



Henry and the Gold Digger



By John V. Safran

Danny & Rose

Henry is sitting a tan leather easy chair. He is reading a book entitled Strategic Investing. His cell phone is on an end table along with a glass of Cabernet. Henry's cell phone rings and he glances at the screen. The caller is his son Danny. He smiles then answers the call. Henry is a trim seventy four year old man. His silver gray hair and a neatly trimmed mustache give him a distinguished look.

“Hello, Danny. It's been quite a while since you've called me. Is everything okay?” said Henry.

“I'm doing just fine, Dad. How about yourself? How are you doing?” said Danny.

“Well, pretty good for an old geezer. When are you and the kids coming down to Florida and visit me?” said Henry.

“That's what I want to talk to you about. Dad, I've found someone and we're planing on getting married” said Danny.

Henry frowns slightly. “Hope you didn't meet in a bar like you met Julie” said Henry.

“No, I didn't meet her in a bar. We met through a service for professionals” said Danny.

Henry shook his head and said “Jeez, Danny. I thought youh were smarter than that. Those dating services are just a bunch of crap. Hope you didn't....”.

Danny interrupts Henry. “Now hold on, dad. This is not what you think. I used a service specifically for professional people. You can’t believe the screening and background checks I had to go through to get approved.

“Son, I hope you’re not rushing into this” said Henry.

“Dad, it’s been almost five years since Julie and I got divorced. I wouldn’t call that rushing” said Danny.

“If you say so” said Henry.

“I’ve been seeing Rose for over a year now. Dad, I’d like to bring her down to meet you next month” said Danny.

Henry gets a big grin and says “That’d be nice. I haven’t seen the kids in a while”.

“It will be just Rose and me. The kids have too much going on in school” said Danny.

“Oh, well alright. Bring this Rose over. How old is she? How many times has she been married? You gotta watch out for Gold Diggers. How do the kids feel about this? I assume you told them of your plans” said Henry in a snotty tone.

Danny became agitated and said “Dad, she’s a year older than me and she’s only been married once. Actually, her situation was much like mine was with Julie. She had a cheating dirt bag of a husband. Oh, and by the way, the kids just love her”.

“Danny, I’m sorry if I sound cynical but I’m just looking out for your own good. Come on down. I’ll be nice” said Henry.

“Thanks, Dad. I’ll send you our flight dates. Love you” said Danny.

“Love you too. Have a safe trip, son” said Henry. Henry takes a big sip of wine, then sighs and shakes his head again.

Two weeks later, Henry is sitting in the tan leather easy chair, reading the Wall Street Journal. A glass of wine is on an end table. Henry puts the paper down and takes a small sip of wine. The doorbell rings and Henry takes another bigger sip. He opens the front door and is greeted by Danny and Rose. Henry and Danny hug.

Henry studies Rose, then smiles and shakes her hand. Rose is a tall and very attractive brunet who looks much younger than her forty six years. “You must be Rose. Nice to meet you” said Henry.

Rose tries to conceal her nervousness and replies “Nice to meet you sir”.

Henry motions to Danny and says “Danny, put your luggage in the guest bed room”. He notices Rose’s nervousness and says “Rose, please relax. I don’t bite. Please sit down. How was your flight?”

“Just fine, sir” said Rose.

“Rose, please call me Henry” said Henry with a smile.

“Thank you, Henry. Daniel has told me a lot about you, especially the story of how you started your plastics company” said Rose as she began to relax in Henry’s presence.

Henry laughed and said “Well now Rose. You don’t want to believe everything Danny tells you. Truth be told, I had to start that company because nobody would hire me”.

“I find that hard to believe, sir. Uh, Henry” said Rose with a smile.

Danny enters the room and sits down next to Rose.
“You’re looking pretty good, Dad. How’s your blood pressure been?” said Danny.

“Real good. My doctor said I don’t need to take blood pressure pills anymore” said Henry.

Are you kidding me? What’s changed? Said Danny.

Henry holds up the glass of wine. “I drink a bottle of this every day” said Henry.

“Dad” said Danny.

Henry laughed and said “Just kidding. I’ve been going to the gym every morning, faithfully, but I do have a couple of glasses of wine with my dinner every day”.

“Are you a wine connoisseur, Henry?” said Rose.

Henry laughs heartily and says “Rose, I’m hardly what you’d call a connoisseur. My favorite wine is a Cabernet called Winking Owl. I get it from Aldi and it’s \$3.95 a bottle. Seriously, all I know about wine is when you’re supposed to drink white wine”.

“And when is that?” said Rose.

“Here it comes” said Danny.

“You only drink white wine when you’re out of red” said Henry with a smile.

“That’s funny” said Rose.

Henry stands up. “Please excuse me. Nature is calling” said Henry as he leaves the room.

Danny looks at Rose and says “So what do you think of the old man?”.

“I like him. You shouldn’t think of him as an old man. He looks pretty chipper to me” said Rose.

“He likes you. I can tell” said Danny holding Rose’s hand.

“How?” said Rose.

“He only tells his wine stories to people he likes” said Danny.

Henry enters the room and remains standing. He looks at his watch. “I bet you kids are getting hungry. Why don’t

we go out and have some dinner? Rose, do you like German food?” said Henry.

“Yes, I do. My parent’s use to take me to some of the best German restaurants in Milwaukee” said Rose.

Henry smiled and said “Good. I’ve got the perfect place”.

Two days later

Danny is sitting on the sofa viewing emails on his cellphone. Henry, carrying a cup of coffee, enters the room and sits in the easy chair. “Help yourself to the coffee. Where’s Rose?” said Henry.

“She’s still sleeping. She really enjoyed the dinner last night” said Danny.

“I like Rose. She’s down to earth and not pretentious. You made a good choice, son” said Henry.

Danny smiled and said “Yeah, I think so too. The service I used to help find Rose worked out pretty good for me. Dad, I’m glad we have a few moments alone to talk. Have you ever thought about meeting someone? It’s been six years since mom died in that car accident. I know you still blame yourself but it wasn’t your fault that she went out in a snowstorm. It’s time for you to....”.

Henry abruptly interrupts Danny and says “Damn it, son. It was my fault. If I would have picked up the stuff she asked for, she wouldn’t have gone out that day”.

“Dad, stop it. Please. It’s not your fault. When I get back, I’m going to send you some information about the service I used. At least, take a look at it” said Danny.

Henry sighs and says “Yeah, okay”.

Rose enters the room. Henry stands up. Henry smiles and says “Good morning, dear”.

“Good morning, Henry. Thank you for the dinner last night. It was as good as some of Milwaukee’s finest” said Rose.

“Glad you enjoyed it. Let’s go get some breakfast. I know a cute little place right on the water” said Henry.

The next morning

Danny and Rose are sitting in the sofa. Henry is sitting in the easy chair. Danny and Rose’s luggage are next to the door.

“I could have driven you to the airport. It’s only a half hour away” said Henry.

“UBER is so convenient. We use it all the time. Saves a lot of hassle” said Danny.

Henry grinned and said “I guess I’m still in the dark ages. Truth be told, I’ve never used it. In fact, I’ll be driving up to Milwaukee for the wedding”.

Danny frowns and says “Dad, you really ought to fly up. It’s over a fourteen hundred mile drive”.

“I love to drive. I hate going through airports. Remember, I drove my Harley back from Sturgis in one day. That was over 900 miles, sonny boy” said Henry.

“Yeah, and how old were you back then?” said Danny.

“Did you have a motorcycle, Henry? Said Rose.

Henry gets a big grin and says “Yup, I used to have three Harley’s in my garage at all times”.

Rose smiles and says “Oh my. I’ve always wanted a ride on a Harley”

Danny’s cellphone rings. He answers the call. “UBER is here. Time to go, Dad” said Danny.

They all get up and go to the door. Henry gives Rose a big hug then looks into her eyes. “It was so nice meeting you, Rose. Danny is a very lucky boy” said Henry.

“Thank you Henry” said Rose as gives Henry a hug and kiss on his cheek.

Henry and Danny hug. “See you next month, son” said Henry.

“I’ll send you the information on that website I told you about” said Danny.

Henry frowns and says “Don’t waste your time. I’m really not interested”.

“At least just take a look, okay?” said Danny.

“Alright, I’ll take a look but don’t hold your breath. Have a safe trip back and you take good care of Rose. She’s a keeper” said Henry.

“I will. Love you, Dad” said Danny.

“Love you too, son” said Henry.

Danny and Rose leave. As Henry sits down, the doorbell rings. He opens the door and Martha enters. She is carrying an attache case. Martha is a sixty year old woman with a mature but attractive look and always impeccably dressed. She serves as Henry’s attorney.

“Hello Martha. C’mon in” said Henry with a smile.

Martha shakes Henry’s hand and says “Henry. I bumped into Danny on the way in. He introduced me to his future bride. She looks like a very nice person”.

“Yes, she is. Very nice. Danny got lucky” said Henry.

“Where did he meet someone so nice?” said Martha.

With a slight frown, Henry says “Believe it or not, he met her through a dating service. He said it was for professional people”.

“Oh, I know all about that type of service. How do you think I met my Donald” said Martha.

“You’re kidding. Well actually, Don never did mention how you two met” said Henry.

“As you have probably noticed, Donald is a very private person on certain matters” said Martha.

“I’m a private person too. I wouldn’t want to advertise that I met my wife through a dating service” said Henry.

Martha smiles and says “Why not? That’s nothing to be ashamed of and it wasn’t a dating service. It was more of a meeting place for people with like backgrounds. It sure beats the bar scene. Henry, you really ought to give it a try. You ought to talk to Donald about it. He’ll give you the straight scoop”.

Henry ignores Martha’s comment and says “What brings you here today, Martha?”

Martha opens her attache case and says” Just a firm offer I received on your lake home in Wisconsin. Are you sure you really want to sell it?”. Martha hands Henry a document and He studies it.

“Yes, Danny never goes there and I’ve just lost interest in the place. You can accept this offer” said Henry with a sigh.

“Will do and I’ll have Donald give you a call about our experience with the professional service we used” said Martha.

The next day

Henry is sitting in the easy chair, drinking a Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. His cellphone rings and he looks at the screen then answers the call. “Hello Don” said Henry.

“Henry, how’s it going” said Don.

“Pretty good, Don. What can I do for you” said Henry.

“Not a thing, but I’ve got something for you to think about” said Don.

“Oh? I’m listening” said Henry.

“Martha told me about Danny and she mentioned how he met his future bride. I know I never mentioned it but that’s how I met Martha” said Don.

Henry laughs and says “I thought you met her at a Nudist Colony. You say you met her through a dating service? You’re putting me on”.

“A Nudist Colony? Now that’s a novel idea. Yes, we did meet through a service for professionals, very similar to what your Danny used’ said Don.

Henry laughs harder and says “I think I’d prefer a Nudist Colony”.

“Yeah, I’d like to see you at a Nudist Colony. Seriously, you ought to give this a try. It worked good for me and Martha. I’m going to email you some information. At

least, take a look at it. Say, there's a new seafood restaurant on Longboat Key. It's called Higgins on the Reef. They're supposed to be pretty good seafood and they have an excellent wine cellar. How about joining me and Martha on Saturday?" said Don.

"Do they have Winking Owl?" said Henry.

"You and your Winking Owl. What do say? We'll pick you up at 5:30" said Don.

"Sounds good. Oh, by the way, I've had a sip from a thousand dollar bottle of wine. I'd almost prefer Winking Owl" said Henry with a grin.

"Take care. See you Saturday" said Don.

Henry puts the cellphone on the table and takes a swig of beer. He gets pensive look on his face and looks upward towards the ceiling for a bit then takes a bigger sip of wine.

Thoughts run through Henry's mind "Maybe I ought to give that service a try. Danny found a real beauty and a decent person. Martha isn't anything to sneeze at either".

Henry gets up and walks over to a desk. He sits down and begins typing on a laptop computer. Henry types and stops to stare at the screen several times. After an hour of browsing has passed, he picks up his cellphone and dials a number. "Hello, is this Diana?" said Henry.

Henry and Diana

Diana is seated at a corner table at Higgin's on the Reef. She is a very attractive woman in her mid sixties. Her long silver gray hair tumbled on her shoulders and gave her an elegant and sexy look. Thoughts run through Diana's mind "I've never done this before. I've been warned about Gold Diggers. I'll be on my guard and check this Henry guy out carefully". She looks at her watch and frowns. A Waiter approaches the table.

The Waiter smiles and says "Welcome to Higgin's on the Reef, Ma'am. May I interest you in a beverage?"

"I suppose so. I'll have an Aubert Park Avenue Estate Chardonnay" said Diana curtly.

"I'm sorry Ma'am. We don't carry that one. May I suggest our...." said the Waiter

Diana interrupts the Waiter and says "I thought this place had a good wine cellar. Just bring me a glass of your best Chardonnay, okay?"

"Yes, Ma'am" said the Waiter as he rolled his eyes.

The Waiter leaves. Diana looks at her watch again. Henry approaches the table. He looks around then notices Diana. Thoughts run through Henry's mind "Wow, she looks better than her picture. This could be be very interesting".

Henry gives a big smile and says "You must be Diana. I'm Henry".

Thoughts run through Diana's mind. "He's not bad looking. He's probably a Gold Digger. I better show him whose the boss." Diana said with a frown "You're late"

Henry sat down and said "Sorry, I got caught in traffic. There was a bad accident on I-75 and things really slowed down".

Diana forced a small smile and said "Yes, that will slow things down, somewhat".

The Waiter approaches with Diana's drink. "Here's your Chardonnay, Ma'am. Sir, would you care to order a beverage?" said the Waiter.

"Yes, I'll have a glass of your house Cabernet" said Henry.

Diana winces slightly. Henry notices her wincing. "Excuse me. Is something wrong" said Henry.

"No, nothing's wrong" said Diana. They converse in generalities for a while then Diana says "So tell me Henry, I see you like to travel. What's your favorite country abroad? I just loved Paris".

"Well, truth be told, Diana, I've never been out of the country said Henry.

"You've never been out of the country. What could you possibly see in the states? How boring!" said Diana in a condescending tone.

Henry tried to uplift the conversation and said “In the summertime, I loved going out west on my motorcycle and visiting National Parks. In the winter, I did a lot of skiing out west. I wasn’t bored” said Henry with a grin.

“You had a motorcycle? Was it a BMW?” said Diana.

“No, it was a Harley-Davidson” said Henry.

“A Harley-Davidson? I suppose you also have some tattoos” said Diana.

Yup, I have a few tattoos. Does that bother you?” said Henry. Would you like to see them?”

“Ewww, no. It’s just that I never dated a man with tattoos” said Diana.

Henry laughs heartily and says “Well. neither have I”.

Diana is not amused by Henry’s comment. She tries to regain her composure and forces a slight smile. Henry studies her intently. Thoughts run through Henry’s mind “Shit, what an arrogant bitch”.

So Henry, I see you were in the plastics business. Tell me Henry, what exactly did you do in the plastics business? Said Diana in a snotty tone.

Henry leans towards Diana. “I swept the floors”.

Diana frowns and says “You swept the floors?”

Henry in a loud tone says “Yes, I swept the floors, unloaded the trucks and I answered the phones. Oh, and I also signed the checks”. Henry stands up and places his napkin gently on the table. Diana sits motionless, with surprised look on her face. “Diana, my wife passed away over six years ago, and you are the first woman I’ve ever dated since her passing. You are also one of the most attractive women I’ve ever met. That said, you are also just way too sophisticated for an old ham andegger like myself. I’m Sorry for wasting your time and I hope you meet someone who meets your standards.

The Waiter approaches the table with Henry’s drink.

“Your drink, sir” said the Waiter.

Henry reaches for his billfold and hands the Waiter two one hundred dollar bills and says “I won’t be having that drink. Here’s two hundred bucks for the drinks and whatever the lady orders. You Keep the rest”. Henry turns and starts to leave. Diana stands up. She has tear in her and says “Henry, please come back”. Henry ignores Diana’s plea and leaves. As Henry drove home in his Silver BMW, thoughts run through his mind. He say to himself. “I’m really proud of myself for being reasonably polite. I really wanted to tell her what an obnoxious and arrogant bitch she was. I’m glad I didn’t use the “F” word although I really wanted to. Well, that does it for dating services”.

The next day

Henry is sitting in an easy chair, reading a book entitled “The Battle of the Little Big Horn”. His cellphone rings

and he looks at the screen then answers the call. Henry smiles and says “Don, how are you”.

“Just fine. I’m curious, well maybe just plain nosy. How did your date go last night?” said Don.

“How in the hell did you know about it? That service told me that everything is confidential” said Henry in a loud voice.

“Relax, Henry. It just so happens that Martha and I were at Higgins last night and we saw you there. Martha works with Diana and we thought it best to leave you two alone. She’s a real looker, huh’ said Don.

“I’ll give you that. She is a looker but way too snooty for my tastes. I left after five minutes” said Henry.

“My goodness. What happened?” said Don.

“First of all, she was ticked off because I was a little late then I got the third degree. I don’t mind questions but it was the way she put them” said Henry.

“Hmm. That’s strange. I always found her to be a nice pleasant person. I hope you weren’t too hard on her” said Don.

“Naw. Maybe I over reacted a bit but I was reasonably polite. I’ll tell you what, Don. I’m through with that dating crap” said Henry.

“Sorry to hear it didn’t work out for you. Well, I’ll see you at the club tomorrow” said Don.

“Yup. See you tomorrow” said Henry.

Martha and Diana

Martha is selecting Pasta at Gino’s Italian Deli when Diana walks towards her. Martha turns and greets Diana. They hug. Diana points to the Pasta and says “This is the best Pasta in Florida.

Martha smiles and says “That’s for sure. Say, Donald told me about your date with our friend, Henry. What happened?”.

Diana sighs and says “I don’t know what got over me last night. This was the first date I’ve had since my divorce. I guess I was trying to appear sophisticated. I probably overdid grilling the poor guy. I was worried about someone after my money. You hear so much about that kind of thing going on today. There’s a lot of Gold Diggers around and they’re all not women”.

Martha smiles and says “Well you’d hardly call Henry a Gold Digger. He’s done very well for himself. He owned one of the biggest plastic companies in Wisconsin. I believe this was his first date since his wife died in a car accident six years ago. Why don’t I see if you and Henry can meet again?”.

Diana sighs again and says “I don’t know. You can try if you want but I don’t think he’d want to see me again. I’m really ashamed how I treated him but I wouldn’t mind seeing him again”.

“Let’s see what happens” said Martha.

Henry and Martha

Henry is sitting at a desk typing on his computer. The doorbell rings. He opens the door and Martha enters. She is carrying a small brief case.

“Well hello, Martha. What brings you over today? Did I forget to sign anything on the lake house deal? Please sit down. Would you like a drink?” said Henry.

Martha smiles and says “No drinks for me. I’m meeting a client shortly. And no, you’re all set with the lake house deal. I want to talk to you about Diana. We work together. She told me about the dinner date she had with you. She feels.....”.

Henry interrupts Martha and grins. “So she’s a lawyer. Well that explains things” said Henry.

Martha sighs and frowns.

“Ah, that was rude of me. I’m sorry. I wasn't referring to you” said Henry sheepishly.

“That’s okay. Diana really feels bad about the way she acted. That’s not her style. For your information, her situation is sort of similar to yours. She divorced a cheating husband three years ago. Your dinner date was the first date she’s had since the divorce. Diana want’s to meet with you again” said Martha.

“Well, I can understand why she had her guard up but she came on way too strong for me. You can tell her that I have no hard feelings but I’m really not interested in getting into a long term relationships with her or anyone else for that matter. No more dates for me” said Henry.

“Okay, Henry. I’ll respect your Wishes” said Martha with a sigh.

“Thank you. I appreciate your understanding” said Henry.

Eve and Dick

Eve is sitting in the corner of a Hotel lounge, smoking a cigarette. She is a sixty year old woman with short blond hair and a voluptuous figure. Eve always beams when people tell her she resembles Doris Day. Of course, looking like Doris Day does help her in her life’s work. An overweight man with a slovenly appearance walks in and sits at Eve’s table. “Sorry, I’m late. There was an accident again on I-75” said Dick.

“Don’t worry about it. What do you have for me?” said Eve impatiently.

Dick smiled and said “I’ve got a good one for you, my dear” said Dick as he wipes sweat from his face. He shows Eve a sweat stained paper. “This is a guy from Milwaukee who lives in the area. He just sold a lake property in Wisconsin for five hundred and forty thousand bucks. He lives in the nearby Royal Del Mar community. You have to have a few bucks to live there”.

Eve’s eyes light up.

Dick smiles and says “It gets better. This guy’s been a widower for six year. He’s in his seventies and I’m sure he’s ripe for the pick-in’s”.

“How will I can meet him? Any suggestions?” said Eve.

Dick wheezes and says “I’ve found out that he likes to go to a certain beach on the bay, several times a week. He seems to be a regular on Wednesdays”.

“How do you dig up all of that shit?” said Eve with a puzzled look.

Dick grins and says “That’s my little secret, dear”.

“Well, whatever. Just, give me his information, okay?” said Eve impatiently.

“First, I want my two thousand, in cash” said Dick.

Eve sighs. She reaches into her purse and says “Your prices have gone up”.

“Take it or leave it. You have no idea what I go through to get all this information. I’ve got overhead and I need to spread some money around to get restricted information” said Dick.

Eve hands Dick a stack of cash. Dick carefully counts the stack then says “Thank you, dear”. He gives the sweat stained paper to Eve. “Let me know how this one turns out. Maybe I’ll deserve a bonus” said Dick.

Eve gives Dick a frown.

Henry and Rosa

Henry is sitting on a park bench at St. Pete's Beach. He is smoking an Ashton cigar and watching the waves roll up on the beach. The temperature is in the nineties but a breeze makes for a pleasant day. As Henry sat, thoughts run through his mind. He thinks of his wife, Rosa and the forty four years they spent together. His thoughts always seemed to go back to the time when he saved a plastics manufacturing company from bankruptcy. After the Chairman refused Henry's recommendation to reward the executives and employee's who were instrumental in the turn-around, Henry became very unhappy with the Chairman's shortsightedness and broken promises. When he told Rosa "I can't work for that man anymore. I'm going to look for another position, even if it means a pay cut". Rosa smiled and said "you're not going to work for anyone again". It was shortly thereafter when Henry and Rosa started a plastics company named Dynaseal. Dynaseal grew to become the largest of it's kind in the state of Wisconsin. How many wives would give up absolute security to start a business? Rosa did. As a tear began to form in Henry's eye, he notices two women walking towards him.

Henry and Eve

One of the women was elderly with white hair and appeared to be in her late eighties or early nineties. She was using a cane and walking very slow. She was holding on to the other woman's arm and panting heavily. They stop by the park bench. Eve looks at Henry with sorrowful

and pleading eyes. “Excuse me sir, would you mind if my Mother sat down her for a minute or two” said Eve.

Henry studies the two women and is momentarily at a loss for words, then he says “Not at all. Please sit down”.

“Thank you, sir” said Eve. Eve helps the elderly woman sit down. She immediately dozes off.

Henry gets a concerned look and says “Is your Mother okay? Would she like something to drink? I have some spring water in my car”.

Eve looks into Henry’s eyes and touches his arm, then in a quiet and slightly sultry voice says “Oh, that’s so kind of you. She will be just fine. Thank you, sir”.

“My name’s Henry” said Henry.

“Thank you, Henry. My name is Eve” said Eve with a smile.

“Looks like your Mother is sleeping. Are you sure she’s okay?” said Henry.

“Mother’s okay. She dozes off occasionally during the day. I’m used to it” said Eve.

“Do you take care of her?” said Henry.

“Yes, I’m her caretaker” said Eve.

“That’s very kind of you and your husband” said Henry.

“I don’t have a husband, Henry. I’ve never been married”
said Eve.

In an apologetic tone, Henry says “I’m sorry, Eve. I didn’t
mean to pry”.

“You’re not prying, Henry” said Eve.

“How long have you been taking care of your Mother?”
said Henry

Eve sighs and says “For over twenty years”.

“I admire you for that, Eve” said Henry.

Eve looks into Henry’s eyes then touches his arm again
and says in a soft sultry voice “Why thank you, Henry”.
Henry smiles and studies Eve intently. He looks down for
a while then looks up and bites his lip. Henry looks into
Eve’s eyes and says “Eve, would you have dinner with me
sometime?”.

Eve looks down and says “Henry, are you married?”.

“No, I’ve been a widower for over six years” said Henry.

Eve holds Henry’s hand “I’d love to come over but I don’t
like to leave my Mother alone”.

Henry grins and says “Well, bring her along”.

“Mother doesn’t do well in restaurants, especially with her
dozing off” said Eve.

Henry smiles and says “Why don’t you and your Mother have dinner at my place. I’m a pretty fair chef and if your Mother gets tired, there’s a sofa nearby”.

“Why that would be wonderful, Henry” said Eve.

“Great. What type of food does your Mother like? Beef, Pork, Chicken, Seafood?” said Henry.

“Mother loves seafood and so do I but don’t want to put you out” said Eve.

Henry grins and says “Salmon is my specialty. Here’s my card. How about next Sunday afternoon. Give me your address and I’ll pick you up”.

“Henry, I’ll drive over. Mother is only comfortable in my car” said Eve.

“If that’s best for your Mother, that works for me” said Henry. Henry then looks at his watch and says “Eve, I have to run. I’ve got a board meeting to go to. See you this Sunday afternoon, say around four or so”.

Eve gives Henry a big smile and says “Perfect”.

As Henry starts to stand, Eve gives Henry a light kiss on his cheek and says in a soft sultry voice “Henry, I’m so happy we’ve met”.

Henry is speechless. He smiles at Eve then slowly leaves. After Henry leaves, Eve and Mother slowly walk to a tan Chevrolet Station Wagon. When they reach the Station Wagon, the Mother looks back over her shoulder then

takes off a white wig and shakes it. Eve frowns and says “Hey, Dede, you shouldn’t take that off yet. He might be watching”.

“He ain’t watching. This friggen wig is hotter than hell and the damn make-up itches something fierce. Eve, you put on a great performance” said Dede. Dede is a small slim woman in her middle fifties. Her short dark brown hair has a few streaks of gray in it.

Eve gives a gloating smile and says “I think we’ve got another live one. You know, he sort of reminds me of my third husband”.

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“Yeah. He does remind me of George. You know, Henry’s sort of cute for an old guy and somewhat charming but a little uptight” said Dede as she takes swig from a silver flask.

“I’ll loosen him up. Give me that. I can use a drink” said Eve with a grin as she takes a big swig from the silver flask.

“I’m sure you will” said Dede.

As Henry drives home in his Silver BMW, thoughts of Eve and her mother run through his mind. It’s been a long time since I met a person so sweet and caring. She’s certainly giving up a lot to take care of her sick mother. I’m really happy we met. Man, what a difference from that Diana person I met.

Next Sunday afternoon

Henry is putting silverware on a table. The doorbell rings. He opens the door. Eve and her mother appear. Henry smiles and says “Hello Eve. Hello Mother”.

Eve gives Henry a big smile and says “Hello Henry”.

The mother nods slightly and gives Henry a small smile.

“Well, come on in. Hope you folks are hungry” said Henry as he motions to the dinner table. “Why don’t you folks sit down? Dinner is ready”.

Eve lifts her head and sniffs, then says “Something smells wonderful, Henry”.

Eve helps Mother to the dinner table. Mother walks very slow. Eve helps her sit down.

“Excuse me while I get the food” said Henry.

Henry leaves the room. Eve winks at mother and mother smiles back. Henry returns with a cart laden with several dishes and a two bottles of wine. He places the dishes on the table. “I made my specialty. Salmon ala Henry. Would you care for some wine. I have a Cabernet or Chardonnay” said Henry.

Eve waves her hand and says “Oh, we’ll just have water. Mother and I don’t drink alcohol”.

“Perhaps a diet soda or coffee?” said Henry.

Eve smiles and says “Water will be just fine, Henry”.

“Hope you don’t mind my drinking in front of you. I always enjoy a Cabernet with my Salmon” said Henry.

“Are you a wine connoisseur, Henry?” said Eve.

Henry grins and says “I’m hardly what you’d call a connoisseur. If I’m in a restaurant and I like the wine, I’ll ask the waiter for the name. That’s how I select my wines”.

Eve samples the Salmon and says “Henry, this Salmon is delicious and the vegetables are wonderful How did you become such a wonderful chef?”.

“I learned on my own. I never did any cooking until my wife passed away. She died in an auto accident over six years ago. I never liked eating alone in a restaurant so I taught myself how to cook” said Henry.

“So you’ve been alone all of these years. Don’t you get lonely?” said Eve.

Henry sighs and says “Yes, I miss my wife terribly. She was the finest woman I ever met. A great wife and wonderful mother. We even ran a plastics manufacturing business together. But to answer your question, I’ve gotten used to being alone. How about you, Eve. How come you never got married. Oh, I’m sorry. That’s none of my business. Forgive me for asking”.

“That’s okay, Henry. I guess I just never met the right person and then I’ve been taking care of Mother for over twenty years” said Eve.

“I admire you for that” said Henry.

Henry and Eve converse while eating. Mother says nothing and slowly picks at her food.

Eve smiles and says “Henry, the food was wonderful. I can’t begin to thank you enough for having us over”.

Henry notices mother sleeping and says “Eve, your Mother has dozed off. Would you like me to help you put her on the sofa for a bit?”.

“Oh, that would be great. Then we can chat some more” said Eve. Henry and Eve help Mother to the sofa.

“Eve, would you like dessert and coffee? I made a dessert using Oreo cookies and ice cream” said Henry.

“Yes, I would. Thank you” said Eve.

“Please sit down. I’ll be right back” said Henry. Henry leaves the room and returns with dessert and coffee. Henry and Eve converse while eating dessert and drinking coffee.

“So tell me, Henry. How do you keep yourself busy during the day. With your business background, I’ll bet you serve on the boards of a bank or two” said Eve.

Henry shakes his head and says “No. Not any more. I don’t have the temperament or patience to sit through board meetings. I help as an advisor but not as a board member. Eve, do you know the definition of a camel?”

“No, please tell me” said Eve.

“A camel is a horse designed by a committee” said Henry.

Eve laughs and says “That’s funny. I know nothing about finance or investing. My father left my mother with a very small pension, just enough to get by on”

“I know some excellent financial planners and experts that I put you in touch with” said Henry.

“Oh that would be wonderful, Henry” said Eve. They hear mother stirring on the sofa as she tries to sit up.

Eve stands up and says” I think it’s time to take Mother home. Henry, thank you again for a wonderful evening. I can’t remember when I’ve had such a good time”.

Henry smiles and says “Me either. Eve, how would you and Mother like to come over next Sunday?”.

“Oh, I don’t to be a bother. That’s a lot of work for you” said Eve as she touches Henry’s shoulder.

“It’s not a bother. I enjoy doing this. Please say yes” said Henry.

“Yes” said Eve.

Henry smiles and says “Great”.

Henry and Eve help Mother up and to the door. Mother walks very slow. At the door, Eve looks deeply into Henry’s eyes then gives him a hug and a kiss on his cheek.

Henry is speechless and waves as they walk away.

Eve and Mother slowly walk to the tan Chevrolet Station Wagon. After they enter the Station Wagon, Dede takes off the white wig and throws it in the back seat. Eve drives off and says “So, what do you think?”.

“I’ll tell you what I think. I think this wig has to go, but, I gotta tell ya, Eve, you put on an academy award winning performance. I don’t how you can feed him all the bullshit with a straight face” said Dede.

Eve grins and says “Remember, I did do some acting when I was younger”.

You should have stuck with it” said Dede.

“I got sick of having to screw directors and producers just for small bit parts” said Eve.

“When are you going to get him in the sack” said Dede.

“When the time is right. We don’t want to rush things. This could be our biggest score yet. Dick told me this guy just sold some lake property for big bucks” said Eve.

As Henry fills the dishwasher and puts left-overs in the refrigerator, thoughts of Eve run through his mind again.

What a sweet and caring person. She seems to like me. I wonder what she sees in an old codger like me.

The next Sunday afternoon

Henry is in the kitchen seasoning three filet mignons when the doorbell rings. He opens the door. Henry smiled and said “Hi folks. Come on in. I’ve got a special dinner for you today. Hope you like filets. These are fork tender and should be easy for mother to eat”.

This Sunday’s dinner occasion mirrored the previous Sunday’s occasion. Henry and Eve converse throughout the dinner. Mother picks at her food and falls asleep again. When Eve helps mother to the sofa, mother coughs and falls to the floor. Henry rushes to help Eve pick mother up and place her on the sofa.

With a concerned look, Henry says “Is she okay? Should I call the rescue squad? Should we take her to the ER?”.

Eve sighs and says “That won’t be necessary. She does fall occasionally. She should be okay”.

Henry and Eve sit on the sofa. As they converse, Eve periodically touches Henry’s chest and arm. A while later, mother stirs and coughs. Eve stands up and says “Henry, I’m sorry but I better take my mother home”.

“I understand. How would you like to come over again next Sunday. Maybe a little bit earlier might work better for your mother? Say around two or so” said Henry.

Eve gives Henry a hug and says “Henry, you’re so kind. That would be great”.

Eve and Mother slowly walk to the tan Chevrolet Station Wagon. After they enter the Station Wagon, Dede sighs and takes off the white wig. She throws it on the floor. Eve drives off and says “You won’t have to worry about that wig anymore. I’ll be taking over from now on. You did an awesome job of faking that fall”. Dede smiles.

As Henry fills the dishwasher and puts left-overs in the refrigerator, thoughts of Eve again run through his mind.

The next Sunday afternoon at 2:45 PM

It’s 2:30 PM. Henry looks at his watch and sighs “I wonder what happened. I wish I had a phone number to call”. He sits in the easy chair with a glass of wine. At 2:45 PM, the doorbell rings. Henry puts the glass of wine out of sight and rushes to the door. When he opens the door, Eve is standing alone. With a surprised and concerned look, Henry says “Hi Eve. Where’s your mother?”.

Eve sighs and says “She’s not feeling well. I have a neighbor who is a nurse. She was kind enough to watch my mother. I really wanted to see you again, Henry”.

“I’m sorry to hear your mother’s not feeling well but I’m glad you came over. I also wanted to see you again. Hope you brought a good appetite. I made Italian Sausage and Peppers. Why don’t you sit on the sofa and relax. The food will be ready in fifteen minutes. Would you like something to drink?” said Henry.

“Yes, a glass of water would be fine” said Eve.

“I’ll be right back” said.

Henry leaves the room. Eve rubs her eyes vigorously. When Henry returns, Eve starts to sob quietly. Henry notices her sobbing and says “Why Eve, you’re crying. What’s wrong?”.

Eve wipes her eyes and says “I’m okay, Henry. I just had a bad week. That’s all”

Henry puts the glass on an end table and sits down next to Eve. Her holds her hands. “Eve, I hate to see you upset like this. What’s bothering you” said Henry.

“Oh, Henry. You’ve been so good to Mother and me. I don’t want to burden you with our problems” said Eve.

“Eve, please tell me what’s bothering you. Maybe I can help?” said Henry.

Eve sighs and says “Mother needs a very serious operation. Without it, she won’t see another Christmas. Her insurance won’t cover it. Oh, Henry. I don’t know what we’re going to do”. Eve starts sobbing and puts her head on Henry’s chest.

Henry hugs Eve and says “Lets have dinner. Maybe you’ll feel better then”.

After dinner, Henry and Eve sit on the sofa. The conversation drifts to mother and her impending operation. “Do you have any reports or documentation

from surgeon and also from the Insurance company” said Henry.

“Why, yes I do” said Eve.

“Could you bring what you have over, tomorrow afternoon. I’ve got plenty of experience in this area with my parents and my wife” said Henry.

When Eve returns to her apartment, Dede says “How’d it go?”

“Great” said Eve with a smile. I’m meeting him tomorrow with the paperwork.

Dede gets a concerned look and says “Do you think he will buy those fake documents?”.

“Of course. We paid enough for them and they’ve always worked in the past” said Eve.

The next afternoon

Eve shows Henry documents detailing the operation. They are from a surgeon, a hospital and an insurance company. Henry carefully studies the documents. Eve sighs and says “We could never come up with that kind of money”.

Henry holds Eve’s hands and says “Eve, I want to help you. I have the funds to cover your needs”.

“Oh, Henry. I don’t know what to say” said Eve.

Henry looks into Eve's eyes and says "I've never met such a caring person like you. I admire what you're doing for your mother. Eve, I want to keep seeing you".

"And I want to keep seeing you, Henry" said Eve. She kisses Henry on his cheek then gives him a passionate kiss on his lips. Henry returns the kiss. He hugs her firmly and places a hand on her thigh. Eve gives Henry another long passionate kiss then abruptly sits up. She looks at her watch and says "Oh, I completely forgot about my mother. I told the nurse I'd be back by 4:30. I'm so sorry but I have to go".

Old feelings stir in Henry then he regains his composure and says "I understand. Can you get that nurse to watch your mother next Saturday? I'd like to take you to dinner. There's a great seafood restaurant called Higgins on the Reef. Afterwards, we'll come back here and I'll try to have a check for you. Can I pick you up?".

Eve hugs Henry and says "I'll meet you here. My place is such a mess with mother's things".

When Eve returns to her apartment, Dede is watching television. She turns the sound down and says "How'd it go?".

"Beautiful, way better than we expected. Next Saturday, he's taking me out for dinner at someplace called Hopkins on the Reef. He promised me a check for the full amount" said Eve.

"Wow" said Dede.

“He’s falling for me. I think I’m I’m going get this one to marry me. He’s worth a few bucks. After I get through with him, you and me can retire in Mexico.

“Did you go to bed with him?” said Dede with a wicked smile.

“Not yet but I will. That always does the trick. No pun intended” said Eve with a big grin.

The next day

Henry is sitting by his computer. He hits the speed dial on his cell phone. “May I speak with Doctor Collins, please?”

“Henry, what can I do for you?” said Doctor Collins.

“Jim, tell me about Viagra” said Henry. As Doctor Collins starts to talk, Henry’s cellphone rings. He looks at the screen and says “Jim, I’ll have to call you back. I need to take this call”. Henry answers the new call and says “Hello, Martha”.

“Henry, I saw your call come in. I was in some heavy traffic and couldn’t take the call. What can I do for you?” said Martha.

“Martha, It’s a long story. I met someone and I’ve been seeing her” said Henry.

“I thought you gave up on dating services” said Martha

“Oh, I did. I met her by accident. She’s a very sweet and caring person. Sort of reminds me of Doris Day. Eve has

been taking care of her mother for many years.” said Henry.

“That’s very admirable, Henry” said Martha.

“Yes, it is. I’ve met her mother. She’s in poor health and needs a serious operation. I want to help them. I want you to go to the trust and withdraw a hundred and fifty thousand. Have it wired to my personal checking account” said Henry.

“Henry, are you sure about this? Have you checked these people out? Henry, how involved are you with this person? Are you falling for her?” said Martha.

“Well, that’s a hell of a thing to say to me. What do you take me for? Some kind of a stupid idiot? Said Henry in a loud angry tone.

“Henry, calm down. I’m only looking out for your best interests” said Martha.

“Sorry I yelled at you. Please, just do what I asked. I’ve already looked at the doctor’s reports and the hospital documents” said Henry.

“Okay, Henry” said Martha.

“Thank you. Call me if you have any problems” said Henry as he ends the call then hits the speed dial.

“Hello, Danny. It’s me” said Henry.

“Hi Dad. How’re you doing?” said Danny.

“Just fine. That was a wonderful wedding. Rose is a real fine lady. You’re a very lucky guy” said Henry.

“Yeah, I know. Rose loves Florida. We’re thinking of buying a Condo there for when we retire” said Danny.

“I’d advise you not to wait. I wish I would have bought mine many years ago. Danny, I’ve met someone. I never thought I’d get involved with someone again. This woman is someone special” said Henry.

“That’s great, Dad. I told you those professional dating services work” said Danny.

“It wasn’t a dating service. We met by accident. She’s a very caring person. She’s a caretaker to her very sick mother. I’m going help them” said Henry.

Oh. that’s nice, but be careful, Dad. There’s a lot of Gold Diggers out there. Well, keep me posted. Dad, I gotta run. I’m late for a meeting. Love you” said Danny.

Henry frowns and says “Yeah, I love you too, son” said Henry as he ends the call. Henry mutters to him self “Shit, everyone must think I’m stupid or something”.

Martha and Diana

Diana is in the seafood area at Gino’s Italian Deli when Martha walks towards her. Martha is pushing a small shopping cart filled with pasta and steaks.

Diana smiles and says “Fancy meeting you here again. Are you here for the seafood sale?”.

Martha laughs and says “Are you kidding? Donald won’t let me bring fish in the house. I’m here for some steaks. When we go to Higgins, he orders a hamburger”.

“That’s funny. Say, I’m curious. Did you ever talk to Henry about us getting together again? I really felt bad about the way I treated him” said Diana.

“Yes, I did and he said he wasn’t interested. Although, he did tell me that he had no hard feelings towards you. It seems he’s seeing someone that he met by accident. I think he might be falling for her” said Martha.

“Oh, well that’s nice” said Diana with a slight frown.

Martha sighed and said “I suppose so but I’m a bit concerned”.

“You’re concerned. Why?” said Diana with a concerned look.

Martha frowned and said “This one is taking care of her sick mother. The mother needs an operation and Henry is going to help them out to the tune of a hundred and fifty thousand from a trust fund. Henry claims to have seen the doctor and hospital reports”.

Diana’s eyes widen and she says “Really? Do you happen to know what the woman’s name is?”.

“I seem to remember it’s something like Eva.” said Martha.

“Would it be Eve?” said Diana.

“That’s it, Eve. Why, do you know her?” said Martha

“She sounds just like a person I prosecuted a few years ago. She and another woman work together and put this act on. The other woman poses as her mother. Eve is very attractive and not bashful about hopping in bed with anyone. They get fake doctor and hospital reports and research their victims. They like to prey on elderly widowers. They’re professional gold diggers and very good at what they do” said Diana with a big sigh.

“Oh my GOD. Poor Henry. What can we do?” said Martha.

“Do you have any idea what this woman looks like?” said Diana.

“I have no idea what she looks like. Henry told me she looks like Doris Day. Wait, maybe we can find out. Henry told Donald that he’s taking this woman to dinner this Saturday at Hopkins on the reef. Maybe, I can get Donald to see what she looks like” said Martha.

“Perfect. Get back to me as soon as possible. Oh, see if you can stall Henry with that trust fund withdrawal” said Diana.

“Should we tell Henry about this? I don’t think he will listen to me” said Martha.

“Don’t say anything to Henry yet. Let me know what Donald finds out Once we confirm she’s the one, then we can give Henry a call” said Diana.

“Okay. Wow, I’m really glad I bumped into you today” said Martha.

“So am I. **So am I**” said Diana.

Saturday

Henry helps Eve out of the Silver BMW. They enter Henry’s Condo holding hands. Eve smiles and says “Henry, that was a wonderful dinner”.

“Glad you enjoyed it. Would you like something to drink?” said Henry/

“I’ll just have a glass of water, please” said Eve as she sits on the sofa.

“Sure you wouldn’t want a wine or something?” said Henry.

“Water will be fine” said Eve.

Henry leaves the room and returns with a glass of wine and a glass of water. He sets them on an end table. Henry also places his cell phone on the end table.

“I’m expecting a call from my friend, Don, about our gym dates for next week” said Henry.

Henry hands Eve a glass of water and sits down. They toast each other and smile. They place their glasses back on the end table. Eve moves close to Henry and embraces him. She looks into his eyes. In a sultry voice, Eve says “Oh, Henry. I’ve missed you so much”. Eve gives Henry a firm passionate kiss.

Henry’s eyes widen and he says “I’ve missed you too, Eve”. As Henry prepares to return the kiss, his cell phone rings. He glances at the cell phone and mutters to himself “Shit”. Henry sighs and says “It’s Don. Excuse me, Eve”.

Henry stands up and move to a corner. He answers the call. “Don, make it fast. What time do you want to meet next week?” said Henry.

“Forget about next week. I want to talk to you about that woman you’re seeing. Henry, do you....” said Don. Henry interrupts Donald.

“Not now, Don” said Henry.

“Henry, you gotta listen.....” said Don.

Henry interrupts Don and says “I’ll call you back later”. Henry ends the call and sit down next Eve. “Is everything okay?” said Eve.

“Yes” said Henry

.
Henry embraces Eve. Eve gives Henry another firm passionate kiss. Henry returns the kiss. After Henry and Eve hug and kiss for a while, Henry again places his hand

on her thigh. Eve puts her head on Henry's chest and begins to sob quietly.

"Eve, what's wrong?" said Henry.

"I'm worried about Mother. She's getting worse and the doctor's want to operate as soon as possible" said Eve in a tearful voice.

"Eve, don't you worry. I've told my financial person to get some funds transferred over from one of my trust funds. I was hoping to have the check ready today. She assured me the funds will available this week.

"Oh, that's so kind of you, Henry" said Eve.

Eve gives Henry another long passionate kiss then looks at her watch and says "Oh my goodness. I forgot about the time. Henry, I better go. I promised the nurse I'd be back by eight. I don't want to lose her".

Henry tries to hide his disappointment and says "Will you come over for dinner this coming Friday? I will have a check for you by then".

Eve smiles and says "I'd love to, Henry".

Henry and Eve embrace then Eve leaves. Henry picks up the wine glass and sits in the easy chair. He takes a big sip then leans back and closes his eyes.

When Eve returns to her and Dede's apartment, Dede is drunk. "So, how'd it go?".

“He promised to have the check ready on Friday” said Eve.

“Did you get him in the sack” said Dede as took she finished a glass of Vodka,

“Naw, I wasn’t in the mood. I suppose I’ll have to give him a little on Friday. That’s kinda funny. I never got more than five hundred a night when I worked in Vegas” said Eve with a big grin as she watched Dede pass out.

Henry and Diana

Henry is watching a Green Bay Packers and Chicago Bears game on television. The Bears score and Henry mutters to himself “Shit, they might lose this one”. The doorbell rings. Henry opens the door and Diana appears. She is wearing a faded denim shirt with blue jeans and carrying a small brief case. Henry is surprised. “What are you doing here? What do you want?” said Henry in a slightly harsh tone.

“We need to talk, Henry. You really need to listen to what I have to say. Please” said Diana in with a pleading look in her eyes.

“Okay. C’mon in” said Henry.

“Thank you. May I sit down?” said Diana.

“Yeah, sure” said Henry as he motions to the sofa.

Diana sits on the sofa, takes a deep breath and says “First of all I want to apologize for my rude behavior when we met”.

“Is this why you are here?” said Henry.

Diana sighs and says “No, it’s something else but first I want to explain my rude behavior to you. Several years ago, I went through a very painful divorce. My ex was cheating on me. I was a successful lawyer and he was ruining us financially. I was talked into using that dating service. Our date was the first date I’d had since the divorce. I guess I was still bitter from the divorce and leery of men. That said, there was no excuse for my rude behavior. I’m sorry”.

“Well, truth be told. I was also talked into using that dating service. That was the first date I’ve had since my wife passed away. Maybe I was a bit too sensitive myself. Thank you for your explanation. What else did you want to see me about?” said Henry with an understanding look.

Diana clears her throat and says “I understand that you’re seeing a woman named Eve. Are you...”.

Henry abruptly interrupts Diana. “How in the hell did you know that. What the hell’s going on here?” said Henry in a loud and angry tone

“Henry, please calm down. Let me tell you what I came here to say. Please?” said Diana in a soft voice.

“Let’s have it” said Henry impatiently

“First of all I found out about you and Eve, by accident, through Martha, Donald’s wife. Martha and I have worked together in the past and we’ve remained friends through the years. They told me about you and Eve. I used to be an assistant District Attorney before I met Martha. I prosecuted Eve and her accomplice for fraud. The case was dropped. The victim refused to testify’ said Diana.

“I find that hard to believe. She’s such a nice person and I’ve met her mother. I’ve seen the surgeon and hospital reports on her mother” said Henry.

“That’s not her mother and those reports are fake. Oh, and another thing, Eve’s been married at least three times, plus she was a hooker in Ve” said Diana with a slight smile.

“Why are you telling me this? How can I believe you?” said Henry.

Diana sighs and says “Henry, I really felt terrible how I treated you and I wanted to see you again. I don’t want to see you get hurt”. Diana reaches into her briefcase. She hands Henry a file folder and says “In this folder are court documents and newspaper articles. Eve has done this several times before. She and her accomplice always seem to get away with their little scheme, mainly because the victims refuse to testify. Actually, I wouldn’t call this a little scheme”.

Henry opens the file folder and carefully studies the documents. He shakes his head in disbelief and says “I’ll be a son of a bitch. Well, this is one time Eve and mommy dear are not going to get away with it. Would you like a drink? Perhaps, a glass of wine?”

“Yes, I would” said Diana with a smile.

“A Cabernet okay?” said Henry.

“Cab is fine. Say Henry, I need to ask you this as an attorney. Have you slept with Eve?” said Diana in serious tone.

“No, but the thought did cross my mind” said Henry sheepishly.

Henry leaves and returns with two glasses . He hands a glass to Diana then sits back in the easy chair. Diana raises her glass then takes a sip. “Umm, this wine is excellent. Martha told me you were a wine gourmet” said Diana.

Henry laughed and said “Yup, I’m a real wine gourmet. Your drinking a Cabernet from Aldi’s. It’s called Winking Owl. Costs \$3.95 a bottle. I just wanted to see if you are wine gourmet”.

“I’m sure you know more about wine than I do. I have a confession to make. I’ve never been to Paris. Actually, your vacations sounded very interesting. I’ve always wanted to get a ride on a Harley” said Diana.

Henry smiles and says “I’ve been tempted to buy one more Harley before I take up the rocking chair. Diana, do you have any ideas how we can send Eve and mommy dear to jail? She is coming over here for dinner on Friday. I was going to give her a check for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

“Let me think on it. Tell you what, Henry, why don’t you meet me at Hopkins tomorrow night and we can come up with a plan. It will be my treat” said Diana.

Henry nods and says “Great idea. I was just going to suggest that. How about another Winking Owl?”

“I’d love to but I have a meeting to go to. How does five sound tomorrow at Higgins?” Diana.

Henry walks Diana to the door. They stop in the doorway. Henry studies Diana intently and says “I can’t begin to thank you enough for exposing Eve”.

“You’re welcome, Henry. See you tomorrow at five” said Diana. She extends her hand, offering Henry a handshake. Henry shakes Diana’s hand then holds onto it for a bit. Henry finally releases Diana’s hand. Diana smiles and leaves. Henry sits in the easy chair and puts a hand on his chin. Henry sits in deep thought.

The next day at Higgins

Henry is seated at a table in a secluded area. Diana approaches the table. Henry looks at his watch then looks at Diana and says with a slight frown “You’re late”. Henry then laughs and says “Just kidding. I just couldn’t resist saying that. Hope you didn’t mind”.

“No, I guess I had that coming” said Diana with a smile.

“I promise. No more cutesy remarks from me. I’m glad you’re here. I looked forward to seeing you again” said Henry.

“And I looked forward to seeing you again, Henry” said Diana.

A waiter approaches the table. He smiles and says “Welcome to Higgin’s on the Reef, May I interest you folks in a beverage?”

“I’ll have a glass of your house Cabernet” said Diana.

“I’ll have a glass of PBR” said Henry.

“PBR? What is a PBR, sir?” said the waiter with a puzzled look.

Henry laughs and says “A Pabst Blue Ribbon beer”.

I’m sorry, sir. We don’t carry that one.

“Just bring me a Heineken and no glass” said Henry.

“Yes sir” said the waiter.

The waiter leaves. Henry and Diana converse. The waiter returns and serves the drinks. Henry toasts Diana’s glass with the bottle of Heineken and says “Here’s to putting those two crooks in jail. Have you any idea how we can do that, Diana?”

Diana looks around then smiles and says “I sure do. I’ve learned much from my previous encounters with those two. The previous victims refused to testify. Your willingness to testify will surely convict them. They may not go to jail but at least we’ve stopped them. I can’t wait

to see the look on Eve's face. Just to be sure, we'll take a picture of you handing Eve the check. I'm going to use an actual camera instead of a cellphone. No one can argue that the photo's were altered. I also have proof that the hospital and doctor's reports are fake".

Henry gets a concerned look on his face and says "You said you were going to take pictures. How will you do that? Won't that be dangerous for you?".

"I'm going to hide in the kitchen until the right moment. I don't think Eve will be a problem" said Diana.

Henry frowns slightly and says "I don't know. That sounds pretty risky".

"Trust me, Henry" said Diana.

"When this is all over with, I want to see more of you, Diana" said Henry as he looked into Diana's eyes.

Diana notices Henry's gaze and says "And I'd like to see more of you, Henry".

Henry and Diana converse for a while then get up to leave. Henry gives Diana a hug.

Friday - Henry and the Gold Digger

Henry smiles as he stirs a pot of Sauerkraut. The smell of Sauerkraut and Slovenian sausage

heavily laden with garlic permeates Henry's Condo. The doorbell rings. He opens the door and Eve enters. She is dressed in a low cut dress and immediately gives Henry a big hug. "Oh, Henry. I've missed you so much" said Eve. She does not see Henry roll his eyes.

"And I've missed you, Eve. More than you can imagine. Please sit down. I've got dinner ready" said Henry with a smile.

Eve sniffs and says "What's on the menu, Henry?"

Henry grins and says "Sauer Kraut and Slovenian Kielbasa".

"I don't think I've ever had that" said Eve.

"Oh, I think you will enjoy this. It's another one of my specialties. I made it especially for you. I'll be right back. Henry returns with the dinner and serves Eve. Henry and Eve converse as they eat. Eve keeps staring at her plate and eats reluctantly. "How do you like the Kielbasa?" said Henry.

Eve forces a smile and says "Oh, it's just wonderful, Henry.

"Great, wait until you see what I have for dessert" said Henry.

"Henry, would you mind if we skipped the dessert. I'm getting full" said Eve.

"Sure. Would you like something to drink?" said Henry.

“I’ll have a glass of Seven-up if you have some” said Eve.

“I don’t have any Seven-up. Okay if I bring you a Pepsi?” said Henry.

Eve nods. Henry leaves the room. Eve gets up and moves to the sofa. Henry returns with a Pepsi and a can of Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. Henry hands Eve the Pepsi and sits down next to her. They toast each other then place the drinks on an end table. Eve embraces Henry and kisses him passionately several times then puts her head on Henry’s chest and begins to sob. Henry lifts Eve’s head and touches her chin. “Eve, are you worried about your mother again?” said Henry.

“Yes, I’m terribly worried. The doctor say’s she won’t last long without the operation” said Eve.

Henry smiles and says “You needn't worry my dear. I have a check for you. I made it out for one hundred and seventy five thousand just in case you may need a little more to tide you over while your mother recovers. The check is made out to your mother just as you requested”.

“Oh, Henry. You’ve been so good to us. I don’t know how I can ever repay you” said Eve.

Henry gets a big grin on face then gives Eve a long passionate kiss and places his hand on her thigh. Eve says to herself “I better show this guy a little gratitude”. Eve stands up and takes Henry’s hand then says “Where’s your bedroom, Henry”.

Henry stands up and point to a door then says with a big grin “Eve, you can’t imagine how long I’ve waited for this”.

Eve smiles and starts to lead Henry to the bedroom. Henry stops and says “Wait, let me get you the check. I wouldn’t want you to forget it”. Henry walks over to the desk and retrieves a check from the drawer. He walks over to Eve and hands her the check. “Here you are, Eve” said Henry.

Eve looks at the check and says “Oh, Henry. Thank you. Thank you”.

With a big grin, Henry says “No, thank you, my dear”.

Just then, Diana steps out from the kitchen and using a Nikon camera, takes a picture of Eve holding the check. The flash startles Eve. She looks at Diana and screams loudly “**YOU**”.

“Yes, it’s me and you’re going to jail this time, sweetheart” said Diana.

Eve snarls “You bitch. You can’t prove anything.

Diana smiles and says “Guess again. I have absolute proof of the fraudulent doctor and hospital records. Along with these photos, lets see what a jury will decide. Maybe you might want your sick mother to testify on your behalf?”.

Eve reaches lifts her dress and retrieves a small Smith & Wesson snub nose .38 caliber revolver from a holster on her leg. She points the pistol at Diana and screams “I’m not going to prison. Give me that damn camera”.

“I will not. Drop the gun. Do want assault with a deadly weapon added to the charges” said Diana.

“I said give me the camera” said Eve as she intensifies her aim on Diana.

“Go to hell” said Diana as she felt her heart pounding in her chest.

Eve cocks the hammer on the revolver and says “Have it your way”. Diana hears the click and closes her eyes.

Eve does not notice Henry as he approaches her from behind. As Eve pulls the trigger, Henry grabs her arm. The shot misses Diana. Eve and Henry struggle. Another shot is heard. Henry clutches his chest and falls to the floor. Diana grabs a wine bottle and hits Eve over her head. Eve drops the pistol and falls to the floor. Diana grabs a phone, dials a number and says “Hello, 911”. She talks into the phone then hangs up and rushes to Henry’s side. She notices the red spot on his chest growing larger . Diana cradles his head in her arms and says in a sorrowful voice “Oh, Henry”.

The next day - Memorial Hospital

Henry is laying in a hospital bed. A Nurse enters and walks up to Henry. “You rang, sir?” said the Nurse.

“Yes, I’m thirsty and my shoulder hurts like hell” said Henry in a weak voice.

“What would you like?” said the Nurse.

Henry gives a faint smile and says “A glass of Winking Owl”.

Sorry, we don’t have any of that here’ said the Nurse.

“Well, then how about a can of Pabst Blue Ribbon?” said Henry.

The Nurse frowned and said “Very funny. You’re pretty frisky for a man that just got shot. If your lady friend wouldn’t have stopped the bleeding, you wouldn’t have made it”.

“My lady friend?” said Henry with a puzzled look.

‘Yes. She said her name was Diana. She spent the night here while we operated on you. She must care an awful lot about you” said the Nurse.

“Where is she now?” said Henry.

“She’s asleep in the waiting room. Should I go get her?” said the Nurse.

“No, please let her sleep” said Henry.

The Nurse took Henry’s blood pressure and temperature then adjusted his pillow and said “Here’s a pain pill and some water to drink. This pill may make you drowsy. Ring if you need anything else”.

“Thank you” said Henry.

Henry takes the pill and a drink of water. The nurse leaves. Henry falls asleep. Diana enters the room and sits Henry's side. Henry eventually wakes up. Diana stands up, smiles and says "Hello, Henry". She holds Henry's hand and kisses him on his forehead. Henry holds on to Diana's hand.

"Hello, Diana. I hear you saved my life. Thank you" said Henry.

Diana sighs and says "Oh, Henry. It's the other way around. You saved my life. Eve's shot just missed me, thanks to you. I guess we're both two very lucky people".

Henry looks into Diana's eyes and says "Yes, we are. Diana, have you ever seen the movie "Pride of the Yankees" with Gary Cooper?" said Henry.

Diana nods and says " Many years ago".

Henry's voice takes on a serious tone. "Do you Remember the last scene when Lou Gehrig is giving his farewell speech at Yankee stadium? He knows his time is limited and he says "I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth". Well that's me. The luckiest man on the face of the earth. And let me tell you why I feel that way. It's not because I survived a close call but I was lucky to meet you. Do you believe on love at first sight?" said Henry.

Diana sighs. "I don't believe I do, Henry" said Diana.

"Neither do I, but I do believe in love at second sight, Diana" said Henry.

“So do I” said Diana with a smile. A tear forms in her and she gives Henry a soft but lingering kiss on his lips.

Two weeks later at Henry’s Condo

Seated at the dining room table are Danny and Rose, Don and Martha, Diana and Henry. Henry’s arm is in a sling. Diana is sitting next to Henry.

Henry stands up and says “I want to thank you for all of the get well cards. I have to admit, that was quite an experience that Diana and I went through”.

“How are you feeling, Henry. You’re looking pretty chipper” said Martha.

Henry sits down and says “I’m doing okay, Martha. I have an announcement to make after we eat”.

Don sniffs and says “What’s on the menu, Henry? Something smells darn good”.

“Sauerkraut and Slovenian Kielbasa. That’s one of my specialties” said Henry with a big grin.

“Oh, my goodness. That’s one of my favorites” said Rose with a smile.

“So what happened to the two gold diggers, Dad?” said Danny.

I’ll let Diana answer that. She prosecuted those two once” said Henry.

Diana looked around the table and said “They caught up with the mother at a Greyhound bus depot. She was on her way to California. She was lucky and just received a ninety day term at Ocala and three years probation. Sort of a slap on the wrist, so to speak. Eve was a different story. She probably would have got off with a light sentence like mother but her pulling a gun out and shooting Henry changed the picture dramatically. Her trial is coming up and she will do some serious jail time. I hate to say it, but she’s getting exactly what she deserves. Danny, Rose, Donald and Martha clap heartily. Henry smiles and nods his head.

Henry stands up and says “Lets eat. I’ll be right back”.

Don laughs and says “Henry, will you be serving Winking Owl with the meal”.

Henry grins and says “Are you kidding? With Slovenian Kielbasa? I’ve Pabst Blue Ribbon in the fridge. Who wants a beer?”. Everyone raises their hand.

“Be right back, folks” said Henry.

Danny stands up and says “I’ll give you a hand, Dad”.

Henry and Danny leave the room then return. Henry is carrying the food and Danny is carrying the beer. The group starts eating and conversing. After dessert is served, Henry stands up and says “I told you all that I have an announcement to make”.

“Dad, did you buy another Harley?” said Danny.

“Well, not quite, son. Something much, much better. Diana and I got engaged. You will all be going to a wedding at Christmas time”. Henry reaches in his pocket and pulls out a ring box. “Diana, we need to make this official. Please stand up. Diana stands up next to Henry. Henry opens the ring box and shows Diana the ring. Diana wipes a tear from her eye. Henry puts the ring on Diana’s finger. They embrace and kiss. The group claps heartily.

GOLD DIGGERS BEWARE!

THE END