***the One (a comedy)***

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***CHARACTERS***

**PAOLO** *Early 40’s, husband of* ABIGAIL - *he is the type of person who cannot hold back his opinions.*

**ABIGAIL** *Early 40’s, wife of* PAOLO. *She means well. All she wants is for her wild sister, whom she has not seen in months, to settle down.*

**DARLEEN** ABIGAIL’S *younger sister, early 30’s; she’s not a bimbo; Down deep she wants love but hasn’t found it because she is incorrigibly bitchy.*

**BERNARD** DARLEEN’S *boyfriend; an entrepreneur, age: early 40’s – He is egotistical; he is head over heals in love with* DARLEEN, but doesn’t want to show it.

**WAITER**

***PLACE***

**ABIGAIL** and **PAOLO** *have just finished having lunch in a restaurant in the West Broadway Mall.*

*Dim lights.*

*Enter Waiter. We barely hear him say “Will there be anything else?” Abigail, almost inaudibly, says “May I see the menu again.” Exit Waiter to fetch menus.*

*Lights up.*

**ABIGAIL** *(Taking a DVD from a small, colorful shopping bag, and handing it to PAOLO)* I can’t wait to see this again.

**PAOLO** Is this the one where Fred Astaire and Ginger dance up and down stairs?

**ABIGAIL** Yes, I think so . . . *(Her phone rings.)* Hello . . . OH MY GOD! . . . DARLEEN!

**PAOLO** *(Reacting negatively to Darleen’s name; he throws his head back, looking up at the ceiling)* Oh great!

**ABIGAIL** You little devil, you . . . What’s his name? . . . ‘Bernard’ . . . Tell me all about him! *(Beat)* OH MY GOD! . . . We’re at the West Broadway Mall too! . . . You’re kidding! . . . Why don’t you and Bernard join us as soon as he gets out of the men's room. . . . We’re at Mulligan’s Restaurant. Hurry. *(Hangs up phone, turns to Paolo excitedly)* That was Darleen! She’s right here in the Mall. I told her to come and join us.

**PAOLO** Why did you do that? You could’ve told her we were vacationing in Aruba or something. I’m getting out of here! *(Stands up.)*

**ABIGAIL** Oh, for god sake, sit down! (PAOLO remains standing) This is serious! She’s met a guy. And not just a guy, *the* guy. She thinks he’s *The One* (*Indicating ‘The One’ with finger quotations).*

**PAOLO** Does *he* know he's *The One*? *(Mimics her finger quotations*

**ABIGAIL** Come on, now. Don’t be so hostile! She says he’s The One. Can you believe it?

**PAOLO** No. This is about the thousandth time she said that she has found *(finger quotations)* The One. She’s always finding The One. Never seems to work out. You wanna know why?

**ABIGAIL** She’s sounds like she’s madly in love! *(Very excited)* I think she’s done it. She’s found The One. And guess what! She says Bernard’s a venture capitalist. A big shot! He owns his very own industry. This one will take. She’s always wanted to marry a rich guy.

**PAOLO** Oh God help us. Darleen and a big shot.

**ABIGAIL** Paolo, please! This is important to Darleen. I want this for her. It’s important to me too. So be nice, OK?

**PAOLO** Ok, ok. I’ll try to be nice but you know how Darleen is…

**ABIGAIL** *(Interrupting him)* Look, we haven’t seen her for months. After she gets married, we may not see her for another very long time and you, Sweetie, won't have to deal with her. But at least we won’t have to worry about her any more. And yes, I know Darleen, but I know *you* too. Now sit down.

**PAOLO** *(Sits down, deflated.)* You can’t be nice to Darleen. It’s like trying to be nice to, to a gila monster. You put your hand out to be nice and WHAM! It rips off your arm to the shoulder.

**ABIGAIL** It’ll make me happy to know that the gila monster is safe. Do this for me. Pleeeease.

**PAOLO** It won’t work. She’s nasty to the bone. She doesn’t like anyone. She hates you too, you know. She hates everyone.

**ABIGAIL** *(Fed up)* Listen, Paolo, don't ruin it for her.  *. .* .Look, I admit she’s not easy to get along with, but we can make it easy on ourselves. Whenever we get the urge to say something critical, we’ll stop ourselves. And we'll say *really* instead . . . And by the way, she doesn’t hate me.

**PAOLO** So we are not going to talk?

**ABIGAIL** Of course we can talk. But when Darleen gets obnoxious or says something nasty, we’ll say “really,” and leave it at that.

*(Waiter brings menus)*

**ABIGAIL**  Two more people are joining us. Could you please bring us menus for them too?

**PAOLO** So while she is being bitchy, we’ll all be sitting here insufferably bored trying to be nice to the gila monster.

**ABIGAIL** Stop being so melodramatic! Remember: “really”. *(She spots Darleen and BERNARD, stands, and waves. PAOLO remains seated.)* OVER HERE!

*(Enter DARLEEN and BERNARD The two sisters embrace tightly and sway in unison. BERNARD stands awkwardly by, Paolo remains seated.)*

**Darleen** Bernard, this is Abigail! *(Then like she is introducing a ‘thing)* And that’s Paolo *(They all sit down. DARLEEN and BERNARD remove their coats.)*

**PAOLO** I’m her husband.

**BERNARD** Great to meet you.

*(Awkward pause.)*

**ABIGAIL** Well Darleen, tell us all about how you two met!

**DARLEEN** You won’t believe this, I can hardly believe it myself. I had given up