deserves to know.

Walker -       It may compromise…

Griffin -        It is compromising my wife; tell her now.

Walker -       Mayumi is an agent from our Osaka bureau who’s been performing reconnaissance on Simon Rockwell’s ties to Vaad Sirat.

Griffin -        And why did I meet with her today?

Walker -       To receive her report.

Griffin -        And am I fucking, pardon my French, Mayumi?

Walker -       Not to my knowledge.

Griffin -        Yet do you not have all the knowledge?

Walker -       Despite my efforts, I do.

Griffin -        Sophie, any questions for counsel? Thank you, Walker.

*Walker exits.*

Griffin -        Do I pass?

Sophie -        No, you fail, I fail, we have failed.

Once, Griffin, je te connaissais mieux que moi;

        Each morning when we woke I’d look across

        And see the impetus for all I’d seen.

        We walked and there ran a cord between us,

        Enwreathing our ambisions dynamique

        In an instinctive conjugal rapport,

        And when you spoke, I heard my thoughts improved,

        Like pictures tinted or des poèmes well read,

        But now you seem as lost and strange to me

        As some absurd, imaginary friend

        D’une enfance ingénu I can but wish

I now knew how to not know better than.

Griffin -        Sophie, I am here.

Sophie -        All that you are?

Griffin -        No,

        For in truth I haven’t been entirely true.

Sophie -        Ce soit maintenant, whatever it is.

Griffin -        I am a man in a mess. Ever since

        Leveret convinced me to strongarm the peace

        By lifting a hapless man to China,

        I’m smasht about by rackets I abhor.

        My trust is jeered, my dreams in jeopardy,

        Engaged against my will by my own will

        To this: my name, my Accord, and my love

        All hang in a balance I fall upon

        The more I try to stand my stolen ground.

        And voici la chose: you advised against!

Sophie -        All this is from that?

Griffin -        All this is from me

        Being far too boomy to receive you.

Sophie -        O Griffin, no.

Griffin -        All I’ve ever wanted

        Is to construct a safer world for us,

        Yet some passion pushes me to semble

        The parts of me that give my goals the go,

        And so, the brink has moved from out to in,

        And all I’ve strove to sidetrack rolls into

        My home and wrecks the life I fought to save.

        Please, my love, take my errors for missteps

        In frantic march across a rough terrain

        To find the comfort, the security

        Assures our impregnable creation.

Sophie -        Tout est de ma faute.

Griffin -        No, I bear some blame.

Sophie -        It’s my play.

Griffin -        Um, yeah, you’ve been typecast as God.

Sophie -        How can I be the place I place myself?

        They talk, and though the limits find a way

        To relegate my voice to rejoinder,

        I question everything, and this leaves them

        Wondering why I’ve come to dance so wooden.

        Be glamorous, they say, but keep in step;

        Charm the lowest need, yet stay above

        Fraying par des images imprudentes.

        In cheating on my instinct for display

        To be what locks the critics from my mind,

        I flex reflexively all I perceive,

        Vous avec inclus, into lurid wish

        To bond in shame, as that is all one has

        When what one needs is what one must defy

        Would one convene une ouverture parfaite,

        Yet know, please know, tho I must falsely fly

        To take my home, I touch down true to you.

Griff - O let us push our berth into the sway

        And find a way to make it every way.

*Enter Xiao.*

Xiao - Je reviendrai plus tard.

Sophie -        No, Xiao, what is it?

Xiao - It is time pour le théâtre.

Sophie -        I must then.

Griffin -        Sophie…

Sophie -        We will fight no more.

Griffin - Yet if it bring such love?

Sophie - Let there be war.

*Sophie and Xiao exit.*

Griffin -        Is there not war enough in me to kill

        Every child the earth has ever favored?

        What will I do? Where go? How live in this

        Regressive gauntlet of untenable

        Compulsion? Everywhere I look, I love.

        So everywhere is nowhere til I choose

        Among them who demand I love but one.

        And I demand it too, yet cannot choose,

        So wanting all, all I’ll have, or all lose.

*He exits.*

*Phase 5, Scene 1. Enter Leveret on a cliff overlooking the sea.*

Lev - I never askt to be some glossy fuck’s

Radical elevator to darkness.

It’s all the shallows you don’t know you’re in:

Rain on the yonder, dust in questy drift,

And suddenly it’s a great night to be

Dismembered. Can you believe I pulled

That pretty face out the manic turbine,

And still I falter on a skate of salt?

You know how it is: slum along the drill,

Fight the mumbo path, so the wrong button,

A gutter-craving critter science sneers

*Pathetica perplexus paradoxicum*.

More voodoologic than zoologic,

More scammed by sleep than subject to a sham,

Tacking vacation perks on suicide

With eyes that steep the tenebrific wash,

It swallows up, to save, the meat it needs.

Big stingers, rise, and let the waftings blither

Of conquests long ago, but most this talent

To pelt the secret door of my desire

With slaphappy bouncing bricks. No, mother,

You are too large to be of any help

In capping these empty premonitions

Of improvement: there, spawning your next meal;

There, fervidly fatigued; there, borrowing

Attention from broke distraction all so

You can pay nothing to feel something;

And here, feeling bearably embarrassed

You crawled out of it just to mess it up.

Yet so it is: I am alone again,

Fuddled to the point of thinking plastic

A heady drink. Well, at least I know

You’re here with me, indulging in your dreams,

Tossing me the scraps like some repulsive…

*Boa enters.*

Boa –            Who you talkin to, Leveret?

Lev -             The ocea…it.

                    Who painted Santa Fe across your face?

Boa -             Rockwell.

Lev -             He spare some solid for his reason?

Boa -             Just being honest bout his feelings.

Lev -             Feelings? Rockwell’s nothing in but targets,

                    And those he hits think they cause him pleasure,

                    And those he misses hurt to ease the pain

                    They ‘magine his, but that empty barrel

                    Restocks alone with cold, hard rounds of hollow.

Boa -             I poppt your peeps.

Lev -             I got no peeps, Boa,

                    Other than my jailbird life, cheep cheep.

Boa -             Your swindle ops, the ones what shot Hunter

                    And Orange Chicken pashin in her coop.

                    They workt out swimmingly as seal wafers.

Lev –            You sank my crew?

Boa -             Boom boom, get a tomb.

Lev - Then here’s for Trick-n-Track: bai bai, Boa.

*Leveret draws on him.*

Boa -             Rockwell told me to.

Lev -             Then lemme tell you

                    How to say “no” in Punish.

Boa -             He sent your clip to Sophie.

Lev -             O that rampant clot!

Boa -             Yo, Rockwell’s th’Islamic Bang Bro Jesus.

Lev -             You take your pills yet, Boa, cuz I’m about

                    To flip your ‘za, and it’d short the cheese

                    ‘Fyou can’t sense how fully much I love it.

Boa -             No more pillows, dammit! Those death merchants

                    In bunny suits makin saline titties

                    Outta medicine balls be droppin diplo

                    Down the hallways of my hospital head –

                    Big stick, big woman, big stick, big woman –

                    So no more pillows. I’m up for the nite,

                    ‘N’when mornin come, ‘s cuz I lickt him.

Lev -             This psychotic episode needs a sequel

                    Sanity; it’s Rockwell poked the stingray.

*Leveret goes to exit.*

Boa -             Would you just kill Griffin Hunter already,

Leveret?

Lev -             What is this obsession with my

Killing Griffin Hunter?

Boa -             His glory guts you, man;

                    Ain’t no dizzy screw-up strip my cellmate.

                    You goony pigged in that Malaysian butt lab

                    So he could be out slurpin cock-cheese crepes

                    Off Bridget Boredom’s zig-zag coco puff.

                    He succeeds, you suck slag.

Lev -             Crazy, but cogent.

Boa -             And for that, I’m griffin him, ‘less you do.

*Boa offers Leveret his gun.*

Lev -             What’s this?

Boa -             My kazoo, hash-head.

Lev -             Why give shit

To a sewer rat?

Boa -             So that when you kill

Griffin Hunter, they trace the singe to me.

I get it. You don’t wanna go back in,

So I’ll be your skell, cuz you n Rockwell,

You’re my only friends. See, I'n't so stupid

                    I don’t know I’m stupid, least round you knacks.

Like that's my special brand of smarts, tellin

I’m a crack in the brain chain, so'f someone's

Gettin canned, it’s sage I be the veggie.

Lev -             Friends don’t let friends prove friendship with a bruise.

Face it, loser: you’re just Rockwell’s dead toast.

                    He bought you cheap and fresh, turned up the heat,

                    Then his focus shifted and you got burnt,

                    So out you go, boadegradable.

Boa -             Kinda sounds like you and Griffin, don’t it?

Lev -             Griffin respects me, Boa.

Boa -             Like I respect

                    The finger I just used to funch my crack.

Lev -             Look, I’m hypothetically comfortable

                    With you framing us as friends, but I got

                    Aged, artisanal feelings for Griffin,

And that don’t zactly mesh with killin him.

Boa -             Do you love him?

Lev -             Do you swear to let him live?

Boa -             And there you are: another Orange Chicken,

                    But don’t fret none, cuz chicken's lotsa types:

                    White meat, slippy n soft, like a bad baby,

                    Dark meat, greazy n tough, like the Farthammer,

                    And then there’s the marrow, which you suck

                    From the manzini bone, like a straight stud

                    Bustin twinks with his balls-out sing-along

Machete, else you suffer…what’s that word?

Lev -             Stud-busting?

Boa -             No.

Lev -             Erotic abuse?

Boa -             No.

Lev -             Emotional Invasion, the Musical?

Boa -             Exactly. Like you gotta douse the star

                    What dazzles you or gulp that fire alive.

Lev -             I’m a vegetarian, Boa.

Boa -             And I’m a humanitarian,

                    But I still eat people.

Lev -             Then break my bread,

                    And teach me how to kill Griffin Hunter.

*Leveret takes Boa’s gun.*

Boa -             Vektor on my face and repeat after me:

                    Griffin Hunter, I am not your retard.

Lev -             Griffin Hunter, I am not your retard.

Boa -             I got special feelings for Boa now.

Lev -             I got special feelings for Boa now.

Boa -             And his stupid's schooled me smart: I’m deformed

                    Cuz you’re demented, and tho I can’t count

                    The dads I had cuz they all sport three fists,

                    I know one thing: it's time for you to bleat

                    Like the Spearmint Rhino of Maladroits

                    So me n Boa can start our life together

                    In a nice place like Fort Lauderfale.

Lev -             There's no repeating genuine passion.

Boa -             And now you pull the trigger.

Lev -             How I look?

Boa -             You look like me.

Lev -             Cheat.

Boa -             I love you, Leveret.

*Leveret kills him.*

Lev - Well taught, Boa. Your flunky passt the test,

And his degree’s his teacher’s lauderfail.

So, how’s it feel bein that big nuthin

For which you practiced all your lamo life?

It’s gotta beat playin a sick retard

With a pharmaceutic soul. Why so jumpy?

Shit’s over, Boa. You can quit your job.

Wilted, wilted, that word salad’s wilted,

But please don’t gimme bitch how I was cruel,

Cuz, man, your deal was major mad cow sad.

So sad, in fact, it made me ask - why live?

To shuck my cob? To force myself to bathe?

To watch my dreams dress up as hopeful clowns

And flop before a house of realists?

This, you audience, is le theatre:

A twitch, a gurgle, a spasm, a stink,

A mound of skin with mighty plans to rot,

All followed by one ubiquitous blah.

You weren’t my friend, Boa. I hated you

Much like an ugly picture of myself,

So you got rippt, cuz hey, honesty’s

Just acting on your feelings. Vaad Sirat.

Time to sample Rockwell where I’m livin -

See that gravy yard? Now who’s the chicken?

*He kicks Boa over the cliff and exits.*

*Phase 5, Scene 2. The Bluebird Bookstore. Enter Mayumi.*

Mayumi -      Noon, and he said nine. Or did he? Noon, nine,

        Distinction small of sign but huge in hope,

        Like you and I, a lie in lieu of life.

        Could it be my love-infected hearing

        Skewed the signal, marking meaning’s maker,

        Difference, resulting in that tainted take,

        I trust you? How wide my eyes uncurtained,

        Not just that I see out, but you see in

        To enter safe the home you made of me,

        Yet out you lookt, then left, affronting love

        With “I’ll be back,” a shrewd truistic fib,

        For as I’d hold whatever you would be,

Your back is all the you that I behold.

        What sweet security you must possess,

        That all uncompromising vital cause

        Of compromise; how could I ever hope

        You, t’om all’s accorded, might swap your stretch

Of glitzy peace for problematic me?

I guess I thought you were that dreamy man

Loves most the love that risks the most for love

And follows bravely thru his head his heart,

To keep, even when losing it, his word.

O you sad human, once a comet came

Into your night of tiny, static specks

And spread a surge of light across the sky

As you stood dazzled, gripless on the ground,

And then it went away, yet still you stand,

Like hang-up knows the way to overboard,

Trying to reclaim its transit marvel,

Incapable of ruthishly admitting

You’ll never see or sip its splash again,

For it is gone, and when it does return,

You will be dead, with darkness all around.

*Enter Walker.*

Walker -       I’m looking for a story.

Mayumi -      Do you have a title?

Walker -       The Death of Griffin Hunter.

Mayumi -      I know it as the Life of Griffin Hunter.

Walker -       I know it likewise, as I’m writing it,

        But this story’s by another woman,

        Or the other woman, one Mayumi.

        Do you know it?

Mayumi -      I know it as myself,

But I am not the death of Griffin Hunter.

Walker -       Not yet.

Mayumi -      Not ever.

Walker -       Not ever is a story

        That ends before it knows how to begin.

Mayumi -      Who are you?

Walker -       Mr. Hunter’s cleaning lady:

        I scrub his dock of miscomplications.

Mayumi -      Might I know what you know so’s not to try

        Selling my dearest truth to the chintzy?

Walker -       Might I know what you want so’s not to go

        Sterilizing what I should simply toss?

Mayumi -      I want to make the life of Griffin Hunter

        A story that ends with me.

Walker -       Then I know

        I wrote that story, and it’s called “Never.”

Mayumi -      We’ll see.

Walker -       This bookstore can’t be doing well;

It’s so independent. Name the amount,

And it’s yours if you accept my request.

Mayumi -      What request?

Walker -       That we strike your character

From th’entire Griffin Hunter series.

Mayumi -      Howbout we strike your sterile, servile soul

        From my independent lovechild bookstore,

        Or I will splinter off and self-publish

The Liberation of Griffin Hunter

        From His Incarcerated Cleaning Lady?

Walker -       Do you swear to never see him again?

Mayumi -      And if I don’t?

Walker -       Then I will splinter off

        And self-publish the Death of Mayumi.

*She pulls her gun.*

Mayumi -      So, you love him too?

Walker -       Bitch, your man is married.

Mayumi -      You know nothing.

Walker -       I know where food ends up,

And you’re his snack.

Mayumi -      Griffin Hunter loves me.

Walker -       And you love him?

Mayumi -      More than you’ll ever feel.

Walker -       Then show you love him by not seeing him,

        Else everything he wants you will destroy,

        And what is love but seeing whom you love

        Be led into their want by everything?

Mayumi -      He sent you here?

Walker -       On his better behalf.

Mayumi -      I’m his better half, you the dieresis,

        And we are done with intermediates;

        I will hear from his own lips what he wants

        Or perish ever striving at his mouth.

Walker -       Say you will not see him or you perish.

Mayumi -      That woman threatens woman not to love

        Proves the peace you protect atrocity.

Walker -       That you woud prop yourself above his peace

        Proves your love takes its orders from your twat.

Mayumi -      As would yours, if you had one.

Walker -       Do you see my gun?

Mayumi -      It’s proof you love him.

Walker -       I love his vision for the world.

Mayumi -      I love his vision in the world.

Walker -       You will leave this world if you see him.

Mayumi -      If I can’t see him, why not leave this world?

Walker -       Look at my gun and make the choice to live.

Mayumi -      What peace can he have if you kill his love?

Walker -       This gun is his peace.

Mayumi -      Then let me have it.

*Mayumi goes for the gun and Walker shoots her. Griffin shouts from the side.*

Griffin -        Mayumi?

Walker -       She did this, so make it so.

*Walker puts the gun in Mayumi’s hand. Griffin enters.*

Griffin -        Walker? Mayumi? But O, what is this?

Walker -       I came to hear her side and found her here.

Griffin -        Did you call it in?

Walker -       Not yet.

Griffin -        So do it.

Walker -       But this will mean the end of your Accord.

Griffin -        Are you insane? She’s dying. I don’t care

        What this does to my Accord. She must live.

        Mayumi, speak.

Walker -       What if Sophie did it?

Griffin -        Sophie?

Walker -       She was leaving when I got here,

        And seemed frazzled, in a hurry.

Griffin -        Sophie?

Walker -       I call, you lose a wife and a career.

*Griffin grabs the gun.*

Griffin -        Call an ambulance, or you lose your life.

*Walker gets on the phone.*

Griffin -        Mayumi, who did this? Mayumi?

Mayumi -      She…

Griffin -        Who is she?

Mayumi -      She said I was hurting you.

Griffin -        Who said that?

Mayumi -      I’d never hurt you, Ghazan.

Griffin -        Mayumi, speak.

Mayumi -      Never, never, never.

*She dies.*

Griffin -        No.

*Walker hangs up.*

Walker -       You must leave.

Griffin -        Never, never, never.

Walker -       You don’t need this now.

Griffin -        O I need her now.

Yumi, I need you now.

Walker -       I’ll take care of her.

Griffin -        All care’s been taken from her. Finally,

        She is careless, all her cares now in me,

        All mine to care for she who has no cares,

        Yet care is counter if it will not join.

*Griffin points the gun at his head.*

Walker -       Griffin, no!

Griffin -        I did that, so I do this.

Walker -       No, you didn’t do this, so don’t do that.

Griffin -        What do I have to live for but the hope

        Of meeting her beyond deceit and death,

        The only corner in this one life town.

Walker -       Yet live to find who did it.

Griffin -        I did it,

        And must die.

Walker -       Vaad Sirat?

Griffin -        Leveret!

Walker -       Leveret?

Griffin -        Then why was Sophie here?

Walker -       She came for peace,

        Like me.

Griffin -        Leveret hated that I loved her.

        He broke us up. He told me so last night.

Walker -       Then this is a message from Vaad Sirat

        Delivered in the casing of his envy.

Griffin -        No, she killed herself because I was late.

Walker -       She was too gentle for a gun.

Griffin -        It’s true.

        She held baby birds tween every finger.

Walker -       All signs lead to Leveret.

Griffin -        I will follow,

        And root him from my route for all and good.

Walker -       Call me when it’s done. If her body’s found,

        It’s instant bad for you, but a missper

        Will take weeks, if ever, and in that time

        Your Accord can be signed, so I will drive

        The body to Big Sur for a burning.

Griffin -        A burning, yes, for how her body burned

Thru mine, for me, and I for her thru that.

O look at you, my love; lost as my love.

        Here rallied once the pulse that was my peace,

        Off-churning breath I followed like a sap

        New warmer winds. How many times I felt

        These hands consign their vim to satchelling

        Some unpresuming empty; and these eyes,

        These soothing spectra of the inner bustle,

        Once flasht my craving’s joyful calibration.

        Yet all are now as silent, still, and stale

        As a bludgeoned seal waiting on the sled.

        O Yumi, gone, and I am endless sobs.

        Prescient infancy, wisdom cycled round,

        O you were springs and orchards to my soul

        That, skewn of care, now rot in proud pollution.

        This world’s far more vicious than it wants us,

        And even thru the lies that mugged our love

        We shared one cherished, tortured chance at truth.

        No solace now but pain that howls for pain.

        Illusion girl, the sun is in your skin,

        My place to be. What science knows your cause?

        Look at you outlast us. O look at you

        Not look at me as up and off you flow.

*He exits. Walker begins to drag the body out.*

Walker -       I told you, didn’t I? Why seek the love

        That never faces shame? You need him once,

        He flirts and flatters you, his gentleness

        And passion glimmer new and genuine,

        He seems to understand, to need your hem

        In a childish way, so you go unedged

        And feed your fresh to his quick-rushing thrill,

        But hidden hot, once opened, quickly cools.

        You pocketed some tiny, shiny nugget

        Of hope, but now, scrubbed with fretting frenzy,

        It’s dull, depreciated past exchange;

        Having served his commercial break, what brief,

        Scanty drudgings of deceived affection

        You think are yours are not, like where are you

        In this embarrassing fugacity?

        Once a pretty fleeting flower from whom

        He took a small, particular sniff, you’re stemmed…

*Enter Madera and officers.*

Madera -       Well, well, what evil’s left for us to do

        When those who fight for peace be killers too?

*They cuff Walker.*

Walker -       So fall the selfless, ever self-condemned.

*All exit.*

*Phase 5, Scene 3. Enter Rockwell, audience, and press in the lobby of the San Francisco Opera House.*

Press - As I’m sure you’re aware, Mr. Rockwell, the United Nations Charter was signed right here in the San Francisco Opera House, and tonight, in a play produced and translated by yourself and directed by your wife, Vivian Nash, the renowned Sophie Berceau will make her buzzed-up American stage debut, appearing as Allah no less, while her husband, Under-Secretary of Disarmament for the United Nations Griffin Hunter, still works to convince diplomats to ratify his peace Accord, which, if the winds of statecraft are with him, will be signed right here in the San Francisco Opera House. Historical irony, backstage lobbying, or inter-matrimonial machinations?

Rock - A lack of proof is not a proof of lack.

*Enter Leveret and pulls Rockwell aside.*

Lev -    Yo, we gotta talk.

Rock - Do I know you?

*Leveret pulls his gun.*

Lev - Yeah,

I’m the zip sherpa lugged your fat khalifa

        Five gimpy years updown the narrow ridge

        Of nihilistic wealth, while you, you what?

        You stab me in the back to spur me on,

        But my fee’s come due.

Rock - And she’s all yours.

Lev - She?

Rock - Huzala’s on Mayumi, Sophie’s free,

And Salubrious Muck is clear to land.

Vas-y mon garçon!

Lev - O shut the fuck up.

Rock - I thought you “love his wife”?

Lev - You love his wife,

And all this “kill Griffin Hunter” was for that,

But guess what I just did? Shyman says “guess.”

Rock - You just interrupted my interview?

Lev -     I just dropkickt Boa off Point Lobos

        And left him bobbing in the abrasion

        So all the seals can eat him and get high

On meds designed to keep the seals down.

        How’s that, boss? Like that, boss?

Rock - You killed Boa?

Lev -     He snufft my staff, and Griffin was on deck.

Rock - What?

Lev -     You ordered it.

Rock - He said that?

Lev -     He said…

Rock - Wait, Boa said…

Lev - Boa said…

Rock - Boa said

Barbra Streisand ran a halal truck

        In his closet so no one knew the clowns

        Stayed off cuz they were feeling falafel.

Lev -     Gimme the clip of Ghazan and Yumi.

Rock - What have you to do with it?

Lev -     What have you to do with it?

Rock - It’s mine, so howbout whatever I want?

Lev -     It’s her opening.

Rock - It’s our opening.

Lev -     Why are you doing this?

Rock - For you.

Lev -     For me?

Rock - You are my dependent.

Lev -     You spawn defections.

Rock - Are you defecting?

Lev -     No, I’m correcting

An early plot point: Kill Simon Rockwell.

Rock - This is the finest moment of your life,

My son; I love you, even in the lobby.

Lev -     Are those ears on your headstone or mushrooms

        Growing out your skull? I have served myself

        To spoilers in your service. Where there stood

        A man of truth and ambition now crawls

        A sad, muttering doormat to deceit,

        And he’s the only one who ever loved me.

Rock - Boa loved you.

Lev -     Then I see a pattern.

Rock - So much for emotional honesty!

Lev -     What?

Rock - You were popping rocks, but then…a pattern?

Lev -     I meant…

Rock - Hey, ment’s for curbing verbs, and we

Are men of action!

Lev -     Action that betrayed

My only friend.

Rock - You didn’t betray me,

Leveret. No, quite the contrary: I you.

But when you’re at your rope’s utmost, you’ve got

Mad swing, so I used you to stop myself,

        For which I’m regret sans expectancy

        Of papaya bowl.

Lev -     Boa…

Rock - Eh, Boa.

Rabid dogs must rest. You have always been,

        Always will be, my preferred brand of wall,

        And when you fall the khamsin shall erode

        Me like a ticky tacky mosque, but you,

Inshallah, shall remain, my disciple,

        My chosen, my son.

Lev -     I’m not your son, really.

Rock - What is really? We have a power in us,

        Leveret, that can leap the gorge of fact

        And make what really isn’t really be.

Lev -     Yeah, we kinda have that power, don’t we?

Rock - Hugs, my son.

Lev -     All this to score on Sophie?

Rock - You sayin she ain’t worth it?

Lev - What I know,

But does she even like you?

Rock - I’n’t so bad.

Lev -     You’re pretty bad.

Rock - No more, my son, no more.

I’m cleaning up my act so picky shits

        Can take a dump on me and drop it down

        ‘Thout having to yelp-scalp th’establishment.

        But since Boa’s cancelled, or shall we say

        Been cancelled, I’ve got an extra ticket,

        Devant et centre. After you, my son.

Lev -     Mr. Rockwell, what about tomorrow?

Rock - Tomorrow, what? I kill you. It’s a joke,

My son. What about tomorrow? Tomorrow

Is tomorrow; tonight is theater.

*Phase 5, Scene 4. Enter Vivian, cast and crew backstage.*

Viv -     People, we have toiled, and we are tired,

        But now we must not let exhaustion in.

        Our lines are fuselaged into emotion,

        Our choices channeled by our characters,

        And free, unveined intent’s one tight action;

        We’ve stumbled thru, but servo’s set to run.

        I beg of you (with dukes of can and will)

        To etch these beauties round your fighter jets:

        Speak big and crisp, calling to your savior

        From culvert dire, yet preserve each nuance

        Its utic subtle verve. Keep pressure’s pace,

        Cuz nothing smells like actors dragging feelz,

        Yet pause enuf to pose a hearing heart.

        Make each moment fleshy with its meaning,

        But fat it never more than it can mean,

        Wrapping yourself in equal discord to

        What fits between a heading and a heeding.

        Yes, you are the star, yet an ambient light

        Blazes in the sky, both from other suns –

        Quintillions huger, hotter, hungrier –

        And from each tiny spot that gazes you,

        So be your media immediate,

        While mediated by a causal mesh,

        Your every part exerting to decide

        Which part of you imparts the basic part

        Clutchest in the task of easy-going.

        Those who say duplicit dooms the actor

        Are too tim’rous to concede we’re the dupes

        Of cryptic circumstance, and being real’s

        Embodying adverse realities,

        So let your conscious choice in pert express

        All unconscious options past prediction,

        Looking to the end while playing each beat

        As intro awesomeness. Move as you speak,

Speak movingly, but most of all, commit,

        Cuz acting’s mainly cheating on the urge

        To cheat yourself out of the chance to act,

        And thereby cheating others of the chance

        To hate the cheat over love the actor.

        In short, fly or fall, make em think you dance;

        Now go out there and kill that audience!

*Enter Stage Manager.*

SM - Flowers for Ms. Berceau.

Sophie -        Griffin?

SM - Rockwell.

*Sophie opens the card.*

SM - Places!

Powers -        See you in heaven, Sophie.

*Sophie projects the footage of Hunter and Mayumi on the wall. The actors enter and begin performing the play.*

Prophet -      True loving lord, sole ravisher of all,

        Whose skirmish winds that flesh and word deploy

        With raging dusts to make and break my wall

        In fits of fate spark severance where I cloy,

        Thou hast yet spared my sons of stage supreme

        Within my heart, Husain and Ibrahim,

        For which I give thee thanks.

Sons -    So too do we.

*Enter Izrail.*

Izrail - Great prophet, I from high to you have come

        To condescend this violent, vital law:

        Thou canst not love in one heart more than one,

        For double worship forms the fatal flaw.

        So must you choose – Husain or Ibrahim.

        One close in life, one lost in death extreme.

Prophet -      But O what cruel imperative is this?

        My lord say crack the chalices of love

        That source his river from life’s fickle mist?

        Out, demon. Thou’t no seraph from above.

Izrail - How pierce thy bayt al-shar like mincing sand

        Were I not of thy lord’s securities?

        Thou more than any knowst his prime command:

        One love, as for thy lord; yet loving these

        Defaults his favor. Choose between thy kind,

        Or both shall he discard as bitter rind.

Prophet -      But they and he are separate quaints of love;

        In him I love the one, in them the all

        Of his expression, which I must be of

        To have and seek his home empyreal.

        Doth not the tigress fight for cub and pride?

        Doth not the stream caress its twining shores?

        Doth not the stillest ship sway side to side?

        Doth not creation crave competitors?

        And doth these unified divergencies

Not etch the eager in his timeless frieze?

Izrail - Thou art his prophet, not some wav’ring scull,

Who is what others must for him believe,

        So choose, and soon, lest seeing how you stall

        Thy loving lord give you two sons to grieve.

Ibrahim -       O father, let me die to save Husain

        For I’d no peace in living by his loss.

Husain -        No, father, let us fight this evil djinn

        Whose lies defile our lord as kafir mosque.

Prophet -      He will not bend to selfish bartering

        Or spiteful insolence; so at thy knees,

        Where to his people, loyal and adoring,

        He gives good cause or grants a sweet reprieve.

*They drop to their knees.*

Prophet -      O lord alone, it is thy faithful prophet,

        In ummah least, yet first in ulama,

        Who begs of you to on his sorrow set

        Some solace or repeal this vicious fatwa.

*Sophie says her line backstage.*

Sophie -        O, ce n’est pas juste.

*She exits. Vivian enters the dressing room.*

Viv -    Sophie, it’s your cue!

*She picks up the card off the floor and reads it.*

Viv -     “This footage of a cheat proves all I promised you:

        In old love found false, a new love’s found true.

        Meet me in your room, Simple Simon.”

*Vivian grabs a sword and exits.*

Powers -        When will this world rise to my standards?

*Powers et al exit.*

*Phase 5, Scene 5. Enter Sophie on the street. Leveret enters following her.*

Lev -     Sophie, wait! It’s me, Leveret.

Sophie -        Leveret me alone.

Lev -     What happened up there?

Sophie -        This.

*She projects the footage.*

Lev -     Where’d you get that?

Sophie -        No matter.

Lev -     Yes matter.

Sophie -        Simon Rockwell sent it to me before

        I went on, so I didn’t, can’t go on.

Lev -     Footage can be doctored.

Sophie -        Unlike my love.

Lev -     Someone set him up.

Sophie -        Yeah, she set him up,

So I’m done. Regardez: a picture speaks

        A thousand words, and every one’s a lie.

Lev -     This ain’t his style.

Sophie -        He’s always been a cheat.

Lev -     To always be a cheat is the rarest

Of all triumphs, and not even Griffin…

Sophie -        Did you know of this?

Lev -     I know he loves you.

Sophie -        Il aime ma naïveté, but its end

Ends our love.

Lev -     This clip is fabricated.

        Lincoln leave the penny, Jesus drop the Christ,

        Shakespeare lose his crown, ok, but Griffin

        Cheat on Sophie? I can’t even think it

        Without first thinking thought unthinkable,

        And speak of thought, think of Rockwell’s motive.

Sophie -        Que savez-vous de ses motivations?

Lev -     Griffin said he’s out for you.

Sophie -        Griffin? Ha!

A lying myocardial parasite.

Lev -     So then there lies in him what lies in all:

        Anger, envy, sadness, lust, ambition –

        Yet he’s a lock on power few possess:

        The power to allow these powers to steer him

        While also being powerfully in control,

        And wobble being the most human trait,

        Losing himself, he gains humanity,

        And from that humanity, he regains

        The power whereby you were first allured,

        So how condemn him for being the man

        Convinced you to condemn all other men

        To being in and out of your control?

Sophie -        You glorify the lie you have not lived,

        But here I am to scream it out my scars:

        La tromperie est le couteau du lâche!

Lev -     And trust the safe space of the self-inflicting.

Sophie -        He gave me his word.

Lev -     Ha! We give our word

        Because it’s breaking us to maintain it.

        Look, Griffin used me, left me, cheated me,

        But I keep coming back because he has

        That power.

Sophie -        Power of a source corrupt

        Is all-corrupting power.

Lev -     Yet the power

        To forgive is beyond all corruption.

Sophie -        We must abate forgiveness once it veers

        At self-destruction.

Lev -     What, you self-destroy?

        He is a warzone of identities:

        Treaty, trouble maker; lover, liar;

        Griffin Hunter, Ghazan Huzala.

Sophie -        Quoi?

Lev -     His name…sorry, thought…he didn’t tell you.

Sophie -        But O to scurry back and spay the Eve

        Of empty men!

Lev -     My place is down the hill.

Just come with me, we’ll have some tea and talk.

Sophie -        Ruines, je suis des ruines.

*They exit.*

*Phase 5, Scene 6. Enter Rockwell in Sophie’s room at his house.*

Rock - The teal muse bridles in the front range.

        An aviary of extremities

        Spits up bougainvillea. Wave after wave

        Of sweltering, swirling root smear, arcane

        In style, yet seditiously fresh of taste,

        Dump allusive vapors cross the hatching,

        And thrippy, urgent rejuvenation

        Comes again, like a five sister nimbus

        Gutloading the riven with pariah.

        Ah, rejuvenation. The honeysuckle

        Scrub brush monastery flexes sugar.

        Rosey routes the fire lane thru her toes.

        The snazzy barrel’s cubic rumba raves

        Flock the coachless soul. Pedals tarento,

        A coy drunkard, sprays fantastic upticks

        Over every infant, and all cry on,

        Looshy epiphenalia in their swind,

        Rejuve, rejuve. Sad maestros ornithy.

        And woozy groove puts in at almondine

        For oeuf imbue. O the carpet waters

        From savvy piggers bashing yokes on nuts!

        All rejuve. Even my seed pod stroller,

        So soft and dank of late’s now hard and swift

        Among the speckled jams of sweet felicia.

        Rejuvenation. Ah rejuvenation

        Doth never pick and curse, but ruddy cranks

        On any sagging, dry cocoon of care,

        And bubbling hormone implants…

*Vivian enters, carrying the sword, outside the room and impersonates Sophie.*

Viv -     Semion?

Rock - O Sophie, yes, you came. Rejuve, rejuve.

Viv -     Under the sheets and close your eyes,

        And you will get a big surprise.

Rock - I’m under the sheets! The best part about

        Being an adult is acting like a kid.

*Vivian enters the room.*

Viv -    I received your gift.

Rock - Pardon my timing,

        But it seemed best t’apprize you toot da sweet.

Viv -     You are so native to my urgent needs.

Rock - Fuck that play, right?

Viv -     That’s what I plan to do.

Rock -   O never has so savory a treat

        Come of such a nasty undergrabbing.

Viv -     Ready?

Rock - You’re not upset about Griffin?

Viv -     I’m a trashy girl with a hungry truck,

And he’s the dog that kept me from your junk.

Rock - You were way too good for him. He’s so stiff,

        And righteous! Allah oy. He must have left

        You cold as a San Francisco summer.

Viv -     Yes, but I can hear your heater groaning.

Rock - Burner’s on and combustion’s good to pass

        Into your exchanger for some toasty.

Viv -     Are you certain Vivian won’t come home?

Rock - I hope she does. You could direct her how

        To please me. That donky I-Don’t-Strip-Mall

        Was inept at eros as I in ethics.

Viv -     You must have had some oolala?

Rock - Not once.

        Miss Gristle Chop came frozen off the grill.

Viv -    It takes two to make one feel faultless.

Rock - The fault is all her female power shit.

        When the political is personal,

        The personal is fucking celibate.

        What good’s a big job and some debate points

        If you can’t open your tadpole spigot

        And sprinkle some wawa on the chuppah?

        Like if the dick ain’t hard, the day sure is,

        So get to work, woman. Damn, I range-roved

        Her rodeo drive with my wiper fluids

        Fly’n like I’s the queen’s own thick monsooner,

        But could she pop a lolly in the chops?

        Fuck no. What a waste of a pubic bloom

        Her hellhole was. Clueless as a game board

        Blew its pieces snuffing its instructions.

        Mais vous, ma chérie, êtes different:

        With hands that grip, eyes that gape, lips that lube,

        Ears that hear beyond their own conditions,

        And for the poofing of the ham un nez,

        You are, my dear…

Viv -     Ok, I think we’ve talked

        Enough for one ineffable d’accord.

        Ready?

Rock - Yes O yes, but speak French to me;

It fraps the hollandaise in my nicoise.

Viv -     No.

Rock - Si vous plais, mon amour. Parlez francais.

Viv -     Very well, Simple Simon. Au Revoir.

*Vivian pulls the sheet off the bed.*

Rock - Vivian, put down the sword.

Viv -     I’ll put it

        Down your gullet.

Rock - But I’m your husband.

Viv -     Only band I’m in’s the husband killers.

Rock - Spare me, please.

Viv -     Your life is past appeal.

        The highest court in disaster sent your case

        To me, the lowest bitch in the basement.

Rock -   Fine, I’m guilty, but death’s too large a fine.

Viv -     It’s true. That’s why I plan to cut you up

        So fine they’ll say your dying outdiced death.

Rock - But they’ll catch you and sentence you to life

        In the no lipstick building. I’m a cheat,

        So why not divorce me, take my money,

        And throw me in the street to spit upon?

Viv -     All I want from you’s your carcass farting

Beads of blood all over my last meal.

Rock - Vivian, ew.

Viv -     Ew? Who are you to ew?

        The work that was morphotic to my soul

        You haggled for some low exchange rate snatch.

        Our love, which I will swear upon the bile

        Your sickness slurried over everything

        Once so alive, your burning urgency

        Has scalded to a cold, vapid cinder.

        And like this caustic ravage can’t suffice,

        Your humor’s so humiliated me,

        A violence once inimical to sense

        Now forms the bulk of my depleted conscience,

        So ew to your ew, you ew-spewing flue,

        And prepare to be ewed past all ewing.

Rock - So I’m sick! Gimme pity, not petty.

Viv -     I’ll carve so many open pits thru you

        They’ll finally ledger down that you’re all mine.

Rock - It’s true. I claim my crimes. But what’s the cause

        Save my morals lapst before your genius?

Viv -     O no. I am no Anne. Your flattery

        But stokes my hankering to hack you up.

Rock - Let me be honest then before I die.

Viv -     Your only honest act will be to die.

Rock - I’m a bad man, Vivian.

Viv -     Honesty

Could have stayed home and loaft that on my lawn.

Rock - I mean that I have dealt the swag of death

        Lacking all compunction or condition:

        The bombing in Beijing, I sold the wares,

        And many slaughter staples prior to.

Viv -     Why tell me this now? Offing u just once

        Was already edging at unample.

Rock - I tell you to exonerate your guilt,

        For murder is the mimicry of love

        When we kill who would bezzle life from us.

Viv -     If this is mimicry, my guilt compounds,

        As emulating you is pure remorse.

Rock - But don’t you see, my wife? That’s our routine!

        When two strong minds enter a weak contract,

        More eas’ly broken than their precast wills,

        The ambush of affection tweaks of each

        All the other was in isolation

        Before concession ever faked an out,

        So intimacy spawns claustrophobics

        That medicate themselves with paranoia

        Whose only side-effect is addiction

        To terror as the studied take on sex,

        And soon, the bedroom turns a battleground

        Whereon the spirit’s tested til it fails.

        It’s normal, natural as tarantulas

        Breeding in the bodily recessions

        Of missing hollabacks. Let us accept

        Your art obtains its subject in my arms,

        My violence giving play to your desires,

        And peace marches on in re-enactment

        Of your forgiveness for my raunchy gaffes;

        A show of autonomic freedom we,

        All mad and all marveled at for madness.

Viv -    Stop talking.

Rock - No, I’ll speak til you admit

        That taking my life’s embracing my love.

Viv -     Your love’s an arsenal that I embrace

        To drop its fubar rating on itself.

Rock - But wait! There’s more in me than eats the lie!

        I hold so much clair de lune congestion

        I can’t control what surges out, but you

        Could direct my smut, search for artifacts

        Among the vitr’ous blast sites of my heart.

Viv -     To search it, I would have to cut it out.

Rock - Launch vindictive; land my vindication.

Viv -     We couldn’t have a child because you’re one.

Rock - Help me grow up and we’ll try, try again.

Viv -     I’m too old.

Rock - I know th’opposite feeling.

Viv -     O Semion, how much you’ve meant to me.

Rock - My meaning is constructed of your craft.

Viv -     More tears? You are a giant, hairy baby.

Rock - You scared me.

Viv -     And I thought to, but I’m sorry.

Rock - What an amazing, troublesome journey

        Our life has been because we stuck so close.

Viv -     When I first saw you, it was like the sun

        Had snuck one night into a human shape

        In order to be brighter being close

        Yet kinder in the freedom of not far,

        And I knew instantly, here was a man

        Whose scope of life gave me the silly hope

        That some day I might with him gladly die.

        Please, know that now, before our time is thru.

Rock - O Vivian, our time shall never end,

        For we are always opening again,

        Progressing thru impossible reversions,

        And running onward, ever, ever, ever.

Viv -     What opens must at some point close.

Rock - Must it?

Viv -     Yes, Simon, it must.

Rock - But why, mommy, why?

Viv -     If you’re open too long, bad things crawl in.

Rock - So you’re leaving me?

Viv -     No, I’m taking you.

*She stabs him.*

Viv -     Then leaving you.

*She stabs him.*

Rock - For who?

Viv -     For me alone.

*She stabs him.*

Rock - O, this is real.

Viv -     No, Simon, it’s a play:

        The one you took from me, which goes to show

        Catharsis will occur, on stage or off.

*She stabs him.*

Rock - Where you, my wife?

Viv -     Sanitizing myself

        Of all those parts of me inclined to you.

*She stabs him.*

Viv -     Who’s on book? O, me. What’s that Simon says?

        “I am dead.” Say “I am dead.”

Rock -   I am…

Viv -     Ha!

        Vivian didn’t say Vivian says!

*She stabs him.*

Viv -     Step on it, dud nut. We’re all sicka this

Run on I am’s; the play’s too long. Just die.

Rock - Adonai anee shav eleyha O…

*She cuts off his head.*

Viv -     Famous last incomprehensible words.

*She grabs his head and phone and exits.*

*Phase 5, Scene 7. Enter Leveret and Sophie outside his place. Griffin is hiding inside.*

Lev -     My place is a loner’s mess. Go round back;

        I’ll get some drinks and meet you on the porch.

*Sophie heads around the side of the house.*

Hunter -        Now sink into the cycle you know best:

        The timeless killer steps into his copy.

*Leveret goes into his place. Hunter jumps out and grabs Leveret by the throat.*

Hunter -        You love me, eh? Do anything for me, eh?

        Save my life? Serve my time? Slay my slayers?

        All good until you take it on yourself

        To take what’s best for me to better you.

        Kill Mayumi? Kill the only human

        I’ve ever loved, including you, you hopeless,

        Filthy faggott? She was the only one

        Who cared for me, knew me, heard all my heart,

        And you killed her, and for that, you are gone.

*Sophie enters through the door.*

Sophie -        Huzala, quit hunting ghosts for supper.

        Rockwell killed Mayumi at my request.

*She projects the footage on the wall.*

Sophie -        After all, it’s clear you left her wanting,

        So I sent a real man to top her off.

Hunter -        You, Sophie? You?

Sophie -        That’s right. My fiancé,

        The only human I have ever loved,

        Did my bid and botcht the bitch.

Hunter -        Fiancé?

Sophie -        Sophie and Simon. It has a ring, no?

*She throws her wedding ring at him.*

Hunter -        Is this true?

Sophie -        No Ghazan, this is marriage.

Leveret -       Look, you two. I work for Rockwell, ok?

He wanted you dead to get you in bed,

But I talked him into this cheating stunt

To save your life, and there’s no way he’d kill

Mayumi much less carve his own cold cuts,

And since I killed his thug and would never

Do it myself, truth is still in traffic,

So let’s just chill, ok?

Sophie -        Never write plays,

Leveret. Your plots are too implausible.

Hunter -        You are my wife.

Sophie -        No, I am your nightmare,

        And you will sleep with me pas plus. Pas plus!

Hunter -        I’m sorry.

Sophie -        To forgive you would imply

        You mean something to me, quand en effet

        You’re just a wrong turn I took to true love.

        So, pip pip. I’ll be lolling ‘long le Midi

        With my Simple.

Hunter -        Who, on your petition,

        Killed Mayumi.

Leveret -       No way.

Sophie -        Y quoi de cela?

Hunter -        I love you.

Sophie-         No, you love her.

Hunter -        I loved her.

Sophie -        Lies burst from his mouth like dreams from a bed!

Hunter -        Only because I’m stuck outside myself;

        I love you and you killed the one I love,

So come.

Leveret - Vengeance is the crime, not the cure.

Sophie -        Yet how I’m cured by this crime of vengeance!

Hunter -        Come now, Sophie.

Sophie -        I told him, murder her,

        Marry me.

Hunter -        Sophie, come now.

Leveret -       Tell the truth.

Sophie -        The truth as I know it, want it, or fear it?

Hunter -        The truth as it is.

Sophie -        I said kill her, she is dead. As it is.

Hunter -        Is that so damn implausible, Leveret?

Leveret -       I’d need to smell it from the scum itself.

Sophie -        He’ll be here soon enough, to kill you both!

Hunter -        Where are you going?

Sophie -        I’m fleeing the scene

        Of my liberation.

Hunter -        We are married.

Sophie -        Til death do us part.

Hunter -        Then death do us part.

*He grabs her by the throat.*

Leveret -       No!

Hunter -        Yes, I did you wrong, but you did worse,

        And yes, I love you, but you killed my love,

        And yes, you are my wife, but where’s my wife?

*Leveret pulls his gun.*

Leveret -       Griffin, stop, or I shoot.

Hunter -        My wife is dead,

        So I will show my love by killing her.

*Sophie dies. Enter Vivian with a sword and Rockwell’s head.*

Viv -     Sophie, baby, c’est moi, Simple Simon!

Sophie? Welcome, please, the husband killers!

*She charges at Hunter with her sword. Leveret shoots her and she dies.*

Leveret -       This is all way too real to be believed.

Hunter -        Rest, sweet Mayumi. Both are nothing now.

Leveret -       You killed her, man!

Hunter -        She is, was, the killer.

Leveret -       How do you know?

Hunter -        How do I know? She said.

Leveret -       Dude, she was distraught. “She said” don’t mean shit.

        Poor Sophie.

Hunter -        Rich Sophie. She found her way

        Beyond this thieving world, and that is all.

*Madera, with Walker and cops, calls from outside.*

Madera -       Hunter, this is Detective Madera.

        I need everyone in there to come out

        Hands in the air, then we can talk it thru.

Leveret -       Yo, we gotta go. I built a trap door

        Dumps onto the beach, then into my boat

        And we’re off. Ghazan!

Hunter -        No, I want the truth.

Leveret -       This is the truth.

Hunter -        Then I’m done.

Leveret -       Come on, man,

We’ll be free.

Hunter -        You set me up?

Leveret -       To save your life.

*Madera calls from outside.*

Madera -       Look, Hunter, you come out or we come in,

        And viz the latter, it’s long and ancient

        And leads to the top of a capsized life.

Leveret -       You go. I fix this then catch up.

Hunter -        Pas plus.

        I’ve built myself of you, and here’s the house.

        Go on. I want to be alone with her.

Leveret -       No, I will not. What am I without you?

        You taught me how to walk to what I want.

        I believe in you. I love you.

Hunter -        And that’s

        Your radiant mistake. Go, do better.

        Be free of me. I am a poison man.

Leveret -       You are my poison.

*Madera calls from outside.*

Madera -       Hunter, one more chance.

        Come out peacefully or trigger my heat.

Hunter -        Just go. I need to handle this myself.

Leveret -       Only if you swear I’ll see you again.

Hunter -        Never.

Leveret -       No.

Hunter -        Fine.

Leveret -       When and where?

Hunter -        In one month,

        The Sleeping Panda, where Yumi waited.

Leveret -       If they put you in, I will pull you out.

Hunter -        Like old times, but without the bad timing.

Leveret -       So I’m to trust you with yourself?

Hunter -        Trust me

        Only with myself.

Leveret -       Ok. This one’s yours.

        Ya habibi.

Hunter -        Ya habibi yalla.

*Leveret exits down the trap door.*

Hunter -        That is the last lie I will ever tell.

*Walker calls from outside.*

Walker -       Griffin, it’s Walker. Please, come out. I need

        To tell you something that will change all this.

Hunter -        Death has done its part; you may miss the bride.

        But when we were a thing, o what we were!

        Sadness savored, beauty seen and spoken,

        Silence and screams imbibed, taking places

        And taken by, following wildest whims,

        Sharing and honoring secrets, patient,

        Passionate, adoring, adored if not,

        In all providing sustenance discovering,

        And certainly forever…

*Walker calls from outside.*

Walker -       Griffin, please,

        Come talk with us. This isn’t what you think.

Hunter -        If only we had loved outside this life,

        A little less, perhaps. For you were fierce,

        Yet too much. You shouldn’t have, yet you did,

        And there we are, exactly what we were,

        Too similar to survive each other.

        O but Sophie, why?

*Walker calls from outside.*

Walker -       I killed Mayumi.

Hunter -        What?

Walker -       I killed her.

Hunter -        Who says that?

Walker -       Me, Walker.

        It was an accident. She rusht my gun.

        I went to save your Accord. I’m sorry.

        Please, come out.

Madera - Hands up.

Walker - And all will be well.

*He picks up Vivian’s sword.*

Hunter -        This is my peace. By this, all innocent,

        Now absent wonders sheen what brutal drives

        Barrel under love; what violent, vengeful

        Urges throttle us thru our desires,

        As th’aurora swoops in hot reflection

        From off the icy continents in shards

        Of unintended awesome perturbation,

        Yet such an image I with me despoil.

*Sea bulls bellow in the distance.*

Hunter - You hear, mad muzzle? Sea bulls, tho sailors

Called them sirens. Pas plus. Felt fictions, rest

        From my fresh-fouling mind that roused the tale

        Of how between two goods, full war can rage.

        She is dead, she is dead, so I’m to die.

        O total and unending isolation.

*He raises the sword and charges out the door.*

        Huzala comes, great cause of these deceased,

        That by his death at last beloved peace…

*Shots ring out.*

THE END