

TINSELTOWN  
by Joe Hanrahan  
Three Short Plays

PRESHOW MUSIC  
“Hollywood” Madonna  
“California Love” Tupac  
“I Love LA” Randy Newman  
“LA Woman” The Doors

FIRST PLAY

LATE LUNCH ON MELROSE

Characters BEVERLY MONTCLAIR, movie star  
BOBBY DANIEL, her agent

Setting - The latest Restaurant-of-the-Moment on Melrose. Cafe table. Two chairs. Fresh flowers on table.

Several martini glasses on table, most empty, one half-full, one sitting, full, to the side.

BEVERLY MONTCLAIR sits quietly, glancing around the cafe, hoping to get attention, but fending off any stares she’s receiving. Then, feeling no one is staring, she does a dance of a few elaborate gestures to gain some attention, checking her expensive watch, then redundantly checking her phone which she retrieves from her purse, showing her impatience at the late arrival of her lunch date. Puts phone away.

BEVERLY: (with a subtle, sweeping glance of the room). I hate this city.

(Finally, her lunch date shows. BOBBY DANIEL, her agent. He sweeps in from Stage Right.)

BOBBY: Darling!

BEVERLY: Darling!

(they Hollywood air kiss)

BOBBY: (as he sits) So sorry. So so sorry I’m a little late.

BEVERLY: Yes...you...

BOBBY: So sorry.

BEVERLY: ...are...late. A little late. My my.

(She turns her head dramatically, playing at being scorned. He stands, bows)

BOBBY: Oh, ah...Mea Culpa Mea Culpa...

BEVERLY: Darling...

BOBBY: Mea Maxima...

BEVERLY: (smiling, whispers) When the fuck have you EVER been...or ever felt you could be...a little late...to see ME? Mmmmh?

BOBBY: ...Culpa.

(pause)

BOBBY: Darling...ah, No more darlings...Darling!

BEVERLY: (small laugh) Don't think twice, dear. Sit down. I ordered you a drink.

BOBBY: (sits) Aaah. Our usual?

BEVERLY: Of course.

BOBBY: Very Dry?

BEVERLY: Very very dry. But not as chilled as when I first ordered it for you.

BOBBY: Delightful.

BEVERLY: So delightful. To be together...finally...even if...you're...a little LATE...coming to see ME.

BOBBY: Again, apologies. Dear, dear Madam...Beverly....apologies. Let me say, before anything else, you do look incredible.

BEVERLY: Really?

BOBBY: Stunning. I don't know how you do it. You look better and bett...

BEVERLY: Cut the shit.

BOBBY: All right...Allow me. A toast?

(he holds up his glass, after a moment, she picks up hers)

BOBBY: To Beverly...one of the greatest actresses Hollywood has ever seen! And...my favorite client.

(they touch glasses, sip)

BEVERLY: ...Hollywood has EVER...SEEN? Seen. Sounds historical...past tense, doesn't it?

BOBBY: (laughs) Darling, I'll rephrase. One of the greatest actresses in Hollywood!

BEVERLY: ONE...of the...how many are there? How many truly great actresses do we have... here?

BOBBY: Darling...

BEVERLY: Enough with the Darlings. (She turns coldly. Then laughs) Darling, I'm only teasing you.

(she takes a healthy drink)

BOBBY: (quietly) How many of those have you had?

BEVERLY: I've had...time...to have a few...waiting for you.

BOBBY: Dar...(stops himself)...uh, No more Darlings...Darling.

BEVERLY: (laughs, then) So, I'm what? Not worth the trouble of being on time...not a priority... not at the top of your... LIST...?

BOBBY: Beverly, come now, you are my favorite client.

BEVERLY: ...THAT List...

BOBBY: My number one client.

BEVERLY: ...that A List.

BOBBY: You defy the alphabet.

BEVERLY: I do know my ABCs.

BOBBY: You do.

BEVERLY: Backwards.

(small laugh from both, pause)

BEVERLY: A B...C List...is there a D List Now?

BOBBY: Dar...You...you...Listen, you know you made my agency.

BEVERLY: Don't forget that!

BOBBY: Oh, I won't. And I don't. And, once more...to apologize once more...another toast.

(He stops for a second. Takes his phone out of his pocket, glances at it, looks back to BEVERLY apologetically. And puts the phone down on the table He holds glass up, after a moment she does the same)

BOBBY: Now...Beverly...may we love...as long as we live...and live...as long as we love.

(They clink glasses. He sips, she stops before she does.)

BEVERLY: Are you talking once more about how old I am?

BOBBY: (laughing) No,no, no, it's...just a toast. So...it's been too long...since we really talked.

BEVERLY: Yes, why is that?

BOBBY: Travel. I was in Belgrade, for GUN RUN, that action thing. Two of our clients are in that. And then Mexico, for the new season of the Cartel series. Toronto, Atlanta, back and forth. Everything's being shot, everywhere. It's just not stopping.

BEVERLY: And you have to be there? What, exactly, do you do there?

BOBBY: Mmmm...hand-holding. Looking after the agencies' interests.

BEVERLY: And, am I not one of the agencies' interests?

BOBBY: Beverly. A strong agency works for all of our clients. That puts everyone, every client of the agency, in a stronger position. Especially our top, A List, clients. (He gestures towards her with his drink.)

BEVERLY: And who would those clients be? I'm not sure I'm on that...list anymore.

BOBBY: Hey now...

BEVERLY: Maybe at the bottom of that...A list? A minus?

BOBBY: Beverly, come now.

BEVERLY: B plus. (turning on him) I have a film in the can. Another that was shut down because of that damned...whatever it was...

BOBBY: Virus.

BEVERLY: ...virus, whatever, and last we talked...which was some time ago...three scripts...three...one of which I'm particularly fond...waiting to be green lit.

BOBBY: The last time we really talked was before the, uh...

BEVERLY: ...virus.

BOBBY: ...virus

BEVERLY: So, what's happening with all that...?

BOBBY: The virus...?

BEVERLY: No. My career!

BOBBY: Uh, well, as you know, the...uh...uh

BEVERLY/BOBBY: ...virus...

(BOBBY hears a small rumble on his phone, picks it up. Pleading to BEVERLY...)

BOBBY: (whispering) I have to take this.

(BOBBY walks away to take call. BEVERLY is mortified. BOBBY returns apologetically, places phone on table. A few moments of silence. As he returns, BEVERLY picks up her phone and pretends to have a call, full of "Darlings")

BEVERLY: (impatiently) So! What's happening? Mr. Agent?

BOBBY: Yes, I want to, that's why...I'm here talk to you about that...

BEVERLY: Good.

BOBBY: ...update...all that.

BEVERLY: Update? That sounds promising. Go ahead.

BOBBY: Uh, first, uh, well, SEPTEMBER LOVE...

BEVERLY: Wrapped a year ago February, scheduled for release last February, then this past September....

BOBBY: Yes...

BEVERLY: But I haven't see it on any release schedules.

BOBBY: No, no, the...virus...the shutdown...caused havoc with the studios...you know...

BEVERLY: I haven't been notified of any festivals...any premieres...any red carpets...

BOBBY: No, see...

BEVERLY: This is a finished film, a quality film. Scheduled for release in September...in some September...Oscar season...you said, Oscar dripping all over this project...

BOBBY: I did, yes.

BEVERLY: This project. OSCAR!

BOBBY: (glancing around, knowing The Restaurant is seeing him getting dressed down) Well, see, now, release dates just got jumbled. Studios are still trying to figure out...

BEVERLY: What's to figure out? The film's wrapped, it's good...

BOBBY: Box office projections have always tough, and now it's even harder...

BEVERLY: What?

BOBBY: ...harder to project, and so they're taking a very...idiosyncratic approach to what films to release and what films to...

BEVERLY: What films to what? Idiosyncratic? Why don't you just say IDIOT!

BOBBY: There's this huge push to VOD.

BEVERLY: (BEVERLY'S playing dumb here, she and BOBBY know it) VOD? What, is that like STD?

BOBBY: (laughs) Video On Demand. Streaming...

BEVERLY: Streaming! Yuck! Sounds like an STD.

BOBBY: Audiences are getting used to seeing...

BEVERLY: Audiences are used to getting used to what we tell them to get used to...

BOBBY: Since the quarantine, more and more, people are ready to see new films at home, streaming. And they're willing to pay to see them.

BEVERLY: I see where this is going.

BOBBY: You were always too smart for me.

BEVERLY: You don't really think that, do you?

(BOBBY starts to respond, stops, laughs)

BEVERLY: But you should.

(pause)

BOBBY: (laughs) So, uh, SEPTEMBER LOVE...Um...

BEVERLY: V...O...D?

BOBBY: It'll be great! They'll announce it, there'll be a premiere date, and then people will be able to watch it whenever they want.

BEVERLY: Mmm-mmh.

BOBBY: And, my dear, the Academy is now taking a hard look at films that don't appear, primarily, in theatres. Films on Netflix or other streaming...SEPTEMBER LOVE will get a short theatre run, that gets a lot of attention, then streaming...

BEVERLY: That's enough. Don't sugarcoat it. SEPTEMBER LOVE is being...streamed. There'll be no Oscar...consideration. And don't even mention profit participation.

BOBBY: Everybody's profit participation will be hurt...

BEVERLY: I said, Don't Mention It!

BOBBY: OK. But trust me, SEPTEMBER LOVE will go down as one of your...

BEVERLY: It'll go DOWN all right. So what about the SISTERS OF STORM script?

BOBBY: That's the one...?

BEVERLY: The one with Streep! We were supposed to go right into shooting after we wrapped SEPTEMBER LOVE.

(BOBBY senses phone - checks it - looks at BEVERLY, decides against answering)

BOBBY: Well, as you know, it going to be delayed because the film Streep was doing at the time was delayed....

BEVERLY: Yes, yes. So?

BOBBY: Meryl...seems to have moved on from SISTERS OF THE STORM.

BEVERLY: Moved on, to what?

BOBBY: Some little thing.

BEVERLY: Instead of SISTERS OF THE STORM? What little thing? With who?

BOBBY: With...uh, Nolan, I think...

BEVERLY: Christopher Nolan?

BOBBY: Ye...

BEVERLY: Some LITTLE thing? Christopher "INCEPTION, TENET, DUNKIRK" Nolan?

BOBBY: But, now, SISTERS OF THE STORM had third act problems that we never...

BEVERLY: All right! All right. What about SHOP DOWN THE STREET?

BOBBY: Which was...?

BEVERLY: SHOP DOWN THE STREET!!! That was...IS... going to show my range! No glamour, No gowns! I was going to be the...the sensitive lady with the little shop....

BOBBY: What kind of shop?

BEVERLY: Just some goddamned little shop! One where I...sold things to the neighborhood, and I listened to their problems, and helped them all...

BOBBY: Uh, I don't remem...

BEVERLY: Now that had Oscar potential! Me, playing against type. Not glamorous. We even talked shooting in black and white.

BOBBY: Black and white? I don't know...maybe Netflix...

BEVERLY: Oh, never mind. I knew that was a long shot.

BOBBY: Sounds like it.

BEVERLY: But then there's the one I want. Bobby...(she grabs his face with her hands)...Bobby, dear...you've been with me all these years. You've watched me grow...as an actress, and as a woman. You know what it is.

BOTH (him reluctantly, her enthusiastically): GEORGIA!

BEVERLY: You remembered. Now all during this...

BOBBY: Virus.

BEVERLY: ...virus thing, I've been working with Susan on the screenplay.

BOBBY: Susan?

BEVERLY: Susan Dimitri. Hot young director. She's doing some sci-fi thing right now, but she's just as dedicated to this project as I am.

BOBBY: OK.

BEVERLY: And I think it's ready to show the studios...

BOBBY: Beverly...

BEVERLY: It's so good. I can see a bidding war.



BOBBY: Beverly. (pause) George O'Keefe's been done. Joan Allen did it ten years ago...

BEVERLY: That's where we're so good...

BOBBY: ...and that one didn't do well.

BEVERLY: But we're not doing the young Georgia, the New York Georgia. So no Stieglitz. No nudity. This is after Stieglitz. New Mexico.

BOBBY: OK.

BEVERLY: This is the mature Georgia. The Georgia who has come full flower as an artist. Full flower, get that?

BOBBY: Yeah, I did.

BEVERLY: The Georgia who is not just the young girl that Stieglitz shot, without any clothes, over and over - and exploited! But the woman who has embraced her years, and is now more beautiful than ever!

BOBBY: Of course.

BEVERLY: (BEVERLY stands, glides a bit) GEORGIA. A movie almost completely without dialogue. (BOBBY mouths "What?") Just images - beautiful, spare images of New Mexico - the isolation, the flowers - and Georgia.

BOBBY: (people are staring) Uh, Beverly...

BEVERLY: Georgia O'Keefe. Artist. Genius. Woman.

BOBBY: Uh, you're...

BEVERLY: I'm GEORGIA! Beverly Montclair is...GEORGIA!

BOBBY: Beverly Montclair is attracting stares...

BEVERLY: They were staring at me from the moment I walked in. (sits) I am, after all, a star. Even though your agency may not realize it anymore.

BOBBY: Now, wait...

BEVERLY: But, Bobby, I have been waiting for this my whole life, my whole career. Well, at least for the last year, since I've had some time. Because of this....

BOBBY: Virus.

BEVERLY: Virus thing. I've been studying her work. And, I've actually been painting!

BOBBY: Really?

BEVERLY: Well, not really painting, but practicing how she painted, how Georgia stood when she painted. (BEVERLY pushes chair out, stands in different poses) What do you think?

BOBBY: That's very...good.

BEVERLY: And the way she...she saw the desert, the landscape. I mean, she really, really saw it.

BOBBY: Yes, she must have.

BEVERLY: And when she looked at a flower...(BEVERLY crouches, peers into the soul of a flower before her)

BOBBY: Yeah, yeah, I see...

BEVERLY: And get this, we already have a theme song in the works. A friend of Susan's - Teenah Davis, remember her? She was big a few years ago, but she's doing a new song for the film. I've been thinking about some lyrics.

(BEVERLY starts to sing)

Georgia  
(something like)  
You finally found the power  
You began to flower  
(something like that, I'm working on it)

BOBBY: Bev, uh the people...

BEVERLY: And there's this other tune...it just came to me...in a dram, I don't know...

Georgia Georgia  
The whole day through  
Just an old sweet song

BOBBY: Oh, yeah, Ray Charles.

BEVERLY: Ray Charles? Oh, Jamie Foxx. He was so good.

BOBBY: Yes, he was.

BEVERLY: But anyway, soundtrack album. Big hit. So, where are we, with this story...of an artist...a genius...a woman?!?!)

BOBBY: Sit down, dear.

BEVERLY: I'll stand...for Georgia! I'll stand...for the film. GEORGIA, starring Beverly Montclair. As Georgia. I'll stand for this true story that will be an inspiration for struggling women... and precious little girls....everywhere!

BOBBY: I...

BEVERLY: I am committed, I am dedicated - with my heart and soul - to bring this story..this story of a woman, of an artist, of a human being...this story of love, of vision, of the eternal spirit...to the silver screen!

(pause)

BOBBY: I'm just not sure that...

BEVERLY: You Cocksucker!!! (BEVERLY sits and drains her drink.) I knew it. I knew it!

BOBBY: Now just wait...

BEVERLY: I knew it. Everything down the drain. My Oscar film - VOD! The scripts I love. Gone! My dream project, the one I've slaved over....for months...forget it, just forget it, Beverly!

BOBBY: It's not...

BEVERLY: What's next? Dropping me from the agency? Is that it? Am I going to have to find a new agent?

BOBBY: No, no...

BEVERLY: Well, that won't be hard, Buster! Don't think twice about it. They'll be lining up to bring me on.

BOBBY: Let's talk...

BEVERLY: Maybe I'll finally get my due. Get some respect. With an agency that can get things done! An agency that can get GEORGIA off the ground! Off the trash heap where you've dumped it!

BOBBY: Now I have...

BEVERLY: I should have dumped you and your popsicle stand of an agency years ago!

BOBBY: BEVERLY!

BEVERLY: How soon they forget. What have you done for me lately...

(BEVERLY starts to walk out)

BOBBY: BEVERLY: I...I...Listen...Listen...I...have some...offers...for you.

BEVERLY: I...what?...You do?

BOBBY: Yes.

(BEVERLY creeps back to the table)

BEVERLY: Well. Mmm. Offers. All right. Mmm, what is...

BOBBY: A new Netflix series. A comedy.

BEVERLY: Netflix? Comedy? (pause, thinks) Television? I haven't done any television in a while...but I can do comedy...

BOBBY: Of course you can. Especially this one. It's a dark comedy, it has an edge.

BEVERLY: An edge. I can do an edge.

BOBBY: Of course.

BEVERLY: What's the role?

BOBBY: You run a former luxury resort hotel in the Catskills. It's been down on its luck for years, and during that time, there's been some strange goings-on there.

BEVERLY: Strange goings-on...?

BOBBY: So there's some scares, but it's still funny...

BEVERLY: Aaaah. Funny. But with an edge.

BOBBY: With an edge.

BEVERLY: (pause, then) So what? I run a hotel? What am I? Some dowdy Catskills hotel hausfrau?

BOBBY: No, not, of course not. You're a former Broadway star...a big star...who fell in love with a wonderful man, whose family operated this hotel. But he's passed on, you've inherited the hotel - you're the glamorous centerpiece of this quirky, curious old hotel. And it just happens to be haunted by your husband...your late husband...who is now a very handsome ghost.

BEVERLY: And...who's going to play my...ghost husband?

BOBBY: We're showing this project to every top actor in town.

BEVERLY: Every...?

(BOBBY nods)

BEVERLY: Even...?

(BOBBY nods vigorously)

(pause. BEVERLY considers)

BEVERLY: It sounds like a tricky concept.

BOBBY: Great writers. Great scripts. I've read all the coverage.

BEVERLY: And Netflix...?

BOBBY: Netflix is where it's at. Netflix is launching...sustaining...reviving...careers!

BEVERLY: Reviving, I...(pauses, laughs)...I've never done TV.

BOBBY: It's where it's at these days.

BEVERLY: But a star of my caliber, doing TV.

BOBBY: Kidman. Clooney. Streep.

BEVERLY: Streep. I saw that.

BOBBY: HBO Max. And Netflix.

BEVERLY: But...how...much...do they...?

BOBBY: \$200,000 an episode. 10 episodes the first season. And no doubt - this one will hit big. This one will be renewed.

BEVERLY: (plays hard to get for just a moment, then smiles) I'll do it!

BOBBY: Wonderful.

BEVERLY: TV is where it's at these days?

BOBBY: Oh yes.

BEVERLY: I actually watched a lot of it during that...?

BOBBY: Virus.

BEVERLY: Netflix. Well, that's good. It's something. But it's not...

BOBBY: AND...also...(raises his eyebrows)

BEVERLY: And...also...?

BOBBY: A film.

BEVERLY: A film? An offer? For a film?

BOBBY: Well, a movie. A movie movie.

BEVERLY: What? What is it? What's the role?

BOBBY: This is a big one. This...this one...guaranteed...a blockbuster! Top grossing movie of the year!

BEVERLY: What is it?

BOBBY: The next Avengers movie.

BEVERLY: Avengers? Those people in tights? And capes?

BOBBY: MARVEL!!!

BEVERLY: Didn't that...? What was that last one?

BOBBY: AVENGERS ENDGAME.

BEVERLY: Endgame? But now there's going to be another?

BOBBY: (BOBBY nods) AVENGERS LAST STAND.

BEVERLY: That Endgame one did well, didn't it?

BOBBY: Worldwide (BOBBY holds up three fingers, one at a time)...Three...(stage whispers)...Billion.

BEVERLY: Oh my!

BOBBY: That's Billion...with a B.

BEVERLY: A, B...

BOBBY: You'll do it?

BEVERLY: (plays hard to get for a moment) With that kind of Box Office, there should be a few dollars for...moi?

BOBBY: We'll fight for every penny.

BEVERLY: Because you get 10%, right?

BOBBY: Well...

BEVERLY: But what role would I play? I'm not sure...me in tights...and a cape...I mean, as far as that goes, I'm in great sha...

BOBBY: No, no...you play the mother of one of the young Avengers.

BEVERLY: The mother!?! I'm far too young to start playing mothers...

BOBBY: No, no, you're the mother of a very young Avenger. You had...have super powers...and you've passed it on to your very very young daughter.

BEVERLY: So I wouldn't have to...

BOBBY: Well, you do, yes. At the dramatic, exciting, special effects laden climax, you and some of the former Avengers come back to save the day.

BEVERLY: So I will have to wear...

BOBBY: Just in close up. For the action...

BEVERLY: Body Double.

BOBBY: Body Double. Stunt Woman. This role...this film...will carve out a whole new image for you. Every actress in Hollywood is taking on an action role...Super Hero, Assassin.

BEVERLY: Except Streep.

BOBBY: Except Streep.

BEVERLY: (plays hard to get for a moment) I'll do it!

BOBBY: Darling.

BEVERLY: Darling.

BOBBY: Should we order another round?

BEVERLY: Darling.

BOBBY: (gestures towards waiter, gestures two more) BEVERLY: Bobby, Darling...let me ask you something?

BOBBY: Of course.

BEVERLY: We've known each other...how long now?

BOBBY: Well, years.

BEVERLY: Yes, years. We've travelled together...

BOBBY: Yes.

BEVERLY: To film sets...award shows...

BOBBY: Oh, yes...Cannes, Venice...

BEVERLY: Festivals...

BOBBY: Toronto, Telluride...

BEVERLY: We've dined together, drank...

BOBBY: Ah yes, drank...

BEVERLY: Oh My God, remember that night in Dublin.

BOBBY: Ah, yes. We hit every pub in town.

BEVERLY: Remember that nun?

BOBBY: Oh yeah, she drank us under the table.

BEVERLY: In all those years, all those times, all those places...why...did you never make a pass at me?

(pause)

BOBBY: Because you would have turned me down.

(pause)

BEVERLY: That's true. But you still should have tried.

(BOBBY'S phone again. He checks it. Smiles at BEVERLY. Puts it away.)

BOBBY: Darling.

BEVERLY: Darling.

BOBBY: (gestures towards waiter) Waiter.

THE END

INTERMISSION MUSIC

"LA Woman" Bill Idol

"Gold" John Stewart

"California" Bob Dylan



