

BEING

by

George Opacic

Adapted from *The Career of Nicodemus Dyzma*

a political novel by the Polish author [Tadeusz Dołęga-Mostowicz](#)

and from

Being There

by

[Jerzy Kosiński](#)

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CHARACTERS

Chance the gardener (Chauncey Gardiner)

young Chance

Mr. William Jenkins - Chance's first benefactor

Louise - Mr. Jenkins' devoted maid and friend of Chance

Delivery Person

Unsympathetic Lawyer - Mr. Jenkins' executor

Eve Rand - young wife of Ben Rand

The President

Ben Rand - bed-ridden tycoon who is dying of cancer

Dr. Robert Allenby - Ben's doctor

Morley - the Rand chauffeur

Ambassador Dmitri Kush - acquaintance of Ben

Roy Chenier - private investigator

Person 1 - reporter

Person 2 - reporter and friend of Chance

Person 3 - reporter

Person 4 - reporter for the Spectator

Aides - to the President, and to Ambassador Kush

ACT 1

SCENE 1

(A young maid is taking the teen-aged Chance into her master's rhododendron garden. she treats Chance with kindness even as he resists being taken outside the mansion. Chance keeps looking back to the door)

LOUISE

Come on, Chance. You really must get outside into the sun. Here...

(Louise hands Chance a small pair of shears and tries to take his cellphone)

CHANCE

Nooo. Need my phone!

(Louise shakes her head firmly)

LOUISE

I'm just going to put it inside so it doesn't get dirty out here. Now take these shears - and be careful, mind! They're sharp!

CHANCE

Sharp?

(Louise stops him from rubbing his finger on the sharp edge)

LOUISE

That will cut your finger!

CHANCE

Cut?

(Chance stares at Louise as she leaves for the garden. he stands unmoving. finally, shears in hand, he begins counting the shrubs)

CHANCE

One. Two. Three. Four...

(Background screen shows time passing -
clock spinning or rotating hourglass)

(Fade lights to black)

ACT [1]

SCENE [2]

(Background screen shows rhododendron bushes. in the rhododendron garden [of Milner Gardens], a middle-aged Chance wearing a suit and a yellow bump-cap is crouching, using one hand to trim a bush with small shears while watching his cellphone in his other hand. the phone can be heard playing a soap opera with a screechy-voiced actor named Vivian. Chance's face contorts into tears then amazement, following the pictures. he doesn't notice that his shears are missing most of the little branches he thinks he is cutting)

CHANCE

(quietly)

Oh. My. God.

(absently, he bops the yellow bump-cap on his head with the shears as he tries to wipe a tear away. he is not aware of the bump, but the audience hears it)

(BOP!)

CHANCE

So... lovely. I may be slow but...

((in lyrical voice))

the visions I see are in a ghostly hue that shimmers endlessly in my mind.

(Chance smiles and resumes almost snipping with one hand while staring at the soap opera on his phone in his other hand)

The life she has is stormy messy shabby and so much better than what I see around me...

(Louise, the maid, calls from a window)

LOUISE

Chance, please come in now. Bring the shears. Put them by the door, ok? Your lunch is ready. Come in now.

(she shakes her head and whispers)
Honestly... Well, I have to admit he is getting better. What with Mr. Jenkins speaking to him every evening about world affairs, and how plants grow, and about his dreams and, and everything... He is getting calmer. I'm quite happy to help him along.

(she nods to herself)

(Chance takes a moment to look around. he finally notices Louise and gives her a smile and wave, then goes back to dreaming and snipping the air)

LOUISE

(patiently, with raised voice)
Come inside, Chance. Stand up and come inside.

(Chance cocks his head then slowly rises from his crouch, still snipping at the air like he is waving a baton. he steps one way but becomes confused. he steps another way looking for the door. seeing it, Chance saunters inside, waving his phone gently. he rhythmically pokes his head and arm back outside to drop the shears onto the threshold then disappears inside)

(fade to black)

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ACT [1]

SCENE [3]

(years pass, as shown on the background screen)

(a middle-aged Louise is in the kitchen with a Delivery Person. she checks the list of food items that are in a box, signs the form, and nods)

LOUISE

Thanks Ricky. Looks good.

DELIVERY PERSON

(he takes the pad with the delivery form that Louise signed)

A bit less than normal this week?

LOUISE

(her face turns sadly up to the second storey)

Mr. Jenkins is just not able to keep anything down. The cancer is a terrible thing. He's down to a hundred pounds now. Half of what...

(Chance enters, waving his phone rhythmically, and absently bumps into the Delivery Person)

DELIVERY PERSON

Oh! Sorry, Chance. How are you doing today?

CHANCE

Vivian is better now after her stay in the hospital.

(the Delivery Person raises his eyebrows then shrugs toward Louise, who shrugs back and shakes her head gently)

DELIVERY PERSON

Well, I better be going. Lots more deliveries today.

(he slows his speech as he nods toward Chance)

Say hello to Vivian for me, Chance.

(he exits)

CHANCE

He is a nice man.

LOUISE

Yes he is. Now you sit down at the table while I put this food in the pantry. That's your dish, there, dear. Would you like juice or milk?

(Chance is staring blankly at the table, slowly waving his phone)

LOUISE

That dish, there. That's a good boy.

CHANCE

(holding onto the back of a chair with one hand)

Vivian only drinks coke and rye. What is coke and rye, Louise? Timmy only has coke. He says he has a line of coke every morning.

LOUISE

Ah...

(she rolls her eyes)

Let me finish putting the food away and I'll tell you... Maybe.

(she mumbles the last bit and shakes her head)

(Louise carries the box into the pantry then comes out. Chance is still standing behind the chair waving the phone)

LOUISE

Sit down, Chance. At your regular place. Right there.

(she points to his plate and gives his shoulder a gentle push. he sits down, free arm at his side with the other waving, waiting for further instructions)

LOUISE

Good. Now eat your sandwich while I pour you some juice.

CHANCE

Thank you, Louise.

(he places his phone on the table)

LOUISE

You are welcome, my dear.

(Louise waits for Chance to settle down then rubs his shoulders from behind)

You're a good boy. I just hope Mr. Jenkins was able to make provisions for you.

(she sighs then hears the door bell)

LOUISE

Oh, who is that at lunch time? Finish your sandwich, Chance. I'll be right back.

(Louise moves to the door then turns back to Chance)

LOUISE

You'll be all right, dear?

(Chance keeps munching slowly)

(Louise can be heard greeting Dr. Zimmer. the two come by the kitchen door and Dr. Zimmer looks inside)

DR. ZIMMER

Hello there, Chance. How are you doing today? Looks like you are working your way through one of Louise's world-famous sandwiches.

(Chance stops munching to look over at Dr. Zimmer. he pauses in mid-chomp then asks innocently)

CHANCE

If you are the doctor, doctor, you should tell *me* how I am.

DR. ZIMMER

Ah... well yes. You have a point, Chance. Yes...

(the doctor smiles at Louise and they both go upstairs)

(fade to black)

ACT [1]

SCENE [4]

(upstairs in Mr. Jenkins' bedroom)

(Dr. Zimmer is holding Mr. Jenkins' wrist, taking his pulse. the doctor is scanning his patient's face and is not happy with what he sees)

DR. ZIMMER

Willie, you're a tough old coot. I don't know how...

MR. JENKINS

(opening his eyes, he croaks)

How I'm still alive? (cough)

It's my damn doctor keeping...(cough)... keeping me in this torture.

(half rising)

Give me something... (cough cough)... Stop this pain...

DR. ZIMMER

(releasing Mr. Jenkins' wrist, he shakes his head)

Please, I'm doing what I can for you. What I'm allowed to do. You know...

MR. JENKINS

To hell with (cough cough cough)... with what you're allowed! Damn it! ... *Damn it all!*...

(slumps back onto the bed)

(Louise comes into the room in a hurry, rushing to to Mr. Jenkins' side)

LOUISE

Mr. Jenkins, what's happening?

(turning to Dr. Zimmer)

Have you given him anything for the pain?

(turning back to Mr. Jenkins)

My dear, you look so very pale... Willie?

(Mr. Jenkins slumps back, eyes closing slowly)

Yes, sleep.

(the two step quietly toward the door to
whisper)

DR. ZIMMER

(looking down) I feel bad, Louise. He's in great pain but I
can do nothing for him, now. Even the strongest pain
medication isn't enough.

(looking at Louise)

You understand, don't you? I can't put him out of his
torture. All I can do treat the symptoms...

(Louise shakes her head)

LOUISE

Can you... you know...

DR. ZIMMER

Give him a higher dose?... No! I cannot. I cannot!
(he rushes out of the room)

(fade to black)

ACT [1]

SCENE [5]

(Next morning, an ambulance is heard arriving. the background screen shows an ambulance's flashing lights)

(Louise is frantically directing two paramedics past the kitchen door and upstairs. after they hurry upstairs Chance comes into the kitchen slowly. he looks around for his plate of food, but seeing none, he sits down at his regular place. he straightens out the placemat carefully as well as the salt and pepper containers. he places his phone in the exact corner of the placemat, adjusting it several times. shortly, he looks up as the paramedics carry a fully covered stretcher past the kitchen door. Louise stumbles into the kitchen and, seeing Chance, she goes to hug him from behind his chair)

LOUISE

That's it, then, Chance. Mr. Jenkins is gone.

(wiping away tears)

CHANCE

(re-straightening the placemat that Louise touched)

Gone?... Gone where? Gone why? Gone?

LOUISE

(more tears)

Oh Chance. What's going to happen now? Who's going to take care of you? You've never left this house and the garden since you were a child, all you've ever known is this house and garden... What's going to become of you?

CHANCE

(cocking his head) I will have to change channels. A new show.

(Louise shakes her head sympathetically)

(Chance touches his phone to select a streaming show, as shown on the background screen)

(fade to black)

ACT [2]

SCENE [1]

(in the kitchen, days later)

(an unsympathetic lawyer is speaking to Louise and Chance. he is confused by Chance's childish reactions)

LAWYER

So you see, ah, Chance, there is no option. None whatsoever. You and, ah, Louise will have to leave the premises. Understand?

(both Chance and Louise are seated at the table. Louise is quietly sobbing, holding Chance's hand)

LOUISE

Oh, Chance. What are they going to do to you? I can find a job, but what will become of you?

CHANCE

(staring at his phone which is playing another soap opera, as shown on the background screen)

Now I have to start another season. Vivien is gone.

(he looks up at Louise)

And Uncle Jenkins. Gone. A new show.

(looking back at his phone)

Maybe I can play in it.

(the lawyer shrugs and shakes his head)

LAWYER

You will have to vacate within two weeks.

CHANCE

(his face brightens as he waves a hand rhythmically)

Vacate? Have a good vacate! On the beach. Placate the inmate; this primate will migrate; he will litigate and donate the estate to a teammate...

(the lawyer stands up in frustration, indicating to Louise that she should take Chance out)

(fade to black)

ACT [2]

SCENE [2]

(pictures on the background screen flash the bustle of New York streets, busy people everywhere, cars honking)

(Chance - stage left - is overwhelmed by the chaos as he is standing, staring up at the screen)

CHANCE

My garden... Now a parking lot... Trampled under the cars... Gone. Disappeared. Lost forever.

(shakes his head slowly and reaches for his phone)

A new show. What is my new show?

(as Chance backs away from the chaos, he moves off stage left and immediately a car's screeching tires are heard. Chance rolls back onstage and collapses in a heap)

(Eve Rand, glamorous wife of the older Ben Rand, runs onstage after Chance, bends down in distress to hold the unresponsive man's head)

EVE RAND

Oh my god!

(looks back offstage)

Call an ambulance, Morley! Right away!

(Eve fondles Chance's head and sees his eyes flicker)

EVE RAND

What has he done to you? Oh! Are you alright? What's your name?

(snapping her head back to look offstage)

What do you mean half an hour!?

(pedestrians walk by, look down, concerned but keep walking)

CHANCE

(opens his eyes to stare at the lovely lady
holding him. he mumbles)

Chance the gardener.

(Eve Rand cocks her head to understand)

EVE RAND

Chauncey? Did you say Chauncey Gardiner? Thank god you're
able to talk, Chauncey. Are you hurt? I mean other than
being hit by our limousine. I mean... Oh! I don't know what
I mean... Morley! Come here! Never mind parking! Quickly!

(fade to black)

ACT [2]

SCENE [3]

(background screen shows pictures of the palatial estate of Ben Rand, then centres on the grand foyer)

(Eve Rand holds the door while Morley helps Chance walk in, limping slightly, to the foyer. Chance steps carefully with Morley's help)

EVE RAND

Over there, Morley. On the couch.

(she indicates a couch next to a broad staircase)

(at the top of the staircase, Dr. Allenby calls out)

DR. ALLENBY

Mrs. Rand! What have you brought us?

(he quickly comes down the stairs)

(Morley places Chance onto the couch. Chance tries to lean back then finds that something hurts, so he leans forward)

CHANCE

Hurts.

EVE RAND

(hovering over him)

Where? Oh, my dear! Morley, have you broken him?

(Dr. Allenby steps off the stairs to join Eve Rand)

DR. ALLENBY

What happened, Mrs. Rand. Who is this gentleman?

EVE RAND

Dr. Allenby, this is, ah, Chauncey Gardiner. He was struck by our limousine. Please check him over, will you?

(she turns to Chance)

We will, of course, cover any medical costs, Chauncey.
Doctor, please...

(she allows Dr. Allenby to get closer)

DR. ALLENBY

Yes. Well. Perhaps we can help him remove his coat...
Carefully.

(Eve Rand and the doctor work to take the
finely made but old-fashioned jacket off
Chance. as they lift his arms, Chance
suddenly groans)

CHANCE

(Groan)

EVE RAND

Oh! Did that hurt, you poor man. Here let me do this arm
first.

(as she gets closer to Chance's face, he
looks into her eyes like a puppy)

CHANCE

Smells nice like lavender spice.

EVE RAND

(whispering with a grin)

You are a naughty boy. You're not injured at all, are you?

DR. ALLENBY

Harrumph. Mrs. Rand, please allow me to examine my patient.

(he probes Chance's chest then up and down
both arms)

Does it hurt anywhere? Here... or here?

(as the doctor pokes Chance's lower chest,
Chance squirms and giggles)

CHANCE

Tickles.

(Chance smiles as he keeps looking at Eve
Rand)

DR. ALLENBY

Tickles is good. (nodding) I feel no indications of overt trauma. And you were able to walk well enough?

EVE RAND

I found him in a heap after he was hit. He didn't roll far...

(she thinks)

Morley, did you find his phone?

(Chance sits up)

CHANCE

Phone.

(he reaches for his jacket to search for his phone)

Need my phone.

MORLEY

No ma'am. It was nowhere to be seen.

(Chance slumps back into the couch, closing his eyes tightly)

DR. ALLENBY

Well, perhaps a slight concussion.

(turns to Eve Rand)

It would be wise, Mrs. Rand, if, ah, Chauncey were to stay here overnight. I can examine him again in the morning.

(Dr. Allenby stands up. Eve Rand nods)

EVE RAND

Yes. You are right, doctor. He can stay in the room next to yours.

(she turns to Morley)

Morley, have the room prepared. Meanwhile,

(turning to Chance)

...if you feel up to it, we can adjourn to the library.

(Chance is noncommittal. before Morley can leave, she calls to him)

Morley, have tea and cookies brought to the library, please. Doctor, will you join us? Oh! How was Mr. Rand this morning?

DR. ALLENBY

Very little change, I'm afraid. The blood cancer...
(they exit)

(fade to black)

ACT [2]

SCENE [4]

(next morning. sunrise shows on the background screen)

(Chance comes to the top of the staircase, looking around tentatively)

CHANCE

Mr. Jenkins is gone. Louise is gone. Is she?

(mumbling as he scans the foyer below)

I should have breakfast. Break the fast. Le petit dejeuner. Chōshoku.

(stepping deliberately, he starts going down the staircase but stops, not knowing where to go)

CHANCE

(Looking around)

Where is breakfast?

(Eve Rand enters the foyer from a door stage right and sees Chance)

EVE RAND

There you are, Chauncey. Please come down. Breakfast will be served shortly.

(Chance nods and resumes going down the stairs. Eve watches his sedate pace, mumbling to herself and to the audience)

A dignified character. His expensive clothes need an update, though. Chauncey looks like he's used to living in a mansion. Might have been hit hard by the recent depression. As well as my limo.

(she grimaces. Chance joins Eve Rand near the door, stage right)

I hope you slept well, Chauncey? Are you feeling better this morning?

CHANCE

Yes, thank you very much, Mrs. Rand. You are very kind.

EVE RAND

Not at all, Chauncey.

(she smiles at him)

It is the least I could do after running into you.

CHANCE

(thinking hard)

It was my pleasure to be run into by your limousine.

EVE RAND

(laughing)

Ha ha ha! Well! I'm only glad you didn't damage my
limousine!

(she takes Chance by the arm to lead him
into the dining room, stage right)

(fade to black)

ACT [2]

SCENE [5]

(background screen shows an opulent dining room)

(seated at the dining room table, are Eve Rand, Chance, and Dr. Allenby, all eating politely. Chance rearranges his plate and cutlery to be centred)

DR. ALLENBY

(closely watching Chance) Are you certain you have no trouble raising your arm now, Chauncey?

(taking note of Chance's OCD actions)

CHANCE

(raising his arm)

This one?

DR. ALLENBY

Ha! It's the other arm that was developing a bruise last night. I will examine you right after breakfast.

CHANCE

(with a mouthful of food, Chance nods, then) Yes, thank you, doctor.

(Eve Rand smiles at Chance then she waves to the open door stage right)

EVE RAND

Top up our tea, please, Sunni. And...

(looking at the other two at the table) see if we need more eggs or toast here, thank you.

(Dr. Allenby looks up to say something but sees that Chance is preparing to speak)

CHANCE

That is very kind of you, Mrs. Rand.

(looking over to confirm who he is speaking to)

I feel that I should be out tending to the garden rather than being here inside this lovely mansion.

(both Eve Rand and Dr. Allenby look up in surprise, then Eve chuckles)

EVE RAND

Oh, you are being silly, aren't you, Chauncey?

(she considers)

Perhaps... perhaps you have become, well, familiar with garden tools since, since the latest troubles?...

Chauncey. After breakfast I shall introduce you to my husband. He, well, he is ill and confined to his bed. Dr. Allenby has been staying with us to tend to his needs.

(she looks at Chance who is absorbed in slowly munching through his food)

It is decided, then?

(they continue eating)

(fade to black)

ACT [2]

SCENE [6]

(the background screen shows dark clouds)

(in the bedroom of Ben Rand, Eve Rand is beside her husband holding his hand. Dr. Allenby is on the other side of the bed checking Ben Rand's pulse in his patient's other wrist. Dr. Allenby shakes his head. Chance is at the foot of the bed)

DR. ALLENBY

Mr. Rand, if you don't eat something you will float up and flutter away on us.

BEN RAND

(croaking)

Leave me alone, you quack.

EVE RAND

(patting his hand)

There, there, dear. You know he's only trying to help.

(they all stay quiet and sad beside Ben Rand for a minute)

Oh! Ben, dear. I'd like you to meet a guest. I, ah, ran into him yesterday and asked him to recover in one of the guest bedrooms.

BEN RAND

Ran into him?

(rises off his pillow a bit to look at Chance)

Bring him closer, Eve. Did you damage him? (cough)

(she nods to Chance, who doesn't move. she lays Ben Rand's hand down to step over to grab Chance's arm)

EVE RAND

Come here, Chauncey. He won't bite. Or maybe he should. Be the first meal he'd have had this week.

(Dr. Allenby looks over to Eve Rand disapprovingly)

What?

(grinning at the doctor, she pulls Chance closer to herself)

CHANCE

Ah, perhaps, Mr. Rand would prefer not to eat at this time?
(all laugh at Chance's comment)

BEN RAND

I promise (cough) I promise not to bite.
Chauncey, you said?

(Chance smiles. Eve Rand adds...)

EVE RAND

Yes, dear. Chauncey Gardiner. Oh! Gardiner. That was your little pun, earlier, about working in the garden, wasn't it. You're a sly one, aren't you?

(she draws him in tighter, which embarrasses Chance)

BEN RAND

Ha! I like you, Chauncey. Eve, pull over that chair so Chauncey and I can have a chin-wag. Doc, if you are done searching for my pulse, you and Eve can leave the two of us here... Go on.

(sitting up, he shoos them out, much to their surprise)

(after the two leave, Ben Rand sizes up Chauncey)

BEN RAND

So. Expensive vest and pants. I'd wager that shirt is silk. But your hands. Give me a hand, Chauncey.

(Chance complies and Ben Rand inspects it)
You *do* work in the garden. Good. I don't trust a man with soft, pretty-clean hands.

(he pierces Chance with a stare)
Fallen on hard times?

(Chance nods but is cut off from replying)
Never mind explaining. We've all lost a bundle with this recession. Ok. I like you so far. Now for the really hard questions. Tell me what you think of our esteemed President of the republic. No diplomatic mumbo-jumbo. I don't have time for that nonsense.

(he leans across the bed to whisper to
Chance)

That quack of mine probably told you I'm going to kick off
this mortal soil soon.

(he stares at Chance for a minute, with no
reaction from Chance)

Yes, but maybe you can help me extend that to a more
distant time. Chauncey, what do you think of the President?

(he leans back into the pillows, waiting)

CHANCE

(starting cautiously)

Thank you for being so honest, Mr. Rand.

BEN RAND

Oh hell, call me Ben. Please.

CHANCE

(nodding) Ben, my life has been simple. I garden and I eat.
Then I sleep. What can the President do to improve that?

(struck silent by Chance's simple wisdom,
Ben Rand's mouth slowly drops)

BEN RAND

Chauncey, you... you stagger me... I never could've thought
of that simple truth. Of course! The President cannot touch
the soul of a simple, honest man unless he understands the
simple honest truth of his life.

(he voices a thought)

A President's important task, we say, is to consider the
big picture. The grand design that resides in the clouds.
But what of us peasants down on earth? In the garden?

(he reaches to shake Chance's hand)

And the task of the President's adviser is to bring *him*
back down to earth on occasion... You must meet him!

(fade to black)

ACT [3]

SCENE [1]

(background screen shows the White House then a montage of paintings of dignified, older US Presidents)

(in a large room of the White House. leaning heavily on Chance, Ben Rand moves forward to fall into a chair. others mill about then part and bend their heads for the President who heads directly for Ben Rand)

PRESIDENT

Ben! I must say you are looking better than when I saw you last. Has that quack of yours found a cure?

(Ben Rand is about to rise to shake hands but the President waves him down)

PRESIDENT

No no. Stay seated, my friend. How did you escape from home? Where's the lovely Eve? Is this your accomplice in crime?

(the President smiles at Chance. Ben Rand grins)

BEN RAND

Eve is at a ladies' get-together. I believe they are discussing world affairs, or, more likely husband's affairs.

(they both grin)

Mr. President, may I introduce you to a delightful fellow who was run over by Eve's driver. Chauncey Gardiner.

(the President's loud guffaw surprises Chance and he is slow to extend his hand to the President)

PRESIDENT

Ha! My pleasure, Mr. Gardiner. And thank you very much for accompanying my friend and adviser. Run over, he said? You do not look too badly off for that, by god!

CHANCE

(finally extends his hand)

Mr. President, I fear the dent in Mr. Rand's vehicle is more pronounced than the dent in my side.

(Chance is about to turn sideways to show his bruise but the President laughs loudly again)

PRESIDENT

Ha ha! By god, Ben! You have a live one, here!

(waves at an Aide)

Ben, let my man help you to that table and we can all sit down for a few minutes. I need to ask your advice about...

(he leans over to whisper)

...that idiot in New York. (winking)

(Ben Rand is assisted to a table where the three sit down side-by-side)

Now, the village idiot who shall remain nameless has been spouting off about his *great* vision of the *world's worst* economy. This, from a person who's been bankrupt six times. His oh-so-simplistic pontifications have attracted an audience of equally gullible fools.

(he looks around)

Some of whom are here.

(putting a finger to his lips)

I really have no idea what they use for brains. Sitting on their brains for too long dulls their senses and... Well. You two know exactly what I mean.

(looks at Ben Rand who nods sadly)

My friend, do you have any thoughts on what I should do about Donald?

BEN RAND

(Ben smiles)

Other than having him dispatched?

(at the President's swift head shake and look around)

Just kidding, just wishfully kidding... He has, I'm told, gathered around himself an army of flunkies and sycophants who are...

(he turns to Chance with an idea)

...like weeds in a garden. Chauncey, how would you handle such persistent and objectionable weeds?

CHANCE

(happy to speak about his favourite subject)
Well, Ben, Mr. President, weeds are a name that is given to some plants because you do not like them. A rose bush growing by itself in the middle of a large lawn could be called a weed. Instead of cutting it out, I might dig it out carefully with its roots, then plant it in a better location.

(Ben Rand stares at Chance, as does the President)

BEN RAND

(nodding slowly)
Out of the mouths of babes! He is absolutely right. Where we think only of the negative, Chauncey shows us how to make it into a positive! Mr. President, we must have someone that Donald knows and trusts - who, of course, is working for us - to speak with Donald. Lather on the butter. Tell the idiot that you, Mr. President, could be convinced to offer him a prestigious position in gratitude for his brilliant suggestions about our economy. Say, as diplomat to, to Canada! No. He's burned that bridge... To Russia! He would love it! That would remove him from his fawning horde and, we could only hope, into the clutches of Vladimir. What do you think?

(nodding and smiling, the President rises to shake Ben Rand's hand, then Chance's)

PRESIDENT

Brilliant, gentlemen! It shall be done.

(fade to black)

ACT [3]

SCENE [2]

(background pictures of time passing,
then the exterior of the Russian
embassy, followed by an opulent meeting
room)

(Ben Rand is being helped by Chance into the
meeting room. even while leaning on Chance,
Ben Rand looks reinvigorated)

BEN RAND

Thank you, Chauncey. You have no idea how much you've
helped me. Dr. Allenby has had to keep extending his
estimate of my, my...

CHANCE

Please, Ben. You will need your strength. Why are we here?
(they make it to a table where Ben Rand
takes the first chair he comes to. Chance
sits beside him)

BEN RAND

We are here, my good friend...

(he pats Chance's hand on the table)
...to meet the Russian ambassador, Mr. Dmitri Kush. He is
firmly in Vladimir's pocket but we usually manage to see
eye-to-eye in most matters. The issue before us at this
time - and a critical issue it is - is that the President
has received information that the Russians may have been
working on a version of the neutron bomb. (cough) A
dramatically new version. If so, it would upset our peace
treaty regarding disarmament.

CHANCE

(puzzled) What is a neutron bomb?

BEN RAND

The science is beyond me, of course, Chauncey, but
basically, it would kill all the people in a city while
leaving the buildings intact.

CHANCE

So, like a pesticide that kills the bugs and leaves the
flowers alone?

BEN RAND

Exactly. A pesticide for people. I never thought of it that way...

(through a larger door, the ambassador walks in whispering to an Aide)

DMITRI KUSH

You just heard what he said. This Chauncey is a smart one. I want everything you can find out about him. Go.

(Dmitri Kush comes to the table as his Aide rushes off)

DMITRI KUSH

Ben! My dear friend how are you? Is the...

BEN RAND

(staying seated)

Still hanging on, Dmitri, thank you.

(he turns to Chance)

Dmitri, I am pleased to introduce you to my good friend, Chauncey Gardiner. Ambassador Dmitri Kush.

(Chance looks up at Dmitri Kush then remembers to stand up to shake hands)

DMITRI KUSH

Very good to meet you, ah, Chauncey?

(as they shake hands, Dmitri Kush sizes up Chance. Chance nods and stares at the plump man, holding onto the shake longer than expected)

Yes, well. Shall we sit down for a brief talk?

(he disengages from the handshake)

(Chance resumes his seat while the ambassador walks to the other side of the table to sit)

So, Ben. What brings you to my humble dwelling today. It must be important to get you out of bed.

(he gives a sly smile)

BEN RAND

I've been sleeping quite well, of late, Dmitri. Quite well, thank you.

(he smiles at Chance then puts on a stern face)

With my, ah, illness, Dmitri, I have found that getting to the point is the best course of action. So, I will say this in the plainest way I can, if you don't mind. We are given to understand that your scientists are experimenting with...

(he turns to Chance then resumes his stern face)

...a pesticide for people.

(Dmitri Kush feigns surprise)

DMITRI KUSH

What? Ben, my friend, I have no idea...

BEN RAND

(holding up a hand)

Please, Dmitri. Your lab in Igarka has been working on a new neutron bomb. The explosion a month ago that was attributed to a high altitude meteorite explosion in northeastern Siberia was a test of that bomb. The pictures showed no damage to the structures that were put there earlier this year...

DMITRI KUSH

Oh please, Ben. Such a falsification...

BEN RAND

(holding up his hand again)

Listen Dmitri. Listen to me. We have incontrovertible proof and we are prepared to place it on the table at the UN. And we have the names of the dozen prisoners, those *late* prisoners, who were shackled in the different buildings in the compound that was built well outside of Igarka.

(he pauses to let that sink in. Dmitri Kush sits back with arms folded)

CHANCE

(unable to contain himself any longer)

You used a pesticide on people? Actual people?

DMITRI KUSH

(waves a hand)

All fabrication! Your people used artificial intelligence to make those pictures. Nobody will believe...

BEN RAND

Dmitri. Dmitri, listen. You and I both know what was done. I am here to give you this message... Stop.

(he leans forward with some pain)

Stop. Your GRU has taken this way too far. If the GRU is still under your government's control... (pausing, staring at Dmitri Kush) ... you absolutely must tell them to *stop* (cough).

CHANCE

(itching to speak) You should know that when using a pesticide it can drift where the wind takes it. Even back into your own face. Into your own face.

BEN RAND

(looking at Chance)

Exactly. I would have put it another way, Dmitri, but... exactly that.

(Dmitri Kush shifts uncomfortably. he mumbles)

DMITRI KUSH

Is that why you foisted that dribbling idiot on us? Please, please send us someone with less pomp and more circumstance.

(he shakes his head)

... I will speak with my people.

(fade to black)

ACT [3]

SCENE [3]

(in Ben Rand's bedroom)

(with Ben Rand are Dr. Allenby and a private detective, Roy Chenier. Ben Rand is exhausted, lying in his bed and unable to fully understand what is being said to him)

BEN RAND

What? I, ah, don't...

DR. ALLENBY

Ben, I know you are overly exhausted from the work that the President asked you to do, of late.

(he turns to Roy Chenier)

I don't want you to carry on with this, Mr. Chenier. This is too much for Mr. Rand just now. Please call tomorrow about a time to see him.

(Roy Chenier is about to respond but looks over at Ben Rand and nods to Dr. Allenby, then leaves the room)

BEN RAND

(ineffectually trying to rise in the bed)
What was he talking about? (cough)

(Ben Rand falls back into the pillow)

DR. ALLENBY

(shaking his head, speaking softly with concern)

Ben, please. You need to have your rest.

BEN RAND

But...

DR. ALLENBY

That fellow was only asking about Chauncey. Nobody seems to know where he came from and...

BEN RAND

(rising with anger)
I will not have him disparaged. You have no idea...

(he falls back onto the pillow, continuing with less force)

...no idea what a friend he's been to me in this, this short time. This short time that I have left. (groan)

(Dr. Allenby takes his hand as if to take his pulse but just holds it gently)

(after some heavy breathing, Ben Rand looks up at Dr. Allenby)

BEN RAND

Thank you, doctor... Please send Eve in to me.

(Dr. Allenby nods and leaves)

(shortly, Eve Rand enters, quietly crying, and goes to kiss Ben Rand)

BEN RAND

There, there, dear. I, I'd rather not see you crying (cough). Not on my last breath yet.

(Eve Rand tries unsuccessfully to suppress a sob)

Eve, dear, I want to ask of you a favour. Eve?

(she calms down)

Eve, dear. I do love you, you know that.

(she embraces him)

There, there... And I have to say that I've grown immensely fond of Chauncey.

(she takes a seat in the chair next to Ben Rand, listening)

He is so down-to-earth. He comes up with the most amazing things. Eve, please promise that you will take care of him. After I'm gone. Can you do that for me?

EVE RAND

(sniffs) Of course I will, dear. Of course, I promise.

(lights dim over Ben Rand's bed and brighten on the doorway)

(Dr. Allenby can be seen in the doorway, listening. he nods slowly. next to him, Roy Chenier also looks into the room and starts to whisper)

ROY CHENIER

I'm very sorry, doctor, but I must insist on clearing up the security issue about...

DR. ALLENBY

Please stop. Mr. Gardiner, no matter where he came from, has had a wonderful effect on Ben. There is absolutely no issue here.

ROY CHENIER

But...

DR. ALLENBY

Please just leave. I will hear no more about Mr. Gardiner.
(Roy Chenier drops his head)

(fade to black)

ACT [3]

SCENE [4]

(background pictures of a Washington park)

(Chance is sitting on a bench in the park. at a distance behind him, an Aide to Dmitri Kush points to Chance. nodding, Dmitri Kush walks toward Chance. the several Aides and guards follow him at a distance)

DMITRI KUSH

(whispers to the senior Aide)

I think we can turn him to our side. Watch me from back here.

(he waves the group away then continues toward Chance)

Mr. Gardiner, is that you? Such a surprise to find you here in this lovely park.

(he trips on a clump of grass)

And it's such a lovely day, is it not? Mr. Gardiner, would you mind ever so very much if I sat beside you on this bench.

(without waiting for a reply he brushes off the bench with a hankie from his breast pocket, turns it over, then wipes his forehead)

CHANCE

(surprised, Chance looks over at Dmitri Kush)

Oh! Hello, Mr. Ambassador. Yes, it is a lovely day. I would not say anything against your sitting down. You look very tired.

DMITRI KUSH

Ah-hm. Thank you so much, Mr. Gardiner. And would you mind if we speak here, without an audience, on more friendly terms than we might in a formal meeting room? May I call you Chauncey?

CHANCE

I always speak in friendly terms. If you want to call me Chauncey, you may. Many others do, ah, Dmitri.

DMITRI KUSH

(looking briefly with suspicion at Chance)
Good. We are friends. (nods) So. Can you tell me...

CHANCE

(interrupting with a joyful look)
Oh! There. Do you see that?

DMITRI KUSH

(alarmed)
What?

(he searches around for his entourage)

CHANCE

(pointing) A rhododendron with two colours of flowers. Two colours means someone grafted a branch onto it. The white branch is grafted onto the red shrub. I would not have done that. I would have let the white rhododendron grow out fully on its own.

(Dmitri Kush stares at Chance. he drops his head. they both sit quietly. Dmitri Kush finally sits back with a sigh)

DMITRI KUSH

Yes. Well. I've had enough of this fresh air, Chauncey. I see my Aide waving to me.
(he rises, offering his hand to Chance, who takes a second to get up)

CHANCE

Oh. Yes, thank you for your company, Dmitri. I think I'll go over to that bush and you can go to your Aide.

(Chance shakes Dmitri Kush's hand then looks around for the Aide, not seeing him)

(Dmitri Kush walks away shaking his head. the Aide waves at him from behind a tree.)

Dmitri Kush is muttering as he reaches the Aide)

DMITRI KUSH

The son-of-a-bitch already knew what I was doing before I opened my mouth. Two colours of flowers! He is not to be trifled with. I need a drink. Have a large vodka waiting for me at the embassy.

(lights dim except, first on Chance, then on Roy Chenier)

(background screen shows, first a closeup of Chance, then of Roy Chenier)

(Chance walks over to a bush that has a branch of white flowers in the middle of red rhododendrons, and whispers to them)

(from a distance, Roy Chenier has a puzzled look. he shrugs and walks away)

(fade to black)

ACT [3]

SCENE [5]

(background screen shows pictures of an impressive church with a coffin being carried out to a hearse, then a picture of the car procession approaching a cemetery)

(Eve Rand is midstage, among a crowd that merges with the background screen picture. she is sobbing on the shoulder of Dr. Allenby)

DR. ALLENBY

Eve, I am so sorry. We knew this was coming, of course, but this is so very hard for you.

EVE RAND

(she begins to control herself. nods. wipes her cheeks with a hankie. looks up at Dr. Allenby)

So very hard. Ben was my strength. He was always kind to me and to his friends. He was brilliant. Everyone admired him.

(she looks around at the crowd and up at the background screen showing the large crowd. she notices Chance nearby, who is mostly looking at his phone)

And poor Chauncey. He adored Ben.

(she waves to Chance, beckoning him)

Poor dear. I don't know what he's going to do now. They were so attached. Like father and son.

DR. ALLENBY

Ah, Eve. I'm not sure if...

(he stops as Chance shuffles to them)

EVE RAND

Chauncey, dear. Come. I need a hug (sniff).

(Eve Rand steps to Chance and gives him a long hug. at first, Chance stands with his arms down, then holds her loosely. then seeing hugs on his phone which now shows a scene from a black-and-white romance movie, also now synced on the background screen, he holds Eve Rand tightly as does the actor)

(Dr. Allenby watches Chance, puzzled)

DR. ALLENBY

Come, Eve. Come with us, Chauncey. They should have the
wake prepared.

(the background screen shows the hearse
procession)

(fade to black)

ACT [3]

SCENE [6]

(Chance is midstage staring at pictures on the background screen which show powerful politicians speaking to large audiences and other pictures of groups shaking hands)

(Chance is looking alternately at his cellphone and up at the background screen, enthralled. he touches the phone and the background screen changes to a black-and-white romance movie)

(the light which starts on Eve Rand, fades. she is seated away from Chance. she is staring at Chance. Eve Rand rises slowly, sensually, stepping toward Chance)

EVE RAND

Chauncey, dear.

(in sync with the background movie, she and the movie actor approach their partner)

Hold me.

(in sync, they throw their arms around their partner)

(Chance is still looking up at the background screen. he sees the actors embrace and kiss. he mimics the same actions, kissing Eve Rand while looking at the screen and his phone)

(Eve Rand finally releases him and is about to pull down her blouse but is confused at Chance's staring at his phone)

EVE RAND

Chauncey? Are you not looking at me?

(Chance continues to stare at the phone)

Are you not...interested in me?

(Chance turns silently and walks to a chair to sit down, still staring at his phone)

(confused, Eve Rand straightens her blouse, muttering)

Maybe you're gay... Must be.

(she combs back her hair with a hand)
Anyway, you can still be my big teddy bear. Can't you?

(she walks to him, sits in his lap and puts her arms around him. he pulls a hand out with his phone to stare at it. she smiles)
My big teddy bear who has his phone always in his face.

(lights dim except for at the window.
the background screen shows the window)

(at the window, Roy Chenier is on the outside looking in)

ROY CHENIER

(whispering to himself)
So that's it. He's just gay. Maybe I can wrap this up, now.

(smiling and ogling Eve Rand)
I'll just watch for a while longer. *OH*!
(Ring!)

(his phone starts to ring. he quickly touches it off then moves away from the window)

(lights dim at the window and are back on for the stage)

EVE RAND

(Eve Rand kisses Chance's cheek)
Chauncey. Is that really your name? What your mother called you?

(Chance looks into her eyes)

CHANCE

You have lovely eyes, Eve. My mother told me that she called me Chance. That is what I grew up with. Mother told me that it is a simple name but full of hope. She said that was just like me. Simple and full of hope. My name holds the possibility of good or ill, she said. I have had much good and I have had some bad. Mr. Jenkins and Louise, and Mr. Rand were good. Now they are gone. I am in a new chapter. You are good. Thank you for being so lovely and friendly. Chance I was. Now I am Chauncey.

(pause)

Is that alright for you, Eve?

(Eve Rand's eyes fill. she hugs Chance
tightly and gives him a long kiss)

(fade to black)

ACT [4]

SCENE [1]

(a park is shown on the background screen)

(Roy Chenier is walking up to an aged Louise who is seated on a bench. he tips his hat to her)

ROY CHENIER

May I join you on the bench?

(Louise looks up in surprise)

You don't know me, Louise. I'm a private detective. My name is Roy Chenier.

(he shows her his identification. she glances at it but shuffles sideways)

I've been looking into the, ah, mystery of just who is Chauncey Gardiner.

LOUISE

I have no idea who you're talking about and I most certainly am uncomfortable speaking with you.

(she rises from the bench but turns back at the sound of dollar bills being shuffled)

(Roy Chenier has a handful of dollar bills and is shuffling them loudly)

ROY CHENIER

I am prepared to pay well for your information, Louise. Please sit down.

(Louise stands briefly, thinking, then settles carefully back onto the bench)

(nodding) Thank you. Now, my client...

LOUISE

Who is that?

ROY CHENIER

Oh, I'm afraid I cannot reveal that. It is private and confidential.

(Louise starts to get up again but stops as Roy Chenier ruffles the bills)

Please, Louise. Just hear me out... Will you?

(Louise hesitates then sits back down)

Good. Now, hear me out before making any rash decisions.

(he waits for her curt nod)

Right, then. My client, whom I cannot name, has been concerned over the past few months about the true identity of one Chauncey Gardiner. I am given to understand - after exhaustive sleuthing - that you once knew this person.

(Louise stiffens)

For even the slightest bit of information I am prepared to place in your hand, right now, all of these bills. And if you are willing to offer further information, I am authorized to pay you up to one thousand dollars.

(Louise is surprised and sits up straight)

LOUISE

Chance.

(Roy Chenier is confused)

ROY CHENIER

Chance? What chance? What do you...

LOUISE

That's his name. Chance. I took care of him for twenty-five years.

(she holds out her hand for the bills)

(Roy Chenier sits, thinking, then absently offers her the bills. she quickly folds them up and stuffs them into her purse)

ROY CHENIER

When you say, took care of him, what do you mean?

(Louise holds out her hand. Roy Chenier looks down at her hand then realizes what she wants. he pulls out a wad of bills that are newly wrapped)

Five hundred dollars, Louise.

(holding the wad and looking at her closely)

Tell me no lies, mind. I know where you live.

(Louise maintains her resolve, keeping her hand out)

This better be good.

(he places the wad in her hand. she shuffles through the wad. satisfied, she places the wad in her purse)

LOUISE

Chance was slow. Is slow. He was a beautiful little boy. Still is. A boy. I loved him like my favourite dog...

(Louise becomes alarmed)

Ohhh! I shouldn't be saying such things about the poor boy!

(she jumps up and runs away)

(Roy Chenier is about to follow her but sits
back down)

ROY CHENIER

Slow. And they all think he's a brilliant political
strategist. Something is decidedly fishy here. HEY! CHANCE
WHO?

(he yells at the fleeing Louise)

Shit... Ok. Fine. Report to Dr. Allenby.

(fade to black)

ACT [4]

SCENE [2]

(background screen shows the Rand mansion)

(in the foyer of her mansion, Eve Rand is standing stiffly in front of Roy Chenier who is holding an envelope)

ROY CHENIER

Madam, please. I have done as Dr. Allenby requested. This is my report. The fact that he no longer wishes to pursue this line of inquiry is not... well, it's just not proper business. We had agreed on a price, I did my job, and now I expect to be paid.

(Eve Rand is growing angry)

EVE RAND

Sir, I consider you no better than a peeping tom! Your agreement was not with me and even if it had been, I have a mind to bring charges against you! Peeping tom-ary!

(she turns to yell)

Morley! Come here and throw this person out!

(that makes Roy Chenier angry)

ROY CHENIER

Madam, you are a most undesirable... *witch*!

(she steps back as if slapped, then growls)

EVE RAND

Sir, I cordially invite you to *go forth to auto-proliferate*! *PROFUSELY*!

(as Morley rushes in, Roy Chenier rushes out yelling)

ROY CHENIER

I will be paid for this! If not by you then by a newspaper!

(fade to black)

ACT [4]

SCENE [3]

(pictures on the background show reporters milling about)

(Chance is in the middle of a group who are excitedly speaking at him. he nods and smiles at each question, which gets answered by another person)

PERSON 1

Was it your recommendation to the President to send Donald to Moscow as our ambassador and why is he now being recalled?

PERSON 2

Of course it was. I heard the President's Deputy Assistant of Protocol say that!

(many nods and excited murmurs)

PERSON 3

Mr. Gardiner, what do you think of the situation that is brewing in central Africa?

PERSON 2

Oh, he's already said he was going to advise the UN to send another peacekeeping force, didn't you?

(Person 2 nods at Chance, then Chance nods)

(Dr. Allenby walks up, takes Chance by the arm to pull him away from the crowd)

DR. ALLENBY

Excuse us please. Excuse us, I have an urgent matter to discuss with Mr. Gardiner... Excuse us...

(they move quickly to the side)

DR. ALLENBY

We can speak quietly, here, Chauncey. Or is it Chance?

(Chance is pleased to hear that)

CHANCE

Hello Dr. Allenby. Thank you for using my real name. It's been difficult to remember that other one.

(Dr. Allenby pauses to look at Chance)

DR. ALLENBY

...Yes. Well. I was going to ask you about Louise...

CHANCE

Oh! Is Louise here?

(he looks around with excitement)

I do miss Louise so much. Where is she?

DR. ALLENBY

No, no.

(speaking more slowly)

She, ah... No, Chauncey. I was speaking with someone who met her a few days ago. She, ah, sends her love... And she wishes you all the best... All the best.

CHANCE

Oh, thank you. Louise always made me the nicest sandwiches and she reminded me to wash my hands before eating and she tucked me into bed every night.

(Dr. Allenby shakes his head then mumbles to himself)

DR. ALLENBY

And that's all there is to it.

(he takes Chance's hand)

Come. Come, Chauncey. Let's find you a nice sandwich for lunch.

(before they can get far, the crowd of Persons surrounds Chance again)

(Person 4 harrumphs loudly for attention and waves a piece of paper)

PERSON 4

Mr. Gardiner! I have here a report by a private investigator...

(the crowd becomes silent)

Private investigator! Yes! It suggests that your real name is not Chauncey. It is Chance.

(Chance nods)

CHANCE

Sir, may I have your name, please?

PERSON 4

James Swinden. I write for the Spectator. And I ask again...

PERSON 2

Oh. The Speculator!

PERSON 4

I must say that is an old...

PERSON 2

So, you write speculation?

(chuckles from the crowd)

PERSON 4

Sir, as you well know, I have been a respected reporter for the paper for over ten years!

CHANCE

And your name is...

(answering stiffly)

PERSON 4

As I said, my byline is James Swinden.

CHANCE

James, is that what your mother called you?

PERSON 4

What do you mean to bring my mother into this?

CHANCE

I only ask what your mother called you.

PERSON 2

Oh Jimmy-boy! You'll be late for supper! Ha ha!

(the crowd laughs. Person 4 shifts uncomfortably then responds quietly to Chance)

PERSON 4

Well, she did call me Jimmy. So what? What's that to do with...

PERSON 2

Jimmy, me boy! So it's not James! That is a huge difference! Almost as much as Chauncey to Chance! Ha ha ha! Such an important piece of *speculation*!

(the crowd laughs)

(Dr. Allenby takes the opportunity to pull Chance away and they walk quickly to the door)

(fade to black)

ACT [4]

SCENE [4]

(background picture shows the White House)

(a group of politicians are seated around a table. they are about to conclude a meeting)

PRESIDENT

It is agreed, then, that my new Vice President must be a gentleman outside the swirl of scandal that has so absorbed the press of late. Our disgraced Vice President has resigned.

(he mutters)

And good riddance to him.

(resumes his speech)

Therefore I propose to put forth a name to replace him from this short list.

(he holds up a sheet)

Gentlemen, at the top of that list is the one adviser, brought to us by our most trusted colleague, the late Ben Rand, may his soul rest in piece, and I speak of none other than Chauncey Gardiner!

(murmurs of agreement)

Gentlemen, and ladies...

(he nods to the ladies)

A few of you are on this list but may I presume to say that this Cabinet is united...

(he scans them aggressively)

United in my proposal that we ask Chauncey Gardiner to accept the appointment of Vice President!

(enthusiastic agreement all around)

We need a formal vote. Are there ayes?...

(all but one raise their hands and thump the desk. Under the withering stare of the President, the Holdout eventually raises his hand)

It is unanimous, then!

(the President turns to an Aide)

Bring Mr. Gardiner in, please.

(the Aide walks to the door then comes back, leading a confused Chance)

(the President rises to greet Chance and directs him to the open seat to the President's right)

Welcome, Chauncey. Welcome Mr. Vice President!

(applause and cheers)

(Chance looks around for the Vice President)

CHANCE

Vice President?

HOLDOUT

Mr. President. (then louder) Mr. President! May I ask...

(grumbles from many)

HOLDOUT

I must be allowed to ask one question!

PRESIDENT

(holding up a hand) Gentlemen, please! We have a question on the table.

HOLDOUT

Thank you, Mr. President. I only wish to ask... *I wish to ask*, by which rule do we make such a hasty appointment to the position of Vice President?

PRESIDENT

A worthwhile question. Perhaps...

(verbal disruptions)

I say, this is a question which should be answered... Should be answered... by our Cabinet's newest member.

(he turns to Chance)

Chauncey, how would you respond to the gentleman's query?

(Chance was about to sit down and now rises)

CHANCE

That is a simple question, Mr. President, so, if I may, I will give my simple answer. I do not know the rules of the Cabinet. I am certain you have them. Every group has someone for whom rules are made. Rules need to be made for those do not wish to follow conventions. The gentleman asks which rule applies? I ask the gentleman, which convention does he wish to part with? Is it the simple will of the majority?

(the Cabinet erupts with laughter and table thumping)

(the Holdout rises abruptly and stomps out)

PRESIDENT

(directed at the Holdout)
And good riddance to him, too.

(fade to black)

ACT [4]

SCENE [5]

(background screen shows an expansive garden and green space)

(Chance is puttering in the garden, snipping rhythmically at the air near some branches. Louise walks in)

LOUISE

There you are, Chance.

(smiling, she walks toward Chance, who raises his head quickly at the sound of her voice)

I see you are still a very good gardener.

(she grins while Chance struggles to get up, then embraces her)

CHANCE

Louise! Where have you been?

LOUISE

Oh, Chance! Where have I been. Where have *you* been? I was so worried for you, being cast out on your own. And here you are, Vice President of the republic!

(she holds his face then feels his sides)

Have they been feeding you? Did you get enough sleep?

(he shakes his head)

CHANCE

Louise, they do not know how to make a good, simple sandwich. All they feed me is this chateau burn-up things and razer-otti and and... I am so glad to see you here, Louise. Can you make me lunch? Please?

(arms around each other, they walk slowly through the garden, then come to a lonely rose bush in the middle of the grass. Louise stops)

(background picture shows them beside the rose bush)

LOUISE

Chance, that looks newly planted. But should it be there all on its own?

CHANCE

(nodding) Yes, Louise. That is my weed.

(fade to black as they walk away)