

Picasso at the Lapin Agile

By Steve Martin

(A bar in Paris, 1904. One year later, Albert **Einstein** published the special theory of relativity. Three years later, Pablo **Picasso** painted Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.)

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

Freddy , the owner and bartender of the Lapin Agile	Albert Einstein , age twenty-five	Charles Dabernow Schmendiman , a young man
Gaston , an older man	Suzanne , nineteen	The Countess
Germaine , waitress and Freddy 's girlfriend	Sagot , Picasso 's art dealer	A female admirer
	Pablo Picasso , age twenty-three	A Visitor

(A bar in Paris, the Lapin Agile, circa 1904. A bartender, **Freddy**, rubs a rag across the bar. On the wall is a three-by-four-foot painting of sheep in a landscape. Upstage left is a door from the street. Upstage right is a door to a hall and toilet. We hear prerecorded accordion music of "Tah Rah Rah Boom Dee Re." **Freddy** is taking chairs off the tables.)

Gaston (singing offstage): Ta rah rah *boom* dee re, ta rah rah *boom* dee re, ta rah rah *boom* de re, ta rah rah *boom* dee re.

Freddy (looks up, rhapsodic): There's something in the air tonight. (Pause, **Freddy** sneezes.)

(A man about sixty, **Gaston**, enters)

Gaston (singing): Ta rah rah *boom* dee re, ta rah rah *boom* dee re, ta rah rah *boom* de re, ta rah rah *boom* dee re.

Freddy: Well, **Gaston**, you sound like you're out of your bad mood.

Gaston: Yes, damn it. Woke up this morning, good mood. Nothing I could do about it. Ta rah rah *boom* dee re, ta rah rah *boom* dee re... Damn my memory, what's the next lyric?

Freddy: I don't know, but my guess is it's "Ta rah rah *boom* dee re."

Gaston: Great song. I wonder who wrote it?

Freddy: Two East Indian guys. Ta Rah and Rah Boom Dee Re.

Gaston (sits): I have to pee.

Freddy: Already? You haven't had a drink yet.

Gaston: One day you'll understand.

(**Gaston** gets up, moves toward the toilet. Through the door, **Einstein**, age twenty-five, enters, hair slicked and neat looking. **Einstein** prepares to speak to **Freddy**. **Gaston** starts to go to the toilet, then stops.)

Einstein: I'll be sitting there. I'm to meet a woman.

Gaston (to **Einstein**): Oh, shut your face, you little pip-squeak!

Freddy (to **Gaston**): Hey! You don't even know him.

Gaston: I have a feeling.

Freddy: Still, you can't just insult someone right out of the blue.

Gaston: But I'm French.

(Gaston exits)

Einstein: Do you have absinthe?

Freddy: One absinthe coming up.

Einstein: I'm supposed to meet her at six o'clock at the Bar Rouge.

Freddy: This is not the Bar Rouge. It's the Lapin Agile.

Einstein: No difference.

Freddy: No difference?

Einstein: You see, I'm a theorist, and the way I see it is that there is just as much chance of her wandering in here accidentally as there is of her wandering into the Bar Rouge on purpose. So where I wait for her is of no importance. It is of no importance where I tell her I will be. And the least of all, it's not important what time I am to meet her.

Freddy: Unless...

Einstein: Unless what?

Freddy: Unless you really want to meet her.

Einstein: I don't follow.

Freddy: If you really want to meet her, you'll go to the Bar Rouge at the time you told her.

Einstein: You're forgetting one thing.

Freddy: What's that?

Einstein: She thinks like I do.

Freddy: Here's your vodka.

Einstein: I asked for absinthe.

Freddy: No difference.

(**Einstein** takes the drink and sits down. **Gaston** reenters.)

Gaston: I can describe the woman you're waiting for.

Einstein: So can I!

Gaston: But I've never seen her. I can describe her hair, her clothes, her smell even.

Einstein: Go ahead.

Gaston: But I need something.

Einstein: Like what?

Gaston: Women are my area of expertise. And like the paleontologist, I can reconstruct the creature from a bone. But I need a hint.

Einstein: How did you get to be such an expert?

Gaston: By looking.

Einstein: So you're an admirer of the feminine equation?

Gaston: Yes, but I never touch. It's my saving grace. In that way, I glide among them, invisible. So I need a hint.

Einstein: Yes, a hint. She has long red hair.

Gaston: Ah. One of those. Hard to control because she's so damn pert. She runs you, doesn't she? Her speech will be short, like her skirt. She'll sit over there and cross her legs and control the room. She's controlling it now. Look at us, talking about her, all because she has long red hair.

Einstein: Sounds like you really know women.

Gaston: Never met one really.

Einstein: Never met one?

Gaston: Not in my new incarnation as an older man. Women respond differently to men of different ages. I'm only newly old. Just getting used to it really. My name is **Gaston**.

Einstein: My name is Albert **Einstein**.

(**Freddy** looks up suddenly)

Freddy: You can't be. You just can't be.

(**Freddy** crosses from behind the bar and approaches **Einstein**)

Einstein: Sorry, I'm not myself today. (He fluffs his hair, making himself look like **Einstein**.) Better?

Freddy: No, no, that's not what I mean. In order of appearance.

Einstein: Come again?

Freddy: In order of appearance. You're not third. (Taking playbill from audience member.) You're fourth. It says so right here: Cast in order of appearance. I knew you were fourth. I knew it when you walked in.

Einstein: And yet you said nothing?

Freddy: I couldn't put my finger on it, but now I can.

(**Freddy** gives back the program)

Einstein: I take your point. Toilets!

Gaston: Behind that door.

Einstein: Thank you.

(**Einstein** exits. The waitress, **Germaine**, thirty-five, enters. She is **Freddy**'s girlfriend.)

Germaine: Sorry I'm late.

Gaston: You're not late; you're third.

(**Germaine** walks behind the bar and pours herself a drink, swallows it)

Freddy: Where were you?

Germaine: At home, darling.

Freddy: Doing what?

Germaine: Sitting in front of the mirror.

Freddy: Why?

Germaine: Just looking. Seeing what all the fuss is about. Besides, a mirror is like a mind: If you don't use it, it loses the power to reflect.

Freddy: Well, you should try and be on time, sweetheart.

Germaine: Oh, don't be so old fashioned – these are the Naughts.

Freddy: This is the fourth day you're late.

Germaine: Are we going to fight? Let's not fight, **Freddy**. Let's be in love like yesterday. (She kisses him.) So tomorrow I can say, "Let's be in love like yesterday." (She kisses him again.) Always. (Another kiss.) Always.

Freddy (breaks away): Okay, always.

Germaine (walks away): I love you, even though you give me nothing.

Freddy: What?

Germaine (as in "oh, nothing"): Nothing

(**Einstein** reenters, again from the street. He perfunctorily goes through his dialogue, panting.)

Einstein: I'll be sitting there. I am here to meet someone. A woman. I am to meet her at six o'clock. At the Bar Rouge. (Then to **Freddy**:) All right?

Germaine: Bar Rouge? This is not the...

Gaston: Don't ask.

Germaine: Hey, **Gaston**. See any good ones today?

Gaston: Saw a good one yesterday as the shops were closing. I tried to hold her in my memory but she faded. All I remember now is a white linen blouse with just a whisper of brassiere underneath. It was like seeing a sweet custard through a veil of meringue.

(An attractive nineteen-year-old girl, **Suzanne**, comes through the door. She is street smart and in charge, and there're probably a few more broken hearts just from her walk to the Lapin Agile)

Suzanne: I've heard **Picasso** comes here. (Pause. They all look at her.) Does he?

Freddy: Sometimes.

Suzanne: Tonight?

Freddy: Maybe.

(This pleases her. She takes an article of clothing out of her bag. She turns her back to the audience and unbuttons her blouse, but before she takes it off, she stops and speaks first to **Freddy**.)

Suzanne: Look away. (Then to **Einstein**:) You look away too. (She looks at **Gaston**.) I guess you're okay. (She takes off her blouse, revealing a black bra underneath, and puts on a new, sexier top.) Okay.

(They all turn. She sits at a table and waits)

Gaston: Damn!

Freddy: What's the matter?

Gaston: Now I have to consider everything I'm wearing today to be lucky. Every time I go out now, it's "not without my lucky hat, not without my lucky coat, not without my lucky shirt."

Suzanne: I'd like some wine.

Germaine: Any special color?

Suzanne: Red please.

(**Germaine** gets the wine from **Freddy**.)

Germaine: Do you know **Picasso**?

Suzanne: Twice.

Germaine: Is he expecting you?

Suzanne (as in “of course”): I think he’s expecting to see me.

Einstein: Who is this **Picasso**?

Germaine, **Freddy**, and **Suzanne**: He’s a painter...

Freddy: He’s a painter or says he’s one. I’ve never seen his paintings, only what he says. Nuts about blue, they say.

Suzanne: Oh yes, he’s a painter. I’ve seen them. He gave me a drawing.

Freddy: What are they like?

Suzanne: They’re strange, really. (She refers to the sheep painting on the wall.) Not like that, I’ll tell you.

Freddy: Nothing wrong with this picture. Got it out of my grandmother’s house just after she died; well, actually, while she was dying. Sheep in a meadow in the fog. Beautiful.

Einstein: That’s not what I see.

Freddy: And what do you see (with pejorative emphasis), **Einstein**?

Einstein: I prefer to take it further. Observe how the sheep are painted small, consumed by the weather and the terrain. So I see “the power of the landscape over the small things.” For me, it’s the meaning that gives it its value.

Gaston (dismissive): Jesus Christ! Sheep. Meadow. Fog. Period.

Germaine: There’s a problem.

Einstein: What?

Germaine: Well, it seems to me, if you judge it only by its meaning, then any bad painting is just as good as any good painting if they have the same meaning.

(There is a pause while everyone thinks.)

Einstein: Women!

Gaston: I would like a wine. The purpose of the wine is to get me drunk. A bad wine will get me as drunk as a good wine. I would like the good wine. And since the result is the same no matter which wine I drink, I’d like to pay the bad wine price. Is that where you’re headed, **Einstein**?

Freddy: I really don’t think he’s that’s clever, **Gaston**.

Suzanne (reaches in her bag and produces a folded-up piece of paper): Want to see the drawing he gave me?

(**Suzanne** hands it to **Einstein**. He gets up, walks downstage holding the drawing up, and examines it in the light.)

Einstein: I never thought the twentieth century would be handed to me so casually... scratched out in pencil on a piece of paper. Tools thousands of years old, waiting for someone to move them in just this way. I’m lucky tonight; I was open to receive it. Another night and I might have dismissed it with a joke or a cruel remark. Why didn’t it happen before, by accident? Why didn’t Raphael doodle this absentmindedly?

Freddy: What do you think of the drawing?

Einstein (innocent): What could it matter?

Freddy: Huh? Let me see it. (He looks at it.) Hmmm. Yeah. Here.

(**Freddy** hands it to **Germaine**.)

Germaine (looks at it): I like it all right.

(**Germaine** offers it to **Gaston**, who looks at it.)

Gaston: I don’t get it.

Suzanne: I don't think it looks like me.

Einstein: There you go. Four more opinions. I wonder how many opinions the world can hold. A billion? A trillion? Well, we've just added four. But look, the drawing stays the same.

Freddy (takes **Einstein's** glass to fill it): Hey, look. What kind of a person would I be if I didn't form an opinion? I see the drawing, I think about it, I form an opinion. Then I see other people, and I express my opinion. Suddenly, I'm fascinating. (He drinks **Einstein's** drink.) And because I'm so fascinating, someone else sees the drawing, and they have an opinion, and they're fascinating too. Soon, whereas before I was standing in a room of dullards, I am now standing in a room of completely fascinating people with opinions.

Suzanne: My name's **Suzanne**.

Gaston: And you're waiting for **Picasso**.

Suzanne: Right. Do you know him?

Gaston: I've heard of him a bit. Big guy, rodeo rider, trick roper?

Suzanne: Uh, no. . .

Gaston: What's his first name?

Suzanne: Pablo.

Gaston: Oh no. Different guy. So how did you meet Pablo?

Suzanne: I . . . it was about two weeks ago. I was walking down the street one afternoon and I turned up the stairs into my flat and I looked back and he was there, framed in the doorway, looking up at me. I couldn't see his face, because the light came in from behind him and he was in shadow, and he said, "I am **Picasso**." And I said, "Well, so what?" And then he said he wasn't sure yet, but he thinks that it means something in the future to be **Picasso**. He said that occasionally there is a **Picasso**, and he happens to be him. He said the twentieth century has to start somewhere and why not now. Then he said, "May I approach you," and I said, "Okay." He walked upstairs and picked up my wrist and turned it over and took his fingernail and scratched deeply on the back of my hand. In a second, in red, the image of a dove appeared. Then I thought, "Why is it that someone who wants me can hang around for months, and I even like him, but I'm not going to sleep with him; but someone else says the right thing and I'm on my back, not knowing what hit me?"

Germaine: Yeah, why is that?

Freddy: Huh?

Germaine: Never mind.

Suzanne: See, men are always talking about their things. Like it's not them.

Gaston: What things?

Suzanne: The things between their legs.

Gaston: Ah, yes. Louie.

Freddy and Einstein: Ah...

Suzanne: See! It's not them; it's someone else. And it's true; it's like some rudderless firework snaking across town. But women have things too; they just work differently. They work from *up* here. (She taps her head.) So when the guy comes on to me through here, he's practically there already, done. So the next thing I know, he's inside the apartment and I said, "What do you want?" and he said he wanted my hair, he wanted my neck, my knees, my feet. He wanted his eyes on my eyes, his chest on my chest. He wanted the chairs in the room, the notepaper on the table; he wanted the paint from the walls. He wanted to consume me until there was nothing left. He said he wanted deliverance, and that I would be his savior. And he was speaking Spanish, which didn't hurt, I'll tell you. Well, at that point, the word *no* became like a Polish village: (they look at her, waiting, then)

unpronounceable. (Proudly.) I held out for seconds! Frankly, I didn't enjoy it that much 'cause it was kinda quick.

Gaston: Premature ejaculation?

Germaine: Is there any other kind?

Freddy: Huh?

Germaine: Never mind.

Suzanne: So then, as I was sitting there half dressed, he picked up a drinking glass, of which I have two, and looked at me through the bottom. (She picks up a glass and demonstrates.) He kept pointing it at me and turning it in his hand like a kaleidoscope. And he said, "Even though you're refracted, you're still you." I didn't ask. Then he said he had to be somewhere, and I thought, "Sure," and he left.

Germaine: You saw him again?

Suzanne: Oh yeah. That night he came back with this drawing and gave it to me, and we do it again. This time in French. I enjoyed it this time, if you're keeping score. Then he got very distracted and I said, "What's the matter?" and he said he sometimes starts thinking about something and can't stop. "Wait," he said, he doesn't think about it, he sees it. And I said, "What is it?" and he said, "It can't be named." That's exactly what he said: it can't be named. Well, when you're with someone who says they're seeing things that can't be named, you either want to run like hell or go with it. Well, I'm going with it, and that's why I'm here tonight. He told me about this place, that he might see me here one day, and that was two weeks ago.

Gaston: Sex, sex, sex.

Suzanne: What?

Gaston: Oh, nothing, I was just thinking out loud.

Suzanne: Been awhile?

Gaston: About eight months. Interesting, really. I saw a cat in the street and bent over to pet it, and it moved just out of my reach. It seemed friendly but nervous, so I followed it, always moving out of my reach. It must have been two feet out of my reach for several blocks, "Here, kitty, kitty, kitty," when I realized the cat had stopped at the feet of a woman. I looked up at her, and our eyes met. Older, my age, but she was dazzling. Let's just say she had a nice mortal coil. We made love in her place within the hour.

Suzanne: Did you ever make love to her again?

Gaston: No, I didn't.

Suzanne: See, there you are. She was there; you were taken with each other. You men; why is once enough? Why wouldn't you make love with her again?

Gaston: I would have, but she died about an hour later.

Suzanne: Oh.

Gaston: We both wanted to do it again, and I told her I needed an hour to rejuvenate. I went outside and sat with the cat; and after a while, I looked up, and they were taking her body out on a stretcher.

Suzanne: Oh, my God.

Gaston: I can't help but think that I killed her. (Pause. Then **Gaston** emits a low, prideful chuckle.)

Freddy: What did **Picasso** say about my place? (**Freddy** starts sifting through some bills.)

Suzanne: He said this is where artists come to talk about... let's see... mana... mana...

Einstein: Festos? Manifestos?

Germaine: Anyone want a coffee?

Gaston (vehement): That's what I could go for!

Germaine: Cream or black?

Gaston: No, a manifesto! I could really go for a nice, juicy manifesto. It would be nice to wake up and have a raison d'être to go with your morning coffee, wouldn't you say? I have to pee.

(Gaston goes to the loo.)

Einstein: Did Picasso say he was working on a manifesto?

Suzanne: Oh no. He said he doesn't need one, and if he did come up with one, he would have exhausted it before he finished writing it down. Oh, one other thing. Just before he left, he went to the window and reached down on the sill and, like lightning, grabbed a pigeon. Then he held it in one hand and turned it upside down, and he soothed it and talked to it, and the pigeon fell asleep. Like it was hypnotized. Then he held his hand out the window and dropped the pigeon. And it just fell two stories upside down, straight down, like a stone. Then just seconds before it would have hit the ground, the pigeon turned itself over and started flapping like mad, and it took off flying, straight up past us, above the buildings and just away into the night. Then Picasso turned to me and said, "That's like me." And he was gone. Could I have a refill?

(Gaston reenters.)

Germaine: I'll get it. Anyone else want a refill?

(Several respond.)

Freddy: Anybody know what 62 franks 33 minus 37 franks 17 is?

Germaine: Why don't you let me do that, Freddy?

Einstein: Twenty-five franks sixteen.

Freddy: You sure?

Einstein: Twenty-five sixteen.

Freddy: You're positive?

Einstein: Positive. Absolutely.

Freddy: It's just that you came up with it awfully quick.

Einstein: Look, if you want it to be different, there's nothing I can do about it.

Freddy: I'll work on it tomorrow.

Einstein: It'll be the same tomorrow.

Freddy: I've got my accountant friend coming over tomorrow; he can check it. He checks everything anyway.

Einstein: You can have a math squad from the Vishnu Numerical Center for the Intellectually Profound come over, and it's still going to be 25 franks 16.

Freddy: All right, all right.

Germaine: Jeez, Freddy. Take his word for it.

Freddy: Are you a professor?

Einstein: No, I'm not.

Freddy: What do you do?

Einstein: By day I work in the patent office.

Germaine: What do you do there?

Einstein: By day I register notions. That's what they are really, notions. Shortcuts. How to get something to do something quicker.

Germaine: And what do you do at night?

Einstein: Ah. At night... at night, the stars come out.

Germaine: The stars in the sky?

Einstein: The stars in my head.

Germaine: And after the stars in your head come out?

Einstein: I write it down.

Freddy: Uh-huh. You been published?

Einstein: No. No, not yet.

Freddy: Yeah, well, we're all writers, aren't we? He's a writer that hasn't been published, and im a writer who hasn't written anything. (**Freddy** goes back to his bills.)

Germaine: And you're welcome here. We get a lot of artist types: writers, poets, painters. What do you write about?

Einstein: I... I... I cant even begin to explain.

Germaine: Try. Simplify it. Can you say what it's about in one sentence?

Einstein: It's about everything.

Germaine: You mean, like relationships between men and women?

Einstein: Bigger.

Germaine: You mean, like life from birth to death?

Einstein: Uh, bigger.

Germaine: Like the warring of nations and the movements of people?

Einstein: Bigger.

Germaine: I see, sort of like the earth and its place in the solar system?

Einstein: Keep going.

Germaine (growing exasperated): Okay. You're dealing with the universe and everything contained in it.

Einstein: Why stop there?

Germaine (giving up): Okay. Okay. How big is this book?

Einstein: About seventy pages.

Germaine: Hmm, not too long. That's good. Maybe we can put you in contact with some of our publisher friends. What's the title?

Einstein: *The Special Theory of Relativity.*

Freddy: Catchy.

Gaston: Judging from the title alone, I think it will sell at least as well as *The Critique of Pure Reason.*

Germaine: Is it funny?

Einstein (thinks): Well...

Germaine: Because if it's funny, you can sell a lot of books.

Einstein: It's very funny.

Germaine: Ah! It's very funny.

Einstein: Well, actually, that depends on what you mean by "funny."

Germaine: Well, does it make you laugh?

Einstein: No.

Germaine: Chuckle?

Einstein: No.

Germaine: Smile?

Einstein: I wish I could say yes.

Germaine: So it's not funny.

Einstein: No.

Germaine: But you just said it was funny.

Einstein: I was trying to sell more books.

Germaine (exasperated): Could it have illustrations?

Einstein : Impossible.

Germaine: Why not? Might look good, give it some zip.

Einstein: Illustrations are two dimensional.

Germaine: I know what you mean, but a good draftsman can give very realistic three- dimensional drawings.

Einstein: I need four.

Germaine: **Einstein**, I'm trying to help you here. You want your book to have impact, don't you?

Einstein: Sure.

Germaine: And if you want it to have impact, you've got to have people read it, don't you?

Einstein : Yes. . .

Germaine: Okay, in your field, how many people do you figure have to read your book to have some impact?

Einstein: One.

Germaine: No, no, no. In order for your book to have impact, you've got to have a lot of people read it; every man in the street has got to have one.

Einstein: No, only one. Max.

Germaine: Max?

Einstein: Max Planck, a German physicist, very influential. If he reads it, he makes my reputation.

Germaine: Well, you're lucky. If your market is one person and you know his name, you can put a limit on what you're going to spend on advertising. How old are you?

Einstein: I'm twenty-five.

Gaston: You don't look twenty-five.

Einstein: I discovered at an early age that I am the kind of person who will always look eighty-six.

Freddy: Hey, **Einstein**, last week I bought twelve bottles of Chablis at seventeen francs a bottle, but only eleven came. How much do I owe this guy?

Germaine: Leave him alone.

Einstein: One hundred eighty-seven francs.

Freddy: See? As long as we've got him here, we might as well use him. I made a deal with Alphonse for a case of port at twenty-six francs each. He said if I bought six cases, he'd give me a discount of 2 to 4 percent. But he didn't know the year of the port. He said if the port arrived and was newer than 1900, he'd give me a 4 percent discount, keeping 3 percent on bottles before 1900 and 2 percent on bottles before 1895. When I got the cases, two cases had nine bottles dated after 1900 and fifteen bottles dated before 1895. One case had 18 percent of the bottles dated before 1900, and the rest were evenly split between before 1895 and after 1900. The rest of the three cases after 1900, before 1900, and before 1895 respectively. How much the hell do I owe this guy?

Germaine: Oh, good grief!

Freddy: Oh, I left out one thing. He said if the sum total of the digits of the date of a bottle was greater than twenty-five he would give a 9 percent discount on those bottles.

Einstein: Hmm.

Freddy: He's stumped.

Einstein: Oh, sorry, I wasn't listening. HA! Just kidding. Here's your answer: 2,245 francs 73 given that x end parenthesis y is the mean price per bottle.

Freddy: Two thousand two hundred forty-five. Did you say, "Y end parenthesis x"?

Einstein (laughs heartily): Y end parenthesis x? OH... THAT'S FUNNY!

(**Einstein** continues laughing. Pretty soon, they're all laughing, but they're not sure why.)

Freddy: What's the date today?

Germaine: It's the eighth.

Freddy: And the year?

Germaine: You don't know the year?

Freddy: I know the year ... it's just that sometimes when you're writing fast, it's easy to write down the wrong year. Sometimes I look at a date I've written, and it's off by ten, sometimes fifteen years. But now that I'm thinking about it, I know it's 1903.

Germaine: '04.

Freddy (quickly): '04. Okay... come on, the year just changed! It's only January.

Germaine: October.

Freddy: The date isn't important anyway.

Einstein: Just put "first decade of the twentieth century."

Germaine: Gosh, that's what it is, isn't it? The first decade of the twentieth century. I'm glad the nineteenth century is over. It was a bad century.

Freddy: What's there not to like about a century?

Germaine: Well, for one thing, the pollution. Soot, garbage, smoke.

Gaston: Horseshit.

Germaine: You disagree?

Gaston: No, I'm adding to the list.

Germaine: Oh yeah. . . horseshit. Noise.

Einstein: This century will be better.

Freddy: What do you see for the future?

Einstein: Let me ask you. What do you see?

Germaine: I'll answer. I see air travel becoming common, with hundreds of people being carried in giant airplanes. I think we'll see images sent through the air, and the receivers will become so popular that mass taste will diminish their potential. The city of Hiroshima will be completely modernized. (**Einstein's** head jerks toward her.) There will be a brief craze for lawn flamingos. Vast quantities of information will be stored in very small spaces. Cruelty will be perfected. By the end of the century, smoking in restaurants will be banned. (They all react; how ludicrous.) Music by four lads from Liverpool.

Gaston: Oh, brother.

Freddy: Uh-huh.

Suzanne (dismissive): Right.

Einstein (yeah, sure): Next.

Germaine: Oh, well, fine.

Suzanne: I think a yo-yo will be a wonderful thing to play with and a terrible thing to be.

(The others look at her.)

Freddy: Here's mine. Led by Germany, this will be known as the century of peace. Clothes will be made of wax. There will be a craze for automobiles, but it will pass. The French will be the military might of Europe. Everyone will be doing a new dance called the Toad. A carton of cigarettes will be one of the most thoughtful get-well gifts. And the Wright brothers will be long remembered for the invention and manufacture of a low-calorie fudge. . .

(Everyone nods: "Sounds about right. . . could be," etc.)

(A man enters. He is in his early fifties, a bit rotund, and nattily dressed. It is the art dealer **Sagot**, vibrant and energetic. He goes over to **Freddy**.)

Sagot: Anyone in tonight?

Freddy: Not that you're looking for, **Sagot**.

Sagot: I got a Matisse today, small but juicy. A little beachscape. . . give me a rum. . . I got him to give it to me. Here, take a look. (He pulls out a small four-by-five-inch canvas and hands it to **Freddy**.) It says everything about Matisse you want to know. I bought eight drawings and got him to throw it in. The smaller it is, the harder it is to say it, no doubt about it, and that thing's got it all. This thing will hold a wall. Stick it up there.

(**Sagot** indicates the bar. **Freddy** hands him a drink and puts the painting up on the back bar. **Sagot** stands back.)

Sagot: Look at it. . . Beautiful (he picks up **Suzanne** and makes her look at the painting; he moves back a few more feet, stops) . . . still works (a few more feet, stops) . . . still working. Still holds the wall. (He moves as far back as he can, stops.) Lost it there. But, damn, you see what I mean?

Suzanne: Not really.

Sagot: Up to ten feet away, that bar is working for the Matisse. Then the bar takes over. (He downs the rest of the drink.) One more, **Freddy**.

Gaston: Does anyone feel a draft in here?

Einstein (indicates the Matisse): What makes it so great?

Sagot: I'll show you what makes it great. (He goes to the bar and picks up the Matisse. He takes it out of its frame. He holds up the frame.) This is what makes it great.

Gaston: The frame?

Sagot: The boundaries. The edge. Otherwise, anything goes. You want to see a soccer game where the players can run up into the stands with the ball and order a beer? No. They've got to stay within the boundaries to make it interesting. In the right hands, this little space is as fertile as Eden.

Einstein: That frame is about the size of my book.

Sagot: Well, I hope you chose your words carefully. Ideas are like children: you have to watch over them, or they might go wrong.

Freddy: I know what he means.

Sagot (To **Einstein**): I told that to Apollinaire; he squiggled and squirmed. (To the Matisse:) I'm going to turn a nice profit on that, you watch.

Freddy: Well, considering you got it for free, it might not be too difficult.

Einstein: But you got it because you loved it. How can you sell it?

Sagot: What do you do?

Einstein: I'm a physicist.

Sagot: Good. Then you must know how naïve a question can sound. I'll tell you how it works. (He is drinking all the time through this.) When I bought it, I identified it. I identified it as something worth having. I have named it as a work of art. Once I've done that, I don't have to own it. It will always be mine. And I guarantee you, Matisse is happy about it too. He wants his work out there, out of Paris. I've sold to Russia and I've sold to America and I've sold to dealers in Paris, who've sold everywhere. And the dealers like to buy from me because, frankly, they don't get it, and they want me to discern the good ones from the bad ones.

Einstein: How did you learn to tell the difference?

Sagot: I wish I knew! But I can look at two pictures that no one has ever seen before and know *that* one is for me (points in the air) and *that* one (points to a different place) is for the people whose idea of art is something ugly done by a relative. They come to the galleries with bags of money and say, "Show me what you've got; taste is no object!" (He finishes his drink.) Another, **Freddy**.

Freddy: Finally, a customer.

Sagot: **Freddy**, take out the book.

Freddy: Come on. . .

Sagot: No, take it out.

(**Freddy** takes out a large book with engraved art plates. He opens the pages. **Sagot** looks at the engravings only.)

Sagot: Courbet. . . (**Freddy** flips to another page.) Courbet!. . . (Another page.) Courbet!

Freddy: Wait a minute, this is a book about Courbet. (**Freddy** gets another book, opens the page, and shows it to **Sagot**.)

Sagot: Titian! (He takes a drink. **Freddy** thumbs through the book and moves to a different plate.) Raphael! (He takes a drink; **Freddy** shows another plate.) Hmm, that's a tough one.

Gaston: You got the other ones, what's so tough about that one?

Sagot: He's got his thumb over the name. (He laughs big at his joke.) We art dealers are notorious for our sense of humor!

Freddy: All right. All right. That's enough.

(**Suzanne** holds up the **Picasso** drawing and challenges **Sagot**. He turns and sees it. **Sagot** smiles.)

Suzanne: Who's this?

(Sagot takes in the drawing.)

Sagot: Was he here this evening?

Germaine: Not yet.

Sagot: Are you meeting him here?

Suzanne: Don't know.

Sagot: I can wait. (He looks more closely at the drawing.) A trifle hasty. Do you want to sell it?

Suzanne: Not for anything.

Sagot: For fifty francs?

Suzanne: It is mine *forever*.

Sagot (giving up): Get him to sign it. It'll be worth more. (He sits down.)

Germaine (Indicating the painting on the wall): Hey, Sagot, you're the expert, what do *you* see?

Sagot (taking a short look): Oh that. I see a five-hundred-pound lemon.

Freddy: What?

Gaston: I have to pee. (He exits.)

Sagot: I know that there are two subjects in paintings that no one will buy. One is Jesus, and the other is sheep. Love Him as much as they want, no one really wants a painting of Jesus in the living room. You're having a few people over, having a few drinks, and there's Jesus over the sofa. Somehow it doesn't work. You could put Him in the kitchen maybe, but then that's sort of insulting to Jesus. Jesus, ham sandwich, Jesus, ham sandwich; I wouldn't like it and neither would He. Can't sell a male nude either, unless they're messengers. Why a messenger would want to be nude I don't know. You'd think they'd at least need a little pouch or something. In fact, if a nude man showed up at my door and I asked, "Who is it," and he said, "Messenger," I would damn well look and see if he has a pouch, and if he doesn't, I'm not answering the door. Sheep are the same, don't ask me why, can't sell 'em. (He sits down.)

Gaston (reentering): Here's what I don't get. A month goes by, every night no different than tonight. People come in, people go out. So why do all the nuts show up in one evening?

Germaine: Picasso's definitely coming in tonight.

Suzanne: I hope he comes in.

Freddy: Me too. He owes me a bar bill.

Einstein: I'd like to meet him.

Sagot: Maybe I could get a painting out of him.

Germaine: Well, we all have an interest in Picasso; let's give a little toast to him.

Einstein: I'll do it: to. . .Pi-

(They all raise their glasses. Through the door, Picasso enters, age twenty-three. He looks a little like Rodin's sculpture Balzac, only quicker. He seems moody, brooding.)

Picasso: I have been thinking about sex all day. Can't get it out of my mind.

Gaston: I've been thinking about it for sixty-two years.

Picasso: I did sixteen drawings today, two in pencil, the rest in ink. All women. What does *that* tell you? It tells me a painter has got to stay well fucked; otherwise, the mind drifts off the easel, out the window, and across the street to the grocer's daughter. (To Einstein:) You were proposing a toast.

Einstein: Oh yes, to. . . **Picasso.**

Picasso: Hey, to him. I mean, did you talk about anything else besides me? Did the weather come up?

Einstein: It was mostly about you.

Picasso: God, I feel good! How lucky for you! To be talking about someone, and then in they come. Anyway, how do I look? Be honest. That spot! (He points to the sheep painting.) We've got to do something about it. (To

Sagot:) Why don't you come by tomorrow? I have something to show you. Something's afoot. The moment is coming; I can feel it.

Gaston: How do you draw something? It seems so impossible.

Picasso: It's all in the wrist. And the wrist starts here. (**Picasso** points to his noggin.)

Sagot: The last month's work has been spectacular. I sat in front of the last piece I got from you with some friends and explained it for two hours.

Picasso: Did they get it?

Sagot: Don't know. They left after the first hour. I can tell you that the last hour was lonely, hard work.

Picasso: Forget it. That was piss, piss, I tell you. This is different already. There is nothing in my way anymore. If I can think it, I can draw it. I used to have an idea; then a month later, I would draw it. The idea was a month ahead of its execution. Now the idea is ahead of the pencil only by minutes. One day, they will be simultaneous. (He stands up, to the room:) Do you know what that's like? If you can think it, you can draw it? The feeling of clear, undiluted vision?

Einstein: / have a vague idea.

Picasso: Are you an artist?

Einstein: No, I'm a scientist, but sometimes I feel like an artist.

Picasso (jazzy): Well, multiply it by a thousand, and you know what it's like to be me. (He notices **Suzanne**, scrapes his foot on the floor like a bull.) I don't believe we've had the pleasure.

Suzanne: Well, *you* have.

Picasso: My name's **Picasso.**

Suzanne: How nice for you.

Picasso (picks up her hand, scratches on the back of it with his nail; she doesn't look at it): Look at it.

Suzanne: It's a dove. (She takes out her drawing and walks over to **Sagot.**) How much?

Sagot: Fifty francs. (to **Picasso:**) That's a good price, isn't it?

Picasso (realizing): Yes, that's fair.

Suzanne: It's the price of fame I guess.

(**Suzanne** starts to leave, but stops on **Picasso's** next line.)

Picasso (getting up and walking over to **Sagot**): How much for the drawing?

Sagot: Whatever you want.

(**Picasso** reaches in his pocket for money but he has none. He finds a pencil and sketches some lines on a napkin, finishes, and hands it to **Sagot.**)

Picasso: Fair?

Sagot: Very fair; This one's signed.

(Picasso takes the original drawing and kneels before Suzanne, offering it to her. She accepts it; he starts to go.)

Suzanne: Sign it.

(Sagot silently claps. Picasso signs it.)

Suzanne: I would like another drink.

(She sits.)

Picasso (to the room): And I would like. . . a motorcar! Can I do that, Sagot? Can I draw my way into a car? Can I draw a camera and you sell it and suddenly I can have a camera? Can I get anything I want by just drawing it?

Germaine (to Sagot): Can he?

Sagot: Not yet.

Picasso: And don't worry, because I never would. And don't forget it.

Sagot: Anyway, if you need a camera, I've got one.

Picasso: Good. Wait a minute. You have a camera?

Sagot: Yes. I have a camera.

Picasso: How did you get the camera?

Sagot: I bought it.

Picasso: Well, I have one question. If I can't afford a camera, how can you afford a camera? How much are you selling my paintings for?

Sagot: Twice what I pay for them.

Picasso: TWICE? Twice! I'm so depressed.

Freddy: Actually, that's not so bad. You should hear what I'm making on the drinks!

Picasso: Now there's *two* words I can't stand: *twice* and *perky*. (Suddenly.) God, he's good. I hate him! (He crouches, tightening his body and grimacing.) I hate him! I. . . hate. . . (straightens his body, turns, and points to the Matisse on the bar) HIM! Just when you're in the swing of things, someone has to come along and ruin it for you. Ain't it the truth? (He picks it up, looks at it.) It's so NEW. I can't even be mad. This is not painting; it's alchemy. Ouch! It's sizzling hot! (He sets down the Matisse.) Take it from me, folks, the boy can paint. What's he like?

Sagot: What's he like? He's earnest; talented, obviously; nice to be around. . .

Picasso: Ugh.

Sagot: Self-deprecating. . .

Picasso: Good. It saves me the trouble. (He parks himself against the bar; then, seeing the sheep painting on the wall:) See, Sagot, here's the difference between you and me. You look at that nasty old thing and see a picture of some sheep in a landscape.

Gaston: He's not the only one.

Picasso: Right! He's not the only one. Enter. . . me! I see it differently. I see it as an empty frame with something hideous in it that's waiting to be filled up with something new. (He picks up a pencil and holds it like a foil.) Advancing out into the unknown, the undrawn, the new thing must be coaxed out of its cave, wrestled with, and finally pinned up on the wall like a hide. When I look at Goya, it's like he is reaching his hand through

the centuries to tap me on the shoulder. When I paint, I feel like I am reaching my hand forward hundreds of years to touch someone too.

Gaston: So it's like a relay.

(**Picasso** goes over to **Suzanne**, picks her up, and starts dancing with her, no music. She's reluctant at first. They dance for a while.)

Einstein: I work the same way. I make beautiful things with a pencil.

Picasso: You? You're just a scientist! For me, the shortest distance between two points is *not* a straight line!

Einstein: Likewise.

Picasso (still dancing): Let's see one of your creations.

(**Einstein** pulls out a pencil. **Picasso** stops dancing, gets a pencil. The others back away as if it were a Western shoot-out.)

Picasso: Draw!

(They start to draw on the napkins. **Einstein** finishes first.)

Einstein: Done!

(**Einstein** and **Picasso** swap drawings.)

Einstein: It's perfect.

Picasso: Thank you.

Einstein: I'm talking about mine.

Picasso (studies it): It's a formula.

Einstein: So's yours.

Picasso: It was a little hastily drawn. . . yours is letters.

Einstein: Yours is lines.

Picasso: My lines mean something.

Einstein: So do mine.

Picasso: Mine is beautiful.

Einstein (indicates his own drawing): Men have swooned on seeing that.

Picasso: Mine touches the heart.

Einstein: Mine touches the head.

Picasso: Mine will change the future.

Einstein (holds his drawing): Oh, and mine won't?

(Sensing victory, or at least parity, **Einstein** starts to dance with **Suzanne**. **Picasso** stands befuddled.)

Picasso: Maybe you're a fake.

Einstein: Maybe you're an *idiot savant*. And hold the *savant*.

(**Einstein** continues dancing. **Gaston** watches.)

Gaston (suddenly singing): WHEN A MAN, LOVES A WOMAN. . .

Freddy: What the hell was that?

Gaston: I don't know; it just came over me.

(Sagot gets out of his chair and starts to exit.)

Freddy: Where're ya going?

Sagot: I'm going to get my camera. A night like this must be preserved on film. (Referring to the painting on the wall.) Picasso, do something about that ovine pastorage, will you?

Picasso: The idea is coming.

Sagot: I like it; sounds good.

(Sagot exits)

Picasso: The idea is coming. THE idea is coming.

(Einstein dances Suzanne to her seat. He signs his drawing and gives it to her.)

Freddy: Hey, tell me if you get this joke: A man goes into a bakery and says, "Can you mail a pie?" The baker says, "Yeah, I think we could." Then the man says, "Well, could you bake me a pie in the shape of the letter E?" And the baker says, "Yeah, I think we could do that. Come back tomorrow, and we'll have it for you." So the man comes back the next day, and the baker shows him the pie. The man says, "You idiot! That's a big E. I wanted a small e, a small e." So the baker says, "No problem, come back tomorrow, and I'll see what I can do." So the man comes back the next day, and the baker shows him the pie. The man says, "Perfect. . . it's perfect." Then the baker says, "So where do you want me to send it?" And the man says, "You know what. . . I think I'll eat it here."

(The others all stare at him. No laughs.)

Freddy: Guy told me that the other day; I didn't get it.

Germaine: It's surreal.

Freddy: I guess that's why I didn't get it. I'm a symbolist.

Germaine: And a good-for-nothing one at that.

Freddy: You calling me a good-for-nothing symbolist?

Suzanne: What's symbolism?

Germaine: So far, it's a fancy excuse for not doing the dishes.

Freddy: That's not fair. Your post-romanticism has gotten us into a lot of hot water around here.

Germaine: My romanticism is not *post*!

Freddy: It most certainly is!

Germaine: It's *neo*.

Freddy: Post!

Germaine: Neo!

Freddy: Post!

Gaston: STOP IT BOTH OF YOU! My God! This is not some sleazy dive somewhere.

Einstein: The reason the joke is funny is because of the perfect selection of the letter E. It couldn't be an A-shaped pie, because A is functioning as both article and noun—who needs it? It can't be a B-shaped pie because of the confusion of the letter B with the insect. And not a C-shaped pie either, because he would have never known it was a capital C, because C in uppercase and lowercase are the same pie. I'll come back to D.

An F-shaped pie is just plain not funny. An H-shaped pie would be unstable: two vertical bars supported by a weaker crossing structure. An I-shaped pie is not good because of the dot problem: do you connect the dot to the pie, in which case it's not an I, or do you keep it separate, which raises the question, is it a dot or is it a cupcake? A K-shaped pie has Kafka written all over it. An M-shaped pie doesn't work because of the M-W dilemma. M to whom? And need I mention sigma? An O-shaped pie doesn't work because a pie is O-shaped. A P-shaped pie doesn't work because the phrase "P-shaped pie" has this naughty calypso rhythm!

Gaston: Excuse me. You're not going to go through the entire alphabet are you, because I may only have a few good years left.

Einstein: Of course not. Some of them are so obvious they needn't be mentioned. Like Q for example.

(Big pause while everyone thinks.)

Germaine: All right, what's the matter with Q?

Einstein: Well, a Q is just an O with a comma through it, and a comma-shaped pie is just a croissant.

Germaine: Thank you.

Suzanne: You said you would come back to D.

Gaston: NO! I have to L... I mean, pee.

(**Gaston** exits to the bathroom.)

Freddy: Wait a minute, you said the joke was funny. But it wasn't funny.

Einstein: Oh yes it is. I laughed.

Germaine: No, you didn't.

Einstein: Not now, no. I'll laugh later. An ice-box laugh.

Freddy: An ice-box laugh?

Einstein: Yes. You don't laugh now, but an hour later, you're at home, standing in front of the ice box, and you laugh.

Gaston (offstage): E-shaped pie! Hahahahahaha!

Einstein: See? He's just getting it now. Probably through a process of elimination. (will be in the downstairs lobby when this joke is delivered.) (to **Freddy**:) When did you hear the joke?

Freddy: A year and a half ago.

Einstein: Maybe you already laughed at that joke when you thought you were laughing at something else.

Freddy: You mean, something else funny happened, and I laughed, but really, I was laughing at this joke, which I may have heard a year ago?

Einstein: Right.

Freddy: So I might still "owe" a laugh at the other funny thing that happened?

Einstein: Or not. You may have only thought the other thing that happened was funny, but it really wasn't, so you don't owe a laugh.

Freddy: So instead of laughing at the thing that I thought was funny, I was laughing at the thing I didn't think was funny?

Einstein: Exactly.

Freddy: There's only one problem.

Einstein: What?

Freddy: The thing that you think that I think wasn't really funny was when the cat went running across the kitchen floor to leap through the cat door, but it was locked. Now there's no way that wasn't funny!

Picasso: How about you, my dear? What do you say?

Suzanne: I've had my example of a bad joke.

Picasso (sits): Oh, come on.

Suzanne: You're a womanizing, bastard fraud!

Picasso: If you're trying to praise me, that's a poor choice of words.

Suzanne: You're ridiculous.

Picasso: Look, I meant everything I said that night. I just forgot who I said it to. Stranger things will happen in your young life, believe me. Worse things.

Suzanne: I believed you.

Picasso: I believed it too. And now that I see you tonight, my dear, I'm believing it all over again. I remember a blue-green bed with a rose-colored spread over it. A tin half-moon on the wall, holding a candle. On your bedside table, there were three rings side by side with small turquoise stones, one with garnet, and next to them a pale pink ribbon. Later I picked it up off the floor. I can't remember your name.

Suzanne: I never told it to you.

Picasso: Yes, you did. I remember it now.

Suzanne: I never told you.

Picasso: Yes, you did, **Suzanne**.

Suzanne: I don't remember.

Picasso: My ear was inches from your mouth. You said your name to me, then spoke words half-whispered, words started and left unfinished, mixed with cries, passion obscuring their meaning. (He leans in and kisses her.) Do you remember?

Suzanne: Yes.

Picasso: I drew three pictures of you from memory.

Suzanne: You did?

Picasso: But I can do better.

Suzanne: I'll be there later.

Picasso: That's a coincidence. So will I.

Suzanne: I should go now. (She picks up her things.) Good-bye, everyone. (She goes over to **Einstein**.) Good-bye Al. (to **Picasso**;) When will you be there?

Picasso: When the play is over.

(**Suzanne** exits)

Einstein: The cat door was locked!

(**Gaston** reenters from the bathroom)

Gaston: So who's the third?

Freddy: What do you mean?

Gaston: Well, in this bar tonight are two men: one is **Einstein**; the other, **Picasso**. Both nearly the same age, who think that somehow their work is going to change the century. So let's give it to them, and say they are. One. Two. There must be a third; there's always a triptych: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the three graces; not to mention that bad news always comes in threes. Need I say more?

Einstein: So who is the third point in the triangle, so to speak?

Germaine: Maybe it's Matisse.

Picasso: No! Matisse cannot be the third! If he wants, he can be the fourth or fifth, but he cannot be the third point in the triangle.

Einstein: I hate to tell you this, but the idea of a triangle with four points will not fly. A triangle with four points is what Euclid rides into hell.

Germaine: Well, who is the third?

(Enter **Schmendiman**, bursting in.)

Schmendiman: You are lucky tonight. You were here at the moment, and you heard it straight from the horse's mouth. I will be changing the century. The other bars know it; you may as well, too.

Einstein: And what is your name?

Schmendiman: **Schmendiman**. Charles Dabernow **Schmendiman**.

Einstein: And how will you change the century?

Schmendiman: With my invention.

Picasso: What is your invention?

Schmendiman: It's an inflexible and very brittle building material.

Einstein: Oh? What's it made from?

Schmendiman: And I'll tell you what it's made from: equal parts of asbestos, kitten paws and radium. The only problem with it is that building considerations only allow it to be used in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and the island of Krakatoa, east of Java. But still! That's a big market! So everyone have a drink! . . .

Freddy: On you?

Schmendiman: Uh. . . no. Just have a drink and remember my name: **Schmendiman**.

(The others say "**Schmendiman**," rather lamely.)

Schmendiman: You see there's a distinction between talent and genius. And it's not just that they are spelled completely different. Talent is the ability to say things well, but genius is the ability to, well, say things! Talent sells a million in a year, but genius sells five thousand a year for two hundred years! (To **Einstein**;) Can you compute that, or am I movin' to fast for you? You have to work to have talent. But genius comes gift wrapped in a blue box from Tiffany's!

Gaston: **Picasso**, **Einstein**, and **Schmendiman**. Somehow it doesn't have a ring.

Schmendiman: Which one is **Picasso**? (**Gaston** points) I've heard of you. . . nice work. If you like blue. Come to think of it, it's about time for a Spaniard again. . . I mean, it's been a long time since "bell-ath-kweth". . . I'm just needling ye! You would be interested in my process. Creation is easy! Just follow the path of least resistance. You're supposed to paint, butcha feel like dancin'? DANCE! You're supposed to write but you feel like singin'? SING! That's what i did. Remember the shortest distance between two points is a foot and a half, no pun intended.

Freddy: No pun achieved.

Schmendiman: I struggled to be a writer, but my heart told me to invent a very brittle and inflexible building material, which by the way is called Schmendimite. And I did! That's why I know my place in history is secure. . . I followed my heart. Next bar! (He goes toward the door, saying like a cheer:) Schmenda. . . Schmenda. . . men men men! Wait! I just had another idea! A tall pointy hat for dunces!

(Schmendiam snaps his fingers. He exits.)

Gaston: What the hell was that?

Freddy: I admire his confidence. And nothing else.

Einstein: Here's the way I look at it. We're not so much going to change the century as bend it. Let's say **Picasso** here is a genius. The century is just flying along in space and it whizzes by **Picasso** here and it picks up speed and it flings itself off in a new direction. Like a comet veering left at the sun. The century is just zig-zagging along, bending and curving, influenced by the powerful gravity of people like **Picasso**. But the century itself, because we're in it, appears to be heading straight.

Gaston: How can something be curved but appear straight? Come on, buddy.

Einstein (sarcastic): Gee, I never thought of that. I guess you're right. HOW ABOUT THE HORIZON, YOU NITWIT?

Gaston: Are you trying to get my goat?

Einstein: No, I'm just trying to explain something. You'll be happy to know that not only is the horizon something that appears to be straight but is actually curved, but so is space in general.

Gaston: Horseshit.

Einstein: Well, it just so happens that it is!

Gaston: Is not!

Einstein: Is too!

Gaston: Is not!

Einstein: Is too!

Gaston: Is not!

Germaine (to **Freddy**): Neo.

Freddy: Post!

Germaine: Neo!

Freddy: Post!

Picasso: Mine is not a formula!

Einstein (to **Picasso**): Is so!

Freddy (to **Einstein**): Is not!

Einstein: Is so!

Picasso (to **Freddy**): Neo!

Freddy: Post!

Picasso: Neo!

Einstein: Hold it! Not only is space curved, but light has mass, and it bends when it passes by large masses like the sun at a finite speed regardless of the motion of its source! (He gasps.) Uh-oh! (To everyone:) Oh, my God, I can't believe I just blurted out the ending of my book. What I just said is my business, and I hope it won't leave this room.

Freddy (sarcastic): I'm glad you stopped me. I was just going to the phone.

Germaine: You want to hear a woman's opinion of this?

Einstein: There is no woman's opinion. This is science.

Germaine: Are you saying women can't be scientists?

Einstein: No! I'm saying there are no gender-related opinions on this matter. Madam Curie didn't say, "I think I've discovered radium; I better check with a man." No man's opinion, no woman's opinion. It's sexless.

Gaston: I know the feeling.

Einstein: What I just said is the fundamental, end-all, final, not-subject-to-opinion absolute truth, depending on where you are standing.

Freddy (notices **Picasso** thinking, hushes everyone): Hey, Pablo, psst! Pabs. . . yo, **Picasso!**... Easel head! Hey, blue boy! What's with you?

Picasso: Sorry, I was just trying to not have an idea.

Einstein: You have a lot of ideas?

Picasso: Endless.

Gaston: How do you draw something? It seems so impossible.

Picasso: What do you mean?

Gaston: Well, you're a painter; you're always having to come up with ideas. What's it like? I mean, the only idea I ever came up with was when I had to paint my shutters. I had to figure out a color. And I thought about it for a long time. Should they be a light color or a dark color? For a while, forest blue seemed nice; then, I realized there was no such thing as forest blue. I tried to flip a coin but lost it on the roof. I started thinking, "What are shutters anyway, and what would their natural color be?" Then I realized that shutters don't occur in nature, so they don't have a natural color. Suddenly, I knew I was just moments away from a decision, just moments, finally. Then this gorgeous thing walks by, with ruby lips and a derriere the shape of a valentine. I swiveled my head around and snapped a tendon. That put the decision off for three days. Then I thought, "Maybe just take off the shutters." I started to think about moving to a land where there are no shutters and, frankly, suicide. But then one day, I said to myself, "Green!" And that was it.

(**Gaston** exits to the bathroom.)

Picasso: My process is just like that, but leave out the start, all the middle parts, and jump to the end. If I asked myself what color I wanted, it would just slow me down.

Freddy: I know what he means. (**Freddy** splashes together a drink.)

Picasso: Well, I see other painters struggling with it, killing themselves over it even. And I don't get their worry. I put the pencil to the paper, and it comes out. Not the craft, mind you, that was difficult to get. The ideas are a different matter. The ideas swoop down on me, they fall like rain; they land with a crash.

Einstein: They "thunk," too.

Picasso: Absolutely! They thunk.

Einstein: You too?

Picasso: Yes. And pop.

Einstein: Well, pop all the time, that goes without saying. They never seem to flow though.

Picasso: Never. Flowing is a myth.

Einstein: Never flow. Well, sometimes.

Picasso: Yeah, sometimes.

Freddy: Where do they come from?

Picasso: Before me, artists used to get ideas from the past. But as of this moment, they are coming from the future, fast and loose.

Einstein: Absolutely from the future.

Picasso: I think in the moment of the pencil to paper, the future is mapped out in the face of the person drawn. Imagine that the pencil is pushed hard enough, and the lead goes through the paper into another dimension.

(**Picasso** and **Einstein** start to get excited.)

Einstein: Yes!

Picasso: A kind of fourth dimension, if that's what you want to call it. . .

Einstein: I can't believe you're saying this! A fourth dimension!

Picasso: And that fourth dimension is. . . the future.

Einstein: Wrong.

Picasso (arguing): The pencil pokes into the future and sucks up ideas and transfers them to the paper, for Christ's sake. And what the hell do you know about it anyway. . . you're a scientist! You just want theories. . .

Einstein: Yes, and like you, the theories must be beautiful. You know why the sun doesn't revolve around the earth? Because the idea is not beautiful enough. If you're trying to prove that the sun revolves around the earth, in order to make the theory fit the facts, you have to have the planets moving backwards, and the sun doing loop-the-loops. Too ugly. Way ugly.

Picasso: So you're saying you bring a beautiful idea into being?

Einstein: Yes. We create a system and see if the facts can fit it.

Picasso: So you're not just describing the world as it is?

Einstein: No! We are creating a new way of looking at the world!

Picasso: So you're saying you dream the impossible and put it into effect?

Einstein: Exactly.

Picasso: Brother!

Einstein: Brother!

(**Picasso** and **Einstein** hug.)

Germaine: Oh please. You two are sprouting a lot of bullshit, and I say, the only reason you got into physics and art in the first place is to meet girls.

Picasso and **Einstein:** What?!!!

Einstein: You actually think I said to myself, "How can I meet a lot of girls? I know, I'll develop a unified field theory?"

Germaine: Look, I'm not saying you're not sincere, but let's face it, (To **Einstein:**) you've got some splashy party talk, and (To **Picasso:**) you've got the perfect and oldest pick-up line: I'd like to draw you.

Picasso: That's outrageous.

Germaine: Maybe it's unconscious. I just think that somewhere way back, you realized you weren't maybe the handsomest things around and decided to go a different route.

Einstein: I'm disgusted!

(A woman enters. She wears glasses; is brainy, well-dressed; has long red hair.)

Einstein: **Countess!**

Countess: Albert!

Einstein: Did you go to the Bar Rouge?

Countess: Of course not, that's where you said we'd meet.

Einstein: Oh, how stupid of me. Of course, you'd come here.

Countess: Now what was that you were saying about it being impossible to distinguish motion produced by an outside gravitational force?

Einstein (aside): God, she's sexy! . . .

(**Einstein** and the **Countess** start to leave.)

Einstein (mumbles): It's impossible to distinguish, you know, two bodies unified... in a field...

(The **Countess** pays. **Einstein** is a little embarrassed but not enough to stop her.)

Einstein (*turns to the room, suddenly waxing rhapsodic*): Although we may never meet again, like the roots of the sequoia grabbing deep in the earth, the ideas we have said here tonight will lace themselves irrevocably through the century.

Picasso (full of himself): This is the night the earth fell quiet and listened to a conversation!

Einstein (the same): O Lapin Agile!

Picasso: **Picasso**, **Einstein**, **Picasso**, **Einstein**. My only regret is that we'll be in different volumes in the encyclopedia.

Einstein: But there'll be no **Schmendiman** to come between us.

(**Einstein** and the **Countess** exit.)

Picasso: I envy him.

Freddy: Why's that?

Picasso: In science there's no reason to ever get cynical.

Freddy: Why would an artist get cynical?

Picasso: I think it's called marketing.

Freddy: I've got to run next door and catch Antoine before he leaves town without paying his bar tab. (To audience:) I might be gone a longer amount of time than you'd think it would take a person to run next door and catch Antoine before he leaves town without paying his bar tab, but traditionally, it's okay.

(And **Freddy** exits, **Gaston** reenters.)

Picasso: **Gaston**, don't you have to pee?

(Gaston realizes he does and exits. Picasso walks over to Germaine, and they kiss; you can tell it's not the first time. They break.)

Picasso: Tasty. Quite tasty.

Germaine: What was I? Dessert?

Picasso: What do you mean?

Germaine: I mean, how many meals have you had today?

Picasso: Why be nasty? We're not so different. . .

Germaine: Oh yes, we slept together, but there's a difference. Women are your world. For me, you are the thing that never happened. You and Freddy exist in separate universes. What I do in one has nothing to do with the other.

Picasso: How convenient.

Germaine: Oh, don't get me wrong. I'm not being nasty. I like you. It's just that I know about men like you.

Picasso: Men like me? Where are there men like me?

Germaine: Have a drink. You don't want me to go on.

Picasso: No, tell me about men like me.

Germaine (settles in): A steady woman is important to you because then you know for sure you have someone to go home to in case you can't find someone else. You notice every woman, don't you?

Picasso: Many.

Germaine: I mean, every woman. Waitresses, wives, weavers, laundresses, ushers, actresses, women in wheelchairs. You notice them, don't you?

Picasso: Yes.

Germaine: And when you see a woman you think, "I wonder what she would be like?" You could be bouncing your baby on your knee and if a woman walks by you wonder what she would be like.

Picasso: Go on.

Germaine: You have two in one night when the lies work out, and you feel that it's your right. The rules don't apply to you because the rules were made up by women, and they have to be if there is going to be any society at all. You cancel one when something better comes along. They find you funny, bohemian, irresistible. You like them young, because you can bamboozle them into thinking you're great. You want them when *you* want them, never when they want you. Afterwards, you can't wait to leave, or if you're unlucky enough to have her at *your* place, you can't wait for *her* to leave, because the truth is, we don't exist afterwards, and all conversation becomes meaningless because it's not going to get you anywhere because it already got you there. You're unreachable. Your whole act is a camouflage. But you are lucky because you have a true talent that you are too wise to abuse. And because of that, you will always be desirable. So when you wear out one woman, there will be another who wants to taste it, who wants to be next to someone like you. So you'll never have to earn a woman, and you'll never appreciate one.

Picasso: But I appreciate women. I draw them, don't I?

Germaine: Well, that's because we're so goddamn beautiful, isn't it?

Picasso: Germaine, men want, and women are wanted. That is the way it is and that's the way it will always be.

Germaine: That may be true, but why be greedy? By the way, I knew you were using me but I was using you back.

Picasso: How?

Germaine: Now I know what a painter is like, tomorrow night a street paver or maybe a news agent or maybe a bookseller. A street paver may not have anything to talk about to a girl like me, but i can write romantic scenarios in my head and pull them down like a screen in front of me to project my fantasies onto. Like you project your fantasies onto a piece of paper.

Picasso: How does **Freddy** fit in? Why are you with him?

Germaine: His faults I can live with. And occasionally, he says something so stunning that I'm just glad to have been there. But really? what I wouldn't give for a country boy.

(**Freddy** reenters.)

Freddy: Well, I caught the son of a bitch in time.

Germaine: Not quite.

(A young **Female admirer** charges into the bar. She looks around.)

Female admirer: I heard he comes here. Is that true? I mean, is that really true? (*She notices **Picasso**.*) OH MY GOD! Oh my god. You! May I approach? May I really approach? (*She approaches.*) I can't believe it! What's it like to be you? I mean, what's it like? . . .(*As she looks at his face, her demeanor changes.*) Wait a minute! You're not **Schmendiman!**

(She gets bored and exits.)

Picasso: Well another typical night.

Gaston: I learned something here tonight.

Freddy: What's that **Gaston**?

Gaston: You take a couple of geniuses, put them in a room together and wow!

Freddy: Boy, you really know how to turn a phrase.

Gaston (pridefully bowing): Well thank you!

Freddy: I was being ironic.

Gaston: So was I! That's my own little genius.

Freddy: I'm sorry i missed it.

Gaston: Sometimes genius comes from very strange quarters.

(*Enter from the toilet door a **Visitor**, a singer from the fifties, age twenty-five. He wears blue suede shoes and has jet black hair. He shakes stardust from his shoulders, looks around curiously. Everyone eyes him as he goes up to the bar, looks at the Matisse painting, wanders away, swivels his hips at **Gaston**, finds that funny, sits down.*)

Gaston: Don't tell me you're a genius too.

Visitor: Shucks, no.

Germaine: Something to drink?

Visitor: Sorry, ma'am, don't drink. Do you have a tomato juice? I'm just a country boy.

(**Germaine** collapses, then gets up.)

Freddy: Sure we do. You want something in that?

Visitor: Like what?

Freddy: Well, like vodka.

Visitor: You're kiddin'.

(**Germaine** goes weak in the knees again, gets up.)

Visitor: By the way, watch the shoes.

Freddy: What brings you here?

Visitor: Well, I kinda like surprising people, you know, and poppin' up where you're least expected, supermarkets, fairgrounds. One thing I like to do is get in people's snapshots, so when they develop 'em, I'm in their picture. But I got a little bored, so I thought I'd do a little time travelin'. Try another time zone.

Gaston: Put some vodka in it.

Visitor (looks around at everyone): You seem like pretty nice folks.

Freddy (offended): Pretty nice folks? What the hell are pretty nice folks?

Germaine: Yeah. What are you talking about?

Visitor: Well, you know, friendly, good natured. Accepting of strangers.

Freddy: Why would I want to be that?

Gaston: Yeah, what the hell are you trying to imply?

Visitor: Well, where I come from, that's what people are like.

Germaine: Where are you from?

Visitor: Memphis.

Freddy: Memphis, Egypt?

Visitor: No sir. Memphis is in America.

("Oh". Silence. **Freddy** starts polishing the bar. **Germaine** starts cleaning glasses. **Gaston** takes a long swig.)

Gaston: What's Hiawatha really like?

(**Einstein** enters with the **Countess**, tipsy.)

Einstein (to the **Countess**): Apparently, the cat door was locked. (*He notices where he is.*) Oh, my God. We've ended up where we started from.

Countess (nudges **Einstein**): Not only is space curved, so is Paris!

(The **Countess** laughs.)

Einstein (to **Visitor**): I don't believe we've met.

Visitor: Oh yes, we will.

Einstein: You and I think alike.

(**Einstein** starts to move toward him.)

Visitor: Watch the shoes.

Einstein (halts): What do you do?

Visitor: Well, ah guess ah... (thinks) sing songs about love.

(The others take a breath, **Germaine** especially.)

Freddy (rhapsodic): If only I could sing songs about love.

Germaine: If I could sing songs about love, I would sing and remember lovers past, and the emotion would infuse itself into the lyric.

Picasso: I would give it all up if I could sing songs about love. No more paints and brushes... just the moonlight, the June light, and you.

Gaston: In the summer evenings, I would stand along the Seine and just sing, sing, sing.

Einstein: People crowding in a smoky cabaret to hear the song stylings of Albert **Einstein**, appearing nightly with the Kentuckymen. Singing songs as pretty as a summer dress... A lover's hand going into their lover's hand.

Visitor: See what I mean, about you all being pretty nice folks?

(They all are embarrassed. **Sagot** enters, carrying a tripod camera.)

Sagot: Good. You're all still here.

Picasso: That's the camera?

Sagot: The latest.

Picasso: They're making them so small! Where did you get it?

Sagot: I bought it from a Japanese tourist. Okay, everybody group together over there.

(They all start to primp.)

Einstein: I'd like to order three one-by-twos and a daguerreotype.

Sagot: Come, everybody. In a row and squeeze together.

(The others all assemble for the photo.)

Germaine: I hate having my picture taken.

Sagot (to the **Visitor**, who hangs out away from the camera): You get in there too.

Visitor: Oh, don't worry. I'll be in it.

Sagot: Who are you, by the way?

(**Sagot** buries his head under the camera cloth.)

Visitor: I guess you could say I'm a messenger.

(**Sagot** emerges from the camera cloth and eyes the **Visitor** up and down, then recovers.)

Sagot (announces): On this day in 1904, the Lapin Agile was the site of this historic photo.

(**Schmendiman** enters.)

Schmendiman: Did someone say, "Historic photo?" (He takes out a compact, powders his nose, and kneels in front with his arms outstretched.) Can you still see the others?

Sagot: Sure can.

Schmendiman (disappointed): Oh.

Sagot: Okay, everybody, smile.

(Erratic smiling. Some do, some don't. It goes in and out. As some get the smile, others lose it.)

Sagot: Hold it. You're not all smiling.

EVERYBODY (ad lib): Well, it's difficult, it feels fake. Why? (Etc.)

Sagot: Okay. Okay. How about this? We'll think up a word that makes the face go naturally into a smile, and we'll say it at the same time.

EVERYBODY (ad lib): Yeah, okay. . . Good idea. (They all think.)

Sagot: Hmm. What's the word? What's the word? I've got it! Matisse.

(**Sagot** says it a couple of times to check, and his mouth goes into a smile. All try as they reform in a group.)

Sagot (gets behind the camera): Okay, everyone say "Matisse." One, two, three.

(They all say it and smile, except **Picasso**, who frowns.)

Sagot: Try again, one more time.

(They say, "Matisse"; everyone smiles but **Picasso**.)

Sagot: **Picasso**, you're not smiling!

Picasso: Well, I just can't! Not if you're going to say "Matisse"!

(They all think some more.)

Einstein: How about Rubens?

Picasso: Oh, please.

Sagot: How about Michelangelo Buonarroti?

Gaston: We haven't got the time for everyone to say "Nicholangelo Canelloni"!

Picasso: El Greco! We can say "El Greco."

Germaine: El Greco doesn't make our mouths go in a smile; it makes it go in an O. We'll all look like fish.

(In union, they try "El Grec-oh". They don't like it. They all think some more.)

Countess: I've got one. How about "twice"? (Smiles as she says it.)

Picasso: No! Not "twice".

Countess: "Perky?"

(All shake their heads no. They all start to think again.)

Schmendiman: How about "cheese"?

(This stops them. They like it.)

Sagot: "Cheese" is good.

Schmendiman: Chalk up another one for me!

Sagot: Okay, everybody say "cheese"!

(They all say, "cheese", and the photo is taken. They are all blinded by the flash.)

Sagot: Did the flash go off?

Visitor (drinks the vodka and tomato juice): A-well-a, bless-a my soul-a, what's-a wrong with me? Whew, that's strong stuff.

(Pause as the **Visitor** looks at the painting of sheep in a land-scape.)

Visitor: Boy, oh boy, what a weird paintin'.

Gaston: Weird? It's just sheep.

Visitor: Sheep? Looks like five women to me.

(**Picasso's** head snaps around to the picture.)

Visitor: You puttin' me on? You see sheep?

Gaston: I see sheep, she sees sheep. Everyone in here sees sheep except for you.

Visitor: Well, mercy. It looks like five weird women to me.

Picasso: Where did you say you were from?

Visitor: From the future.

Picasso: And why are you here?

Visitor: She sent me with a message.

Picasso: Who is she?

Visitor: She is the one who whispers in your ears every time you touch the pencil to the paper.

Picasso: And what is the message?

Visitor: Are you open to receive it?

Picasso: Yes.

Visitor: You better stand back.

(**Picasso** stands, thinks, then steps back. The **Visitor** gestures toward the painting. The painting changes into the full-sized, eight-foot-square painting of **Picasso's** Les Demoiselles d'Avignon. **Picasso** and the **Visitor** stare at the painting in wonder. No one else, of course, sees it. **Picasso** turns away from the painting, entranced.)

Picasso (to himself): I could dream it forever and still not do it, but when the time comes for it to be done, God, I want to be ready for it, to be ready for the moment of convergence between the thing done and the doing of it, between the thing to be made and its maker. At that moment, I am speaking for everyone; I am dreaming for the billions yet to come; I am taking the part of us that cannot be understood by God, and letting it bleed from the wrist onto the canvas. And it can only be made, because I have felt these things: my lust, my greed, my hatred, my happiness. (*He turns to the bar.*) So this is what it's like.

Germaine: What?

Picasso: To be there at the moment.

Gaston: What moment?

Picasso: The moment I leave blue behind. I'd like some wine.

Germaine: Any special color?

Picasso (looks back at painting): Rose'.

Picasso (to the **Visitor**): My name is **Picasso**. Are you an artist?

Visitor: I had my moment.

Picasso: What kind of moment?

Visitor: My moment of.. perfection.

Picasso: I know the feeling. I just had it over there.

Visitor: It's a good feeling.

Picasso: Yes, it is.

Visitor: I think not many people have it.

Picasso: No. No, they don't.

Visitor: Hard to know when it's happening, till it's over.

Picasso: Don't tell anyone that; better to let them think you always knew.

Visitor: Yes sir.

Picasso: Don't let anyone in on the fact that we can't help it. We're like the chickens that cross the road. We do it and we don't know why.

Visitor: Yes sir.

Picasso: And remember, in a sense, we are both exalted because we are originals.

Visitor: Well, that's a pretty bold statement, Mr. **Picasso**, considering we both took ideas from the art of the Negro.

(Magic music. The set pulls away, revealing a backdrop of stars in the sky. The painting is still visible.

Einstein pops out of his chair, looking up.)

Einstein: Did you see that?

Visitor: The roof is gone.

Einstein: The stars have come out.

Picasso: Millions and millions of stars.

Einstein: You're way low.

Visitor: It's night. I didn't know it was night, you know, the time traveling thing. I arrive, I don't know if it's lunch or dinner or what. I've put on eighteen pounds. Hoping to take it off when I go back.

Einstein: I'm going to get a new suit. When I present my paper, I'd like to be wearing a new suit.

Picasso: I wonder what I'll be wearing when I paint it?

Visitor: I'd like something white with a big belt. (Then:) Did you see that?

Einstein: Shooting star. They hit the atmosphere and burn white.

Picasso: I'd like to leave a long trail. A long string of fire.

Einstein: From the horizon.

Visitor: Whoosh!

Picasso: So bright that when you look away, you can still see it against your eyes.

Einstein: I would like that . . . a retention of vision.

Picasso: I would like that too. Into my eighties. A retention of vision.

Visitor: I would like to have it too, although I don't know what you're talking about.

Picasso: I hope I don't die young.

Einstein: Me too.

(The **Visitor** gulps.)

Picasso: Are you dead?

Visitor: Pretty much.

Einstein: How is it?

Visitor: Overrated.

Picasso: All those stars. It's a miracle.

Einstein: Not a miracle; that's just the way it is. A miracle would be if, for example, the stars rearranged themselves and spelled out our names across the heavens.

Picasso: My god!

Einstein: It's a miracle. . .

Visitor: Just like Vegas.

Picasso: There's my name.

Einstein: There's mine, spelled right too.

Picasso (to the **Visitor**): Don't see yours though.

Visitor: Oh yeah, it's there. Right above both of yours and three times as big.

Picasso: Oh yeah.

Einstein: Humph.

Visitor: Get used to it, gentlemen, 'cause that's the way it works.

(Pause.)

Picasso: I want to have the time to make enough things.

Einstein: That's what we do best, make things.

Picasso: I want to leave the world littered with beauty.

Einstein: I want to make Newton's apple leap back into the tree.

Visitor: I want to come at them through the radio and break their hearts.

Picasso: I want them to see the thousand years of tenderness in woman combing her hair.

Einstein: I want an idea to take them at light speed to the edge of the universe.

Visitor: I want them not to be lonesome tonight.

Picasso: Hey, I think we should toast.

Einstein: Got one?

Picasso: Got a good one.

Visitor: Sure.

Sagot: Let's.

Freddy: I'll pour.

Gaston: I'll drink.

(**Germaine** pours several drinks, distributes in silence.)

Picasso: I want to toast the twentieth century. . .

Gaston: Why the twentieth century?

Visitor: Heck, ah know why.

Freddy: Why?

Visitor: 'Cause this century, the accomplishments of artists and scientists outshone the accomplishments of politicians and governments.

(Everyone pauses.)

Gaston: We shall see.

Visitor: You can take that to the bank.

Freddy: I know what he means.

Gaston: You always know what everybody means. What exactly does he mean, **Freddy**?

Freddy: Simple. He means that in the twentieth century, no political movement will be as glorious as the movements of the line across the paper. (*Points to Picasso*), The note across the staff (*Indicates the Visitor*), or the idea across the mind (*Indicates Einstein*).

Germaine (To **Picasso**): See what I mean?

Freddy: I do what I can. I'll start the toast. You all are pretty good rhymers(He steps forward, swings his arm like a pendulum.) The pendulum swings to the left. . .

(**Freddy** signals to the **Countess**.)

Countess (shrugs): The pendulum swings to the right.

(The **Countess** hands it over to **Gaston**.)

Gaston: The past was driven by horses . . .

(Sounds of agreement from others.)

Einstein: The future is driven by light.

(They all give a responsive "yeah". It falls to **Schmendiman**.)

Schmendiman: Coconuts. . .

(**Schmendiman** can't think of anything. **Freddy** steps in.)

Freddy: The mistakes of the past are over . . .

(More enthusiasm.)

Picasso: The Modern waits to be met...

(More enthusiasm.)

Schmendiman (Steps forward): The pelican's a funny. . .

(Again, **Schmendiman** can't think of anything. He sits down.)

Sagot: Say good-bye to the age of indifference. . .

(They respond with more "hear, hears". **Sagot** hands it over to the **Visitor**.)

Visitor: And say hello. . . (Everybody anticipates.) . . . to the age. . .(More anticipation. They all start to toast enthusiastically.) . . . of regret.

(On "regret," they stop short and stare at the **Visitor**. Momentary deflation. Then:)

Picasso: To the twentieth century!

Einstein: To the twentieth century!

Everybody: To the twentieth century! (The lights start to dim or curtain starts to drop.)

Visitor (eyes the lights): Isn't it amazing how the play fit exactly between the time that the lights came up and the lights went down? (or: "the curtain went up and the curtain went down?")

THE END