



AUDITION PACKET

DRINKING HABITS
A FARCE BY TOM SMITH

2025
FRI & SAT
APRIL
11 & 12
7 PM

SUN
APRIL
13
2 PM


PRESENTED BY
wabeno area
PLAYERS

NANCY VOLK
AUDITORIUM
WABENO HIGH SCHOOL
4325 BRANCH ST
WABENO, WI 54566

TICKETS
\$15
STUDENTS
\$10

FOR TICKETS VISIT:
WABENOAREPLAYERS.ORG

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715.473.5466 / 715.889.0306 | wabenoareplayers@gmail.com
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OR SCAN
QR CODE

Auditions 4 p.m. Sunday, January 12,
and 6 p.m. Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Wabeno Town Hall, 4473 N. Branch St., Wabeno, WI 54566

DRINKING HABITS

Thank you for your interest in auditioning for The Wabeno Area Players production of *Drinking Habits*, written by Tom Smith. In this hilarious comedy, two sisters of Perpetual Sewing have been secretly making wine to keep the struggling convent open, but Paul and Sally, reporters and former fiancées are hot on their trail. Sprinkle in additional nuns, accusations, mistaken identities and romances, and you've got a perfect, laugh-out-loud farce.

FIRST REHEARSAL:

Sunday, February 2, 4-6pm. at the Wabeno Town Hall

AUDITION SHEETS AND CONFLICT SCHEDULE:

Please make sure the audition sheet is filled out completely. Please write legibly. Print your email address very clearly. *Please list all known conflict between February 2 and March 29, including planned vacations.* **Rehearsal Days between March 30 and April 10, are mandatory as well as performance days.**

SET CONSTRUCTION/DECONSTRUCTION

The weekend of March 15 and 16, is set construction. Please be available at least one of those days. After our last performance we will strike our set and put all materials/costumes, equipment, etc... away. This is mandatory for all involved.

REHEARSALS:

Rehearsals are planned for Sunday (2-4) pm, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday evenings (6-8 pm). Actors will only be called for rehearsals for which they are needed. The schedule will be finalized after the show is cast.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU AUDITION:

You will be asked to read from the script. Sides are contained in this packet. You will also be asked to demonstrate your ability to move well on the stage by performing simple stage movements.

FAQs

I HAVE NEVER BEEN PART OF WABENO AREA PLAYERS. CAN I STILL AUDITION?

Absolutely! We welcome newcomers to our theater.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO THE AUDITION?

Please bring a list of all schedule conflicts. Please wear comfortable clothes and shoes so that you can move easily at auditions.

WHEN WILL I FIND OUT IF I'VE BEEN CAST?

You will be notified by text if you are cast. You will be notified by email if you are not cast. You will be notified by Thursday, January 16, 2025.

I DID NOT GET A CALLBACK. DOES THAT MEAN I WON'T BE CAST?

Not necessarily.

WHAT IF I HAVE A CONFLICT WITH REHEARSAL DATES, DOES THAT MEAN I WON'T BE CAST?

The director will usually work around minor conflicts, which is why it is important to list all known conflicts on the audition form. Actors **must** be available for all performances. If you have a conflict with a performance date, please do not audition.

WHAT IF I GET SICK AND HAVE TO MISS A REHEARSAL?

If you are too sick to go to work, we don't want you at rehearsal. Contact the director, assistant director, or stage manager as soon as you can if you must miss rehearsal due to illness or emergency.

WHAT IF I GET COVID?

We will address any need to quarantine or replace an actor who becomes ill with COVID if that occurs. The safety of our cast and crew as well as our patrons is paramount in all of our decisions.

This production has a small cast. If one person is unable to attend a scheduled rehearsal it makes it difficult for the cast and crew as a whole. If more than three cast members are absent at any rehearsal, it will be cancelled.

ROLE SUMMARY

Casting : 5 women age ranges 20s-80s / 3 men ages ranges 20s-80s

DRINKING HABITS CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

The stage age ranges listed will be tightly observed, due to relationships revealed at the end of the play.

Sister Philamena (F) — age range 20s-mid-70s

One of the three nuns who lives at the Sisters of Perpetual Sewing. Has secretly been making wine for several years with Sister Augusta in order to keep the convent open. Devout and dedicated to her calling. Joyful and humorous. Incapable of lying. Must have excellent comic timing and move well.

Sister Augusta (F) — age range 20s-mid 70s

One of the three nuns who lives at the Sisters of Perpetual Sewing. Has secretly been making wine for several years with Sister Philamena in order to keep the convent open. Devout and dedicated to her calling. Joyful and humorous. Must have excellent comic timing and move well.

George (M) — age range 20s-60s

Caretaker and gardener at the convent. George isn't dumb, but he is a little slow. Must have excellent comic timing and move well.

Mother Superior (F) — age range 50s-early 80s

Has been in charge of the Sisters of Perpetual Sewing for many years. Hates alcohol, especially wine. Someone wily. Must have excellent comic timing and move well.

Paul (M) — age range 20s-30s

Newspaper reporter. Co-worker and former fiancé of Sally. Paul is an orphan. He's a good writer, but his conscience sometimes gets in the way of his reporting. Must be a master of comic timing and move well and quickly.

Sally (F) — age range 20s-40s

Award-winning newspaper reporter. Used to be engaged to Paul. Left him standing at the altar on their wedding day in order to cover an important story. Quick-witted and sometimes sharp-tongued. Must have excellent comic timing and move well.

Sister Mary Catherine (F) — age range 20s-30s

A novice nun sent to the convent to finish her training. Meek & timid. Must have excellent comic timing and move well.

Father Chenille (M) — age range 50s-early 80s

Priest of the local parish next door to the convent. Patient, understanding, and a little clumsy. Must have excellent comic timing and move well.

SIDES (SCENES FROM THE PLAY) TO BE READ AT AUDITIONS:
SCENE 1: SISTER PHILOMENA, GEORGE, SISTER AUGUSTA, MOTHER SUPERIOR

SISTER PHILOMENA: Today hasn't been so bad, has it? Only three chimes.

GEORGE: When I grew up in the orphanage, I would always get in trouble for making too much noise.

SISTER PHILOMENA: George, I didn't know you were an orphan!

GEORGE: I am?

SISTER PHILOMENA: You just said you were.

GEORGE: I did?

SISTER PHILOMENA: Yes. You said you grew up in an orphanage.

GEORGE: Oh, but I wasn't an orphan. My father was the groundskeeper and we lived on-site. An all girls orphanage, which was an awfully nice place to grow up, if you catch my meaning. There was one girl in particular: I never knew her name, but I saw her watching me out her window all the time. Even when I was just eating lunch or reading, she's stare at me in my old monogrammed work shirt and smile. And I'd smile back, and kinda wave, like this, and then she's wave back, like this, and then I'd give her my Valentine eyes, like this, and she'd—

(AUGUSTA AND PHILAMENA *look embarrassed.*)

Sorry sisters.

SISTER AUGUSTA: What was it you wanted, George?

GEORGE: Wanted?

SISTER AUGUSTA: Yes, you know.....(*repeats some of George's mimes*)

GEORGE: Oh, right! They said on the radio that a heavy frost is expected tonight.

SISTER AUGUSTA: Frost? SISTER PHILOMENA: So soon?

SISTER AUGUSTA: We'll have to drop everything and harvest the grapes!

SISTER PHILOMENA: But what about these robes? Mother Superior told us to get them repaired and shipped out by tomorrow. There's no way we can pick grapes and finish all this sewing.

GEORGE: I can help with the grapes. I don't mind.

SISTER PHILOMENA: Oh, George, could you?

GEORGE: Sure, I've already finished my chores. Besides, if those grapes go bad you won't be able to make any of your juice for the poor.

SISTER AUGUSTA: Glory be! Sister Philomena, we'll skip dinner tonight and go help George. Then we'll come back and rush through the rest of this sewing. We'll get our buckets and meet you in the fields, George.

GEORGE: All right. *(He starts to exit,)*

SISTER AUGUSTA: George! What's that in your pocket?

GEORGE: I almost forgot! Mother Superior got a telegram. From Rome!

(He hands it over.)

It's marked "importante." That's Italian. I wonder what it means....?

(They stare at him for a second. He thinks really hard. Finally, he thinks he gets it.)

Ohhhhh! Imported!

SISTER AUGUSTA: Important, George. It means important.

SISTER PHILOMENA: We'll see that she gets this right away!

GEORGE: Good! I'll see you in the vineyard! *(He rushes off.)*

SISTER AUGUSTA: *(Calling after him:)* Orchard, George! Remember, Mother Superior doesn't like us to call it a vineyard.

SISTER PHILOMENA: Once we pick those grapes, Augusta, we'll have to start making our....*(looking around and whispering)*...wine. But we don't have enough bottles. Or space! Or time!

SISTER AUGUSTA: What choice do we have? Our...*(from this point on, everyone whispers "you-know-what" instead of wine)*...You-know-what...is the only thing that keeps money coming into this convent. Without its, the church would close us down for

sure. Now c'mon, Philomena, we have to go help George with that grape harvest.

(MOTHER SUPERIOR enters)

We can't let it go bad.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Let what go bad, Sisters?

SISTER AUGUSTA: Mother Superior!

SISTER PHILOMENA: We didn't see you come in.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Let what go bad!

SISTER PHILOMENA: (*Terrified:*) ...uh...uh...

SISTER AUGUSTA: George, Mother Superior! We can't let George go bad.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: What do you mean?

SISTER AUGUSTA: We were just talking to him, Mother Superior, and he seems to be treading the path of sin. Isn't that right, Sister Philomena?

SISTER PHILOMENA: ...uh...uh...

MOTHER SUPERIOR: What sin, Sister Augusta?

SISTER AUGUSTA: I saw him drinking...alco—

MOTHER SUPERIOR: (*cutting her off sharply:*) Don't say that word, Sister Philomena! You know how much I despise that word!

SISTER AUGUSTA: Sorry, Reverend Mother.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: But George lives here on the grounds. Where on earth could he get ... you know-what?

SISTER PHILOMENA:...uh...uh...

SISTER AUGUSTA: He sneaks into town at night, Mother Superior, and buys bottles of that....devil's delight....that seems to be popular among the locals. Sister Philomena and I were going to skip dinner and counsel him.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: This is terrible! George has been our groundskeeper for years. He's never once given me a moment's worry. Perhaps I should speak with him personally.

SISTER PHILOMENA: No, Mother Superior, you can't!

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Why not?

SISTER PHILOMENA:...uh...uh...

SISTER AUGUSTA: He doesn't know that you know, Mother Superior, and it might embarrass him. He so looks up to you. It would be much easier coming from Sister Philomena and me.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Perhaps you're right. But remember, you may counsel, but don't preach. Change must come from within. And hurry back: we're expecting that new addition to our convent tonight: Sister Mary, who has been sent to us by Cardinal Redding himself!

SISTER PHILOMENA/SISTER AUGUSTA: Yes, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: I see George has found a trunk to ship the robes off in. Oh, it's Father Chenille's old magic trunk. That man is the worst magician I've ever seen: the only thing he can make disappear is an audience.

SCENE 2: PAUL and SALLY

PAUL: That was close; they almost saw us!

SALLY: But they didn't. Geez, Paul, you're as nervous as a marshmallow at campout. Calm down.

PAUL: Easy for you to say! You didn't spend 12 years in Catholic school! You have no idea what these nuns are like! Sally, I feel really strange about all this...

SALLY: Why? This is just like any other story we've been assigned.

PAUL: Oh, really? What other story required us to do an expose on nuns?

SALLY: Well, somebody in this town has been making wine and they just won a half-million dollar prize. Besides, this will only be an expose if these nuns are the ones making it.

PAUL: Still, this doesn't feel right...

SALLY: Listen, the chief promise whoever cracks this a year's worth of front-page stories. From page, Paul! Do you know what that could do for our careers?

PAUL: I know, but....spying on nuns?!?

SALLY: Aren't you tired of writing for the Society section? I don't know about you, but I took this job to report hard news, not cake walks and charity luncheons.

PAUL: Fine; let's just take a quick look and get out of here. (*Looking around.*) This place gives me the creeps. I've never been in a convent before.

SALLY: You just said you went to Catholic School!

PAUL: I did, but we never actually saw where those nuns lived. For all we knew, they were like bats and slept upside down in coat closets. Boy, I don't miss those days at all. Those nuns used to scare me to death: always staring, not saying anything. You'd confess to anything, guilty or not, just to stop that staring. There was this one nun at my high school; she gave me the willies so bad that I'd stutter. I couldn't get anything out. It was horrible!

SALLY: Don't you mean, horr-ri-b-ble?

PAUL: That's not funny!

SALLY: (*Opening the high holy closet:*) Hey, look at this. (*She pulls out a white robe.*) Boo!

PAUL: Don't touch that, it's holy! (*Quickly putting the robe away:*) The nuns in this order sew and repair all the robes for the Church. If the Pope rips a hem, he sends it here to get fixed. These are very sacred things.

SALLY: (Looking around more:) This place isn't so bad; it's simple and kinda cozy. You know, I always thought that we'd have something like this for our summer home: a little vineyard, a lot of quiet.

PAUL: We would have — if you didn't leave me at the altar.

SALLY: Oh, Paul, you're not still sore, are you? What choice did I have? Cracking that Dillon Boys story finally got me noticed! I was the only reporter who covered it!

PAUL: Because everyone else was at our wedding, waiting for you to show up!

SALLY: Look. Paul, we both agreed not getting married was the best thing to happen to our relationship.

PAUL: I know, I know! But it hasn't been easy since we started being assigned the same stories. The chief sure has a sadistic side...

SALLY: Thanks a lot.

PAUL: You know what I mean, Sally. It's just difficult sometimes...I still care about you. A lot.

SCENE 3: SISTER PHILAMENA, SISTER AUGUSTA, SISTER MARY CATHERINE, SALLY

SISTER PHILAMENA: (*Seeing Sally:*) Oh, hello! Who are you?

SALLY: I'm Sal — (*Stops herself and extends her hand*) Sister Mary.

SISTER PHILAMENA: Sister Mary?

SISTER AUGUSTA: But this is Sister Mary.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Mary Catherine. Which one are you?

SALLY: Excuse me?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Which Mary? I'm Mary Catherine, and you're Mary...?

SALLY: Mary?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Sister Mary Mary?

SALLY: Well, Bloody Mary was already taken.

(PHILAMENA and AUGUSTA look shocked.) That's just a little joke.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Oh, I get it! Like the cocktail!

SISTER AUGUSTA: Shhhh...you mustn't talk about...you-know-what...here. Mother Superior feels drinking is one of the greatest sins one can commit.

SISTER PHILAMENA: She says it leads to a life of vice and sin. She's quite passionate about it. She won't even let us say the word. We have to say "you-know-what," or "Satan's bathwater" or "the devil's hair tonic," or something like that.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I didn't know. Please forgive me!

SISTER PHILAMENA: Sister Augusta and I didn't know you were living with us as well, Sister Mary Mary.

SALLY: Yes, I was sent here by, um, Cardinal whatshisname....

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: What a coincidence! He's responsible for my being here as well! And what a coincidence we've arrived on the same day! And we have almost the same name! You're not an orphan too, are you?

SALLY: Can't say that I am.

SISTER PHILAMENA: Oh, Sister Mary! You're an orphan?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: My entire family was killed in a terrible car accident outside of Paris. I was brought up in an orphanage for girls. Every one of us became nuns. It was sort of expected.

(Beat.)

Except for one girl. She started a softball team.

SISTER AUGUSTA: I'll tell Mother Superior you've arrived, Mary Catherine.

SISTER PHILAMENA: And I'll prepare another room.

SCENE 4: FATHER CHENILLE and SALLY

FATHER CHENILLE: Oh, hello! You must be the new Sister. I'm Father Chenille. I'm the priest of the local parish.

SALLY: Hello, Father.

(Rises. Unsure how to greet him, she does an elaborate curtsy.)

FATHER CHENILLE: My, it was rather formal where you came from, wasn't it? Well, perhaps you can help me? It's a high holy day tomorrow, and I seem to have ripped my cassock. I was wondering if you might be able to mend it for me?

SALLY: Wouldn't it be easier to take it to a seamstress?

FATHER CHENILLE: But Sister, you're a seamstress.

SALLY: Oh, yes, of course. Just leave it here. I'll get to it a little later tonight.

FATHER CHENILLE: It's only a small tear. I don't suppose you could fix it now? I have a sunrise service in the morning.

SALLY: Well...certainly I could. It's just a small tear.

(Gathers sewing supplies and focuses so intently on threading the needle she ignores FATHER CHENILLE)

FATHER CHENILLE: How do you like the convent so far? Rather small, but they really do good for the community. I see Sister Philomena and Sister Augusta go into town every week with their grape juice, and it seems to brighten up the spirits of every soul in town. I don't know how this order has remained open, with so little money coming into it. But I suppose our sisters are thrifty. Having some trouble?

SALLY: I can't thread this stupid needle.

FATHER CHENILLE: You're joking! I'm well aware Cardinal Redding sends only those divinely gifted in the art of sewing to this convent.

(He sees the trunk.)

What's this?

SALLY: *(still trying to get the needle threaded:)* Almost got it....

FATHER CHENILLE: *(examines the trunk:)* Well, I'll be!

SALLY: *(Finally getting the needle threaded:)* There we go!

FATHER CHENILLE: My old magician's trunk! I haven't seen this in years!

SALLY: *(Begins to sew:)* Hey, this isn't so hard...

FATHER CHENILLE: I'll be right back; I just need to get a few things from the kitchen. *(He rushes off.)*

SCENE 5: SISTER MARY CATHERINE, SISTER AUGUSTA, SISTER PHILAMENA

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Good morning, Sisters.

SISTER PHILAMENA: Good morning, Mary Catherine.

SISTER AUGUSTA: *(Moving to the other side of MARYCATHERINE and checking her out:)* Good Morning.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Is something wrong, Sister?

SISTER AUGUSTA: How are you feeling this morning, Sister Mary Catherine? Anything you'd like to tell us?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: What do you mean?

SISTER AUGUSTA: Anything to....confess?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Actually, there is.

SISTER AUGUSTA: *(Excited:)* I knew it!

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I drank the last of the grape juice at breakfast this morning.

SISTER AUGUSTA: Is that all?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: (*Unsure:*) And...I'm sorry? Listen, Sisters, may I ask you something? Is this building very old?

SISTER PHILAMENA: Not really. Why?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I hears strange noises all night last night. I though maybe it was the building settling.

SISTER AUGUSTA: Noises? What kind of noises? Did the noises make you want to...tell us something?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I know this sounds silly, but they sounded almost ...human. Like a voice, telling me the strangest things.

SISTER AUGUSTA: Oh, really? Like what?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: They just kept saying, "confess, confess."

SISTER AUGUSTA: Maybe you have a heavy heart about something. Perhaps a secret weighing you down? Something you need to...confess?

(Both Sisters stare at MARY CATHERINE)

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: (*Very nervous:*) I think I'll take my sewing outdoors. I'd like some quiet time to reflect.

SISTER AUGUSTA: I'll come along.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I don't mean to be impolite, Sister Augusta, but I'd like to go alone.

SISTER AUGUSTA: Good, me too. We can go alone together.

(As they exit, AUGUSTA whispers behind her: "Confess! Confess!")

SCENE 6: MOTHER SUPERIOR and PAUL (as Father Paul)

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Ah, Father Paul.

PAUL: Good morning, Mother Superior.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: I trust your accommodations with Father George were acceptable?

PAUL: Yes, quite nice.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Excellent. We want your stay to be comfortable. I see you missed breakfast this morning. There's still team, if you'd like.

PAUL: I'm fine, thank you.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Father Paul, may I ask you a rather...odd...question?

PAUL: Of course, Mother

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Can you tell when a person is lying?

PAUL: I beg your pardon?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: In confession you see sinners all the time. Say that there was a person who had committed a great sin: they disguised themselves as a member of the Church to spy on someone. Could you tell just by looking at that person?

PAUL: I d-d-don't know what you mean....

MOTHER SUPERIOR: I believe I have that gift. I can spot a phony right away.

PAUL: Mother Superior! I d-don't know who you're ref-f-ferring to.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: May I be frank with you, Father Paul?

(PAUL *nods nervously.*)

There is a deceiver in this very convent!

PAUL: Wh-wh-wh-what?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Father, you're stuttering.

PAUL: I j-j-j-j-just, I mean, I j-j-j-j...(*Desperately composing himself:*) A deceiver?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Imagine Sister Mary's audacity to lie in a house of charity!

PAUL: (*Horried:*) Oh. So you know about Sister Mary, then?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: It is painfully clear that Rome sent Sister Mary Catherine to spy on us.

PAUL: Mary *Catherine*?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Yes, Father. She arrived late last night.

PAUL: (*Greatly relieved:*) Oh! Mary Catherine!

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Father, as much as I abhor myself for what I'm about to ask you, I feel I must, for the good of this convent.

PAUL: What would you like me to do?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Disguise yourself as a nun!

PAUL: I beg your pardon?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: I need you to dress up like a nun so you can spy on Sister Mary Catherine. Oh, I know it sounds sinful, and I must sound crazy, but I'm desperate! I need someone to watch her and let me know what she's up to. She's already met everyone else, or I'd never ask you to do this. Please, Father, the future of The Sisters of Perpetual Sewing depends on it!

PAUL: But isn't that deceitful? You were just saying...?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: I said what she is doing is deceitful: a layperson dressing as clergy. But you're clergy dressing as clergy. Please, Father! You're my only hope!

SCENE 7: SISTER MARY CATHERINE and GEORGE

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Please know, Father, that I'm not a prude, but I was shocked seeing Sister Mary Mary and Sister Paula kissing like that.

GEORGE: But, as Mother Superior explained, Sister Paula is from France.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I suppose they do greet people differently there. I wonder if that's what they call a French kiss?

GEORGE: Oh, no, a French kiss is with tongue. I mean, so I've been told. In confession.
I don't know myself. I'm a priest.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I just hope Sister Paula doesn't greet all of us that way.

GEORGE: Sister Mary Catherine, may I ask you something? Something...personal?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Certainly, Father.

GEORGE: Have you ever been in love?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: What do you mean?

GEORGE: Before you became a nun, wasn't there someone in your past to whom you felt the least bit of attraction?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Why, yes there was, Father. At the orphanage I grew up in, there was a groundskeeper who had a son, a beautiful young man with whom I was quite smitten. He used to read books on his breaks: Tolstoy and Shakespeare and Bronte.

GEORGE: Charlotte or Emily?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Both. I used to watch him for hours on end, but I was too shy to ever talk to him. Then one day he was gone. A new groundskeeper came. I never knew what happened to that boy, but I've always felt in my heart that if he were to ever return to me, I would remember what it's like to be in love once more. It's a silly memory, Father. Why do you ask?

GEORGE: It's not a silly memory at all! The boy — did you every know his name?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: No. But he had his initials monogrammed on his shirt: GD. (*Reverently:*) If you try to pronounce it, it sounds like "God."

GEORGE: Perhaps that boy is still out there, looking for you. Perhaps he always knew he was being watched, because he was always watching you too. Perhaps he remains a groundskeeper to this very day, searching every window for signs of that lovely young girl!

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Perhaps. But I suppose I'll never know for certain. Besides, it's too late now. I'm a nun. (*Beat.*) Almost.

GEORGE: Almost?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Father, there's something I've wanted to confess to you. I'm not really a nun.

GEORGE: You're not? That's wonderful! I mean, what do you mean?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: I'm just a novice. Cardinal Redding has allowed me to finish out my time here, since I'm so skilled at sewing. I'm not really supposed to tell anyone. But I've been plagued with guilt ever since I arrived. I feel sacrilegious wearing these garments before I've officially taken my vows.

GEORGE: I have something to confess to you as well: I'm not really a priest. I've just been telling you I was!

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: What!?! GEORGE: Father Chenille put me up to it. He's worried that Father Paul has been sent to take over the parish. I'm supposed to spy on him, and report what I see. So, you see, I'm not really a priest at all!

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Then who are you?

GEORGE: I'm the groundskeeper!

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: The groundskeeper? But I just gave you confession!

GEORGE: I know. And it was just wonderful!

SCENE 8: MOTHER SUPERIOR and PAUL

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Father Paul, I must speak with you at once!

PAUL: Please, call me Sister Paula while I'm dressed like this. I don't want to have to make up another lie!

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Very well. Sister Paula, your discovery has forced me to commit a grave sin: I have lied to a priest! To save you embarrassment, I must inform you of the circumstances I have created. You are my sister, you're French, and you kiss everyone like that when you first meet them.

PAUL: I do?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Now, Father, I realize no one in this matter is above reproach, but what in Heaven's name were you doing kissing Sister Mary Mary in the pressing room?

PAUL: That's a good question. Awfully good. What was I doing kissing Sister Mary Mary in the pressing room? Well, here's the thing... That is to say...

(MOTHER SUPERIOR *stares at him.*)

You m-m-m-make me very nervous st-st-st-staring at me like that. Could you please look away from me for a m-m-m-minute?

(*She does.*)

I wasn't actually kissing Sister Mary Mary.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: (*Looking back at him.*) I saw you with my own eyes, Father.

PAUL: Y-y-y-y —

(Motioning for her to turn back around. She does.)

You only think you saw us kissing. In fact, Sister Mary Mary is plagued with allergies. When she was younger, she almost dies from a bee sting. Anaphylactic shock. Well, this morning, a bee stung her on the lip. She started gasping for air. I walked in and knew exactly what happened. So, to save her life, I ran over to her and tried to suck the stinger out of her lip.

We rushed into the pressing room to look for a phone to call an ambulance but there wasn't one around. I continued to suck on her lip until we could find a phone. Luckily, the shock of everyone screaming got her adrenaline pumping and it worked the poison out of her system, thus saving her life.lip.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: I had no idea! Why didn't you say something?

PAUL: She gets embarrassed about her allergy. She didn't want to make a bad impression.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: That poor dear!

PAUL: Yes, it's awful.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: *(Hugging PAUL:)* How good it was that you were here to help her.

PAUL: Yes!

SCENE 9: FULL CAST: PAUL, SALLY, MOTHER SUPERIOR, FATHER CHENILLE, GEORGE, SISTER MARY CATHERINE, SISTER AUGUSTA, SISTER PHILAMENA

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Paul Billings! I should have known.

PAUL: You remember me then? After all these years?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Of course I do. I always remember the troublemaker. Plus you reminded me very much of my late husband.

(Everyone gasps.)

SISTER PHILAMENA: You...you were married?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Yes.

(Everyone gasps again.)

I was a widow before I became a nun. I had two children — twins: a little boy and a little girl. Their father, may he rest in peace, enjoyed...you-know-what...too much. One night, while we were vacationing in France, he drunkenly crashed our car into a telephone pole. I woke up two days later in a Catholic hospital. I begged them to tell me what happened to my family. Speaking no English, they tried to tell me, but I couldn't understand the language. But I saw in their eyes what had happened. My entire family was killed. And that's why I can never utter the word associated with Satan's drink. It's too...painful.

PAUL: France? Where in France?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: You've never heard of it. A small town in the middle of nowhere. A little place called —

MOTHER SUPERIOR/SISTER MARY CATHERINE/PAUL: Cotes du Cashmire.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: How...how did you know?

PAUL: I was found on the doorstep of a boy's orphanage outside of a little town called Cotes du Cashmire.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: And I was found on the doorstep of a girl's orphanage outside Cotes du Cashmire.

PAUL: How old are you?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: 24. And you?

PAUL: 24. My birthday is on —

MOTHER SUPERIOR/SISTER MARY CATHERINE/PAUL: April 11.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Brother!

PAUL: Sister!

MOTHER SUPERIOR/: Children!

(They all hug.) It's a miracle!

PAUL: I have so many questions! Tell us everything, Mother. What was Father like? Was he smart?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Very.

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Was he handsome?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Very.

PAUL: What did he do for a living?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: He was a salesman. Quite successful in his line of work. He sold --

FATHER CHENILLE: —bedspreads.

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Yes, that's right. But how did you — ?

FATHER CHENILLE: Chenille bedspreads. The accident altered my face, but never my heart. Margaret?

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Lawrence?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Daddy?

PAUL: Papa?

FATHER CHENILLE: Family!

(They all hug.)

MOTHER SUPERIOR: But Lawrence, I thought you were dead!

FATHER CHENILLE: I asked them not to tell you that I survived. I couldn't face you after the accident, Margaret. I had to get myself sober, to start over again. I was no good to you. I was a bad husband and a bad father. So I did what any amateur magician does: I made myself disappear. I came back to America and started anew. I got our marriage annulled, and it was then I found my calling. I began training for my ordination that very night. Years later, when they assigned me to this parish and I found you again, I felt like it was the hand of God bringing us back together. But I couldn't bring myself to ever tell you the truth. That's why I was so upset when I thought Father Paul was taking over the parish — I couldn't bear the thought of leaving you again!

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Oh, Lawrence!

(They embrace. Suddenly, he magically pulls a small bouquet out from his cassock and hands the flowers to MOTHER SUPERIOR. Everyone applauds.)

SALLY: (*re-entering*) I can't do it! I can't go through with it. You're right, Paul: I do run away from my feelings. I left you at the altar because I was too scared to let myself depend on someone else. But when I walked out just now without you, I felt like the loneliest girl in the world. I love you. There I said it too. I love you!

PAUL: Mom, Dad, Sis...this is Sally, my soon to be again - wife!

SALLY: Paul, what's with all this "Mom" and "Dad" stuff? Have a little respect...

PAUL: Sally, this is my mother the Mother, my father the Father, and my sister, the Sister. I'll fill you in on the way to Vegas.

FATHER CHENILLE: Vegas?

PAUL: I promised myself Sally and I would get hitched the minute she told me she loved me again.

FATHER CHENILLE: Then why wait for Vegas? You've got your old man to do the ceremony now, if you want.

PAUL: Oh, Sally! Could we? Before another story comes up?

SALLY: I can't think of a better story to cover than true love conquering all. (*They hug.*) Except of course, for a local convent winning a half-million dollars.

SISTER AUGUSTA: What do you mean?

PAUL: Your wine has won a prize worth one half-million dollars! That's the story we came to cover. Our entire newspaper staff has been looking for the winners!

SISTER PHILAMENA: A half-million dollars?

SISTER AUGUSTA: We won't be considered insignificant!

SISTER PHILAMENA: We won't have to close our doors!

SISTER PHILAMENA/SISTER AUGUSTA: Hallelujah!

GEORGE: (*Noticing MARY CATHERINE smiling at him. He extends his hand. She crosses to him. He gets down on one knee.*) Mary Catherine? Will you do me the honor...?

SISTER MARY CATHERINE: Oh yes, George! (*They embrace.*)

MOTHER SUPERIOR: A double wedding! Glory be!

SISTER AUGUSTA: And we're already set up for the reception!

MOTHER SUPERIOR: Hors d'oeuvres and wine for everyone!

SISTER PHILAMENA: (*Shocked:*) Mother Superior! You said..you-know-what!

MOTHER SUPERIOR: As it says in Deuteronomy: "And spend the money for whatever you desire, oxen, or sheep, or *wine* or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves; and you shall eat there before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household."

ALL: Amen!