

## LEADING LADIES

of this comedy called life, will be presenting a one-in-a-million performance of Twelfth Night, and all I can say is May God Be With Us!

*(The lights change and the cast scatters.)*

## Scene 3

*(As the lights change, we hear a dance band in the garden playing a popular dance tune of the period over the clinking of party glasses. In a blue half-light, our company of actors helps move the furniture back into place; simultaneously, stagehands dressed as caterers begin decorating the room with flowers, a screen and a punch bowl and glasses. Small white fairy lights come on in the garden — and by the end of the transition, the room looks joyfully party-like.)*

*It's ten days later and the party is in progress. Just as the caterers finish decorating the room, the lights come up on the balcony above the living room, and DUNCAN enters from down the hall. There's a telephone up there, outside Meg's bedroom, and he picks up the receiver and dials, furtively. He's extremely upset.)*

FLORENCE. *(Off.)* Duncan, get down here!

DUNCAN. *(Calling.)* I'll be down in a minute, Florence! *(To himself.)* You old bat! *(Into the phone.)* Ah, Inspector Ballard, it's Reverend Wooley again. Sorry to bother you at this... Yes, I know it's seven-thirty, but I've been trying to get you all... Well, you didn't answer any of the messages! Now listen, I'm at Florence's house right now, at the party... Well I'm sorry you weren't invited but I

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wasn't in charge of the guest list... Well, yes, I had some influence, but... Yes, the food is excellent, I'm very sorry you weren't invited, but please just listen! Do you remember I told you about the telegram from the real Maxine and Stephanie — well, it said they'd arrive this morning and they aren't here yet! Of course it has me worried! I told you about this whole thing weeks ago! You were supposed to help me! Yes I am, very upset, and I'll tell you why. Because Maxine, the big one, told me this morning that she overheard Florence changing her will. She's leaving everything to Stephanie, the smaller one... Yes, they're both large, but one is bigger than the other! The point is, Stephanie doesn't deserve it!... Well, yes, I hope Florence lasts forever, but it isn't very likely, now is it?

FLORENCE. *(Off.)* Duncan!

DUNCAN. Shut up! *(Into the phone.)* All right, I'll tell you what I think you should do. I think you should arrest them both. Right now. Send a squad car... Of course you need evidence, but you were supposed to find it! That's your job!... I'm not criticizing you! I'm stating a fact!

FLORENCE. *(Off.)* Duncan! Where the hell are you?!

DUNCAN. I'M COMING! *(Into the phone, desperate.)* Look, just do something, but do it now!... Thank you! *(He hangs up.)* God!

*(He realizes what he just said — at which moment, the lights change and a tango starts to play. FLORENCE appears, dressed to the nines, and starts tangoing. She has taken years of lessons and has great flair. DUNCAN ENTERS and joins her. He's miserable. They complete the first section of the dance and dance out — as AUDREY and BUTCH dance into the room. AUDREY is terrific. BUTCH is trying hard to keep up. They perform the second section and then go — as STEPHANIE and DOC enter*