

Performance rights must be obtained before production. For contact information, please [see the information page for The Goodies](#).

## **THE GOODIES**

comedy by ALAN ROSSETT

There are two ways to cast this play.

With two actresses:

Star 1 plays Annie, Granny, Marissa, Mama, Alice

Star 2 plays Bibi, Beryl, Boglinde

or

Eight actresses play the eight roles.

The play, which takes place in several different spots, can be done without sets.

I might suggest a unit arrangement of larger than life children's blocks, able to be combined in unexpected ways.

"The Goodies" has been produced in Paris, Avignon, national French tour, often revived, both in Paris, by regional companies and in schools. The English version has been performed at the UBU Theatre, NY, and Genoa Mothers Theatre, Denver. Included in the comprehensive reference book on modern French theatre "Répertoire du theatre contemporain".

Some press comments on the assorted versions...

"Witty wicked wild" Elle Magazine. "A tasty comedy on the condition of women, on maternity and the right to be oneself." Radio-France Vaucluse.

"Two women, two different life styles, two ways of thinking. Other women follow, a gallery of lucidly stroked, caustic portraits. Rossett's comedy; alternately biting and funny, is also notable for its underlying humanity." Information Service Press. "Tender, cruel and hilarious" France-Soir. "The quality and subtlety of Rossett's style raise this show well above average." Figaro Magazine.

"How not to hire your baby-sitter: a funny original play." L'air d'Avignon "

"Perfect for the summer season. Finely crafted dialogue, gags and serious scenes alternate and make this show something very rare in the theatre.

Rossett's been to a good school in the States and should be very closely followed." Fluide Glacial. "Two excellent actresses play all the characters with enthusiasm, emotion and comic flair. One leaves the theatre light-headed."

Tribune Libre "Rossett's play hasn't dated at all since the creation; still a fabulous gallery of women's portraits." Progrès de Lyon "A lovely show and a very, very funny one." France Culture.

## PART 1

## Scene 1

(Annie, in her late thirties. Bibi, a young girl.)

ANNIE (to the audience)

...It' not that I was nasty. I just made a few mistakes...Well quite a few. Nothing but! God Almighty...It would've been more polite, I suppose, if I'd been sitting in the car, waiting for Bibi at the train station. But as she did say on the phone:

BIBI ("on the phone")

I've got two big feet and I know what they're for. Give me the directions, Madame Antoinette, I'll track you down. Can I call you Annie?

ANNIE (to the audience)

True, true...if, all by herself, this girl can't find a house as big as ours, sitting right there by the riverside - then she's feeble-minded and we don't hire her as an Au Pair Girl to look after our one and only child! (to Bibi) It's quite simple, Bibi. You take the suburban line from Paris..get off at Cheverchemont ...turn down the first right from the train station, then to the left and then the right, left, right, left, you turn you turn you -

BIBI (who's casually entered during the above and spread herself out:)

I'm Bibi.

ANNIE

OH! I'm Antoinette! Annie!...Uh...make yourself at home.

BIBI

I'm at home.

ANNIE

I'm not. I'll never get used to this place! You see - before my marriage I lived in Paris, I was a filing clerk, then steno-typist, finally executive secretary! And I just happened to fall into this little company making films.

BIBI

You know movie stars!?

ANNIE

No. I know a lot of machines. We make "industrial films"... but it was fun, my position improved, before I knew it my boss couldn't do without me! Then one fine day a certain Monsieur Henri Dupuis magically appeared in our outer office...he'd come to order a documentary on his new line of electric lawn mowers. He mowed me over... I married him and it was....fantastic, God...the real problems only began when we moved out of our apartment in Paris and into this house.

BIBI

A house by the riverside!...isn't it a dream?

ANNIE

By" the riverside? I'll take you to the basement later, we'll go wading. No - fixing up this shack - at the same time zipping off to work every day - and I was already pregnant...Well once you've hit thirty...and a bit! you've got to get moving there, otherwise not worth the effort. And when "Baby" appeared. Theodore! Ah my own Teddy Bear! Ah...but he certainly takes time and I hadn't even cut the umbilical cord tying me to Jacques... you know, my boss...that little film company? He calls me fifteen times a day! "Antoinette...it's Jacques, I'd just like your opinion on a few things, you do have a couple of hours.." Yuk! He's such an ugly bastard. So - at five in the morning I'm up already - mixing plaster, feeding Baby, reheating Henri's coffee, grabbing the phone - "Annie it's Jacques your opinion?" And he keeps dangling this mouth-watering new salary and a "title" A title! - if I'll come back to the office of course - from 9 to 5. That is out of the question. But I've been thinking: were I to hire a young girl —

BIBI

Like me!

ANNIE

Yes...you'd move in with us, I'll pay you a decent part-time wage. Then I'd go into town one day a week, bring the paperwork back here. Mornings I'd be upstairs quietly working away, while you —

BIBI

Do all the housework? I was warned about the lady of the house. She often tries to con the au pair girl into cleaning it, the house that is. And I must simply have the courage to say no.

ANNIE

Oh but Bibi, really, I'm absolutely not the type to take advantage of the situation. You're here for my son and nothing else. Believe me, looking after Baby is more than enough, God. Oh, babies!

BIBI (vaguely)

Oh! babies!...God?

ANNIE (a little disquieted)

You do like children?

BIBI (floundering)

Like?...why...a child - the young! for me...are the living breathing proof that I'm not still in diapers myself! (practically sucking her thumb) -and that's so important! You see, my parents still think of me as Bibi Boo Boo. Which is understandable and quite insane. If not contradictory since they keep tearing out their hair at the way I've turned out as an adult. And just because I dropped out of high school? Who wouldn't? I'm interested in people, people...like...you - not biology. But my parents! "Bibi you've got to prepare yourself for the big bad world! Bibi, Bibi! In other words put away the cassettes, get out of my room and land a job. So one night after dinner I told them that I'd landed one, a job, not far out of Paris. Ah...Paris..."Paris? All that far?" When they'd stopped shouting at me, I simply let them know that there was nothing to worry about as I'd already written to Rosy - my best friend from junior high school who's already living in Paris - and as she'd put in a word for me with one of

her pals who has this client who's having a thing with this "Paulette" woman who works with this man who's married to you - do I start immediately?

ANNIE

Slow down - you don't mean that Rosy's your only reference? I don't even know this Rosy.

BIBI

That's OK. I know her very well. She's terrific, if you'd prefer I moved in tomorrow - ?

ANNIE (amused)

You are a little go-getter! No I admire that. All right, why not! to our association.

BIBI

To us! And to the best end of the stick you'll be getting. For babies adore me. All of them! I don't know why...I don't talk down to them but they no more than look at me - they burst into laughter. Sometimes they have fits. I don't know why.

ANNIE

We'll check that out once my Teddy wakes up. He's very choosy!

(Loudspeaker: cacophony. Traumatized) He's waking up!!

(She rushes into the nursery. Loudspeaker: whimpering)

But no no my little man, no no you little bugger, no...

BIBI (looking in)

Oh he is cute! Hello there! (Loudspeaker: baby laughter)

(modestly) You see. They all make fun of me.

(The telephone rings. Bibi finds and immediately takes it:)

No Jacques: out of the question. She can't come to the phone. (calling into the receiver) It's that Jacques jerk.

ANNIE

Yikes! Bibi - quick - take Teddy...

BIBI

I'm a lucky girl!

(She rushes off, crashing into Annie on the way out - who rushes to answer the phone...)

ANNIE

You lucky man. Antoinette is coming back to you. I'll drop by Monday. Yes, I've found this girl...She's...vibrant!

BIBI (bursts in, radiant)

Your son is...fabulous!

ANNIE

I knew you two would hit it off. Yes?

BIBI (radiant)

Your son...is soaking wet!

ANNIE

Oh - you'll find fresh diapers - bottom drawer of the big blue dresser... (Bibi hasn't moved) ...Yes?

BIBI (naively)

Annie...how is it done really. I've never changed a diaper before. How odd. I suddenly feel sick. (discreetly) Where's the...you-know-what?  
(Music and change of lighting)

Scene 2

(Bibi alone, spread out, phone in hand:)

BIBI

But no, Rosy, I didn't go to the movies with him, that creep. He's sad, you know, sad. why ruin a movie that's supposed to be terrific? So we all ran off to the disco, oh terrific, terrific, you know, aside from that jerk, he is sad. In my opinion his problem is that he has a limited vocabulary...it is sad...  
(to Annie - who's come home loaded down with papers, cans of film etc..)  
And here's my pal! Annie Hello there Annie?

ANNIE

God what that slob, Jacques, doesn't give me as homework. (smiling and anxious)  
And Teddy Bear? He's all right, how's the Bear? Where's my child?  
(Loudspeaker: baby groaning) Baby?  
(She rushes off.)

BIBI (to Rosy, but projecting)

That's Annie! I just love her! Her husband... (lowering her voice) - A lot less nice.  
Henri. A real creep. And poor Annie. So nice and so bright! We really get along!

ANNIE (returning)

Bibi! His bottom is all red! You've got to put cream on it!  
(to Bibi, all wrapt up with Rosy) Uh...Bibi!...You mustn't forget.

BIBI (to Annie)

Oh! Before I forget! I can take the morning off tomorrow instead of the afternoon,  
that way I'll be back 'round four. That is better for you, huh? (to Rosy, ignoring Annie  
who doesn't quite know what to do...) What're we saying...oh yees...that creep...it's  
sad...  
(Loudspeaker: baby's complaints...)

ANNIE

Teddy...bear...?

(Change of lighting.)

Scene 3

(Moonlight. Bibi tiptoes in... Annie coughs pointedly: the lights come up full blast!)

BIBI

OH! Uh - good evening! Back...already?



ANNIE

The French Provincial Lawn Mowers' convention was rather dull. We decided to come home early. And thus we stumbled onto a livelier show. I just glanced once...into the nursery. That's odd...I still can't figure out how a ten month old baby was able to climb out of his crib and jump up into a playpen?

BIBI

No, no, you've got it wrong. You see, Teddy was sleeping so soundly in the pen, I thought it'd be a shame to wake him up -

ANNIE

- before you skipped off - onto a train - to Paris - to go dancing -

BIBI (modestly)

Uh, I did roll him up in his blanket beforehand. Mustn't let kiddies catch cold...huh?

ANNIE

Well, well: then my son is an ungrateful bastard. Not that we'll ever know how it happened. Perhaps all alone, at night, he was awoke...by a balmy draft from the window someone-or-other never thought of closing? Perhaps - gripped by a sudden need to explore the outer world - beyond that window? - he pushed his little self through the bars of the playpen. Alas. His fat little ass got in the way. There he was, stuck, between the bars. And that blanket of yours held on to him as well: by the throat. I do believe he was being strangled. At that age though, the span of concentration is never very long. I envision him suddenly being fascinated by -now you're going to laugh - (Bibi obligingly laughs.) a mother-of-pearl lighter - yours?? that had just been left there on the floor - within baby's reach.

BIBI

...Oh that lighter...it's lost...

ANNIE

And found. Teddy managed to light it. He is advanced. We just barely managed to pull him out of the playpen before it went up in flames. Henri murmured - awestruck - that the scene brought to mind the last act of "Gotterdammerung".

BIBI

...what is that?

ANNIE

Just a little opera by Wagner - where everything burns up - palace, patrimony and patience! (glaring, she hums the leitmotif of the Valkyrie. Then)  
Teddy Bear is sleeping peacefully now —in our bedroom.

BIBI

...That's...nice.

ANNIE

It is nice that he's still alive?

BIBI

Uh...well... babies...there's nothing they don't know about survival.  
(pause)

ANNIE

Bibi...this really bothers me...having to be the one to shake up your...delightful ... carefree attitude.! But I am a mother. And as such... I keep asking myself...  
(she takes a breath, very uncomfortable.. then) ...does this job really suit you...dear? (collapsing) There. I've said it. whew.

BIBI

Oh! But I don't intend to keep this job for the rest of my life. I think of it, you see, as an intermediary stage of my parapsychologicel evolution...you know? My real calling...I'll find...eventually...We'll go into this again!... (yawns) ..Nighty-night!  
(She's begun to discreetly - but quickly - sneak off - )

ANNIE (firmly for a change)

STAY WHERE YOU ARE YOUNG LADY! I don't think I've got to the point.

BIBI (turning back, touchingly polite)

Yes?

ANNIE

Even as a sequence in your para-chutical - bullshit -

BIBI

Why Annie...

ANNIE

- do you dare!! pretend that you belong in my house!?

BIBI

But of course. I simply love Teddy Bear. I think you're awfully sweet! And then...there's your husb...Monsieur...Henr...Mons...Hhh. (lowering her voice)  
I have this strange impression sometimes that he's not as fond of me as you are. He snaps at me! did you know that?

ANNIE

He growled at me tonight!...growled that he was ready to walk out on me -

BIBI

Walk out?

ANNIE

- and take my son with him.

BIBI

But - but - oh what a, what a - I mean, he's just an old meaniel

ANNIE

Noo...he did come up with a kind of compromise. He'd stay... and let me keep my child...on condition that you get out - tomorrow morning on the very first train.  
(Pause)

BIBI

Ha! And what did you have to say to that kind of disgraceful blackmail ! What?

ANNIE

Bye-bye Bibi.

(Long pause)

BIBI (darkly)

I get it.

ANNIE

Mother of Mary and all the saints: she got something!!??

BIBI

Something? everything. You're just an old meany - you as well!

ANNIE

Me? No!

BIBI

Yes! Are you aware that you're firing me?? Without even letting me know that I'm incompetent?

ANNIE

I've tried to - for ages -

BIBI

Then you're incompetent. And I thought you were my pal! I thought you liked me!  
(breaking down) It's just so rotten of you.

ANNIE (maternally)

Oh what a little girl you are!...Calm down.. .you're not the first girl to lose her first job...Now now..It's not the last iob you'll lose....Now now..my little girl..

(Slowly - and very coldly - Bibi looks back at Annie)

BIBI

I am not a “little girl”. Certainly not yours! Thank heavens! After the tragic moments I’ve been pained to observe in this leaky dream house.

ANNIE

What’s that?

BIBI

Look at yourself in the mirror, Annie, what do you see: Annie - and that’s pretty tragic. A typical old maid who’s thrown herself at the first moron to actually peck her cheek - and off she goes to what she’s supposed to want to be: Mother! Mummy! That is all that counts for you —

ANNIE

But no -

BIBI

But yes! For, before you can blink, you’ve given birth. Alas. Annie’s read in some woman’s magazine that the modern female goes back to work - whether she wants to or not. Annie doesn’t want to - so she goes back! Obviously that’s why you never really told me what I was supposed to do...at the same time always there, breathing down my neck, oh such a nice woman - says you! You were dying to take my place, that is, step back into your own - Mother! Mummy! God! You were just waiting for me to make a mess of everything - and so I did what I could for you. Now I must start thinking about myself for a change! And my next employer, I’m getting from an agency! Ciao Annie forever.

ANNIE (dumbfounded)

But - where are you going?

BIBI

To Paris! (leaving) By the first train out.

ANNIE

But no – Bibi- it's three in the morning! (Bibi has gone) Bibi??

(pause. To the audience) I felt just miserable...watching this girl fade away into the night. And the next morning... (defensively) I went to an agency! And I insisted on references! Cast-iron ones! And - at the agency! they came up with a girl...a really superior sort of girl. An English girl From England! And this girl was...Beryl! What a charming English name! She'd just finished a scholarship in French' civilisation at the Sorbonne! Now she hoped to complement it - as she put on the application form - by actually moving in with the natives. This Beryl gets down to business - you can see that right away...

(Star 2 enters as "Beryl": disagreeable expression, a very young spinster type.)

BERYL (coldly)

With your permission - Madame Antoinette?

(From a very large bag, she brings out knitting needles...Beryl knits. Monotonously, to herself) One, two...

ANNIE

...Obviously not the sort who wastes her time.

BERYL (rapidly)

Four-five-six-seven-eight.

ANNIE

All right, I can't stand this girl. She repels me! Yech! (defensively) And so? I'm not shelling out money anymore just to be palsy-walsy! I want some results! And Beryl's child care - it's simply astounding. My teddy bear must feel safe with this one... Ah...He despises this girl!

(Loudspeaker cacophony)

BERYL (glacial)

Fair enough, little man. Now it's my turn.

(She rolls up her sleeves. She takes three measured steps. Then — with a big gesture:) S L LEE E EP.

(Loudspeaker: snoring.)

(coldly) Children pose no problem whatsoever - once one has realised that every last one of them is a monster.

ANNIE (to the audience, beaming)

Thanks to Beryl, I can finally get back to work! Things are humming at Jacque's office!

(Change of lighting Annie and Beryl have eased into seated positions as if in the middle of a conversation..)

He suggests my coming in two days a week...

#### Scene 4

The only snag: you'll be stuck more than ever in this house.

BERYL

I rather like it here. (She knits.)

ANNIE

Oh?...at your age you must want to...go to Paris?.. Have fun?

BERYL

Paris, boo, is just another big city: I've seen more than enough of it. And before, I was in Liverpool. My mother brought us up there...in a single room with my thirteen brothers and sisters.

ANNIE

Thirteen??

BERYL

It is an unlucky number.

ANNIE (delicately)

And...your father?

BERYL (bitter little laugh)

Which one. (She quickly looks down.)

ANNIE

Oh excuse me Beryl...I'm...embarrassed..

BERYL

That's all right. At all events the one we called "Pater" was never around. You can imagine the difficulty she had - poor "Mater" - to fill up all our open mouths. After a while, looking day after day into open mouths.. Mater began to fill up her own. (makes a gesture of alcoholism) Obviously, the problem of survival fell on me, the eldest. Ah I could tell you tales that...No, no - no point in that really. Now you're staring at me as if I were an animal.

ANNIE

..It's just that...I admire you. But I do! You've made something of yourself. And with the cards you were dealt: hats off to Beryl! (discreetly) You lack only one thing really.

BERYL

And what is that..

ANNIE

A smile. (Annie shows off her own dazzling smile.) The young should smile!  
(Beryl tries to smile and fails.)

BERYL

That's...rather difficult.



ANNIE

...No, we're going to find something pleasant — just for you...like...Certain young ladies get involved with fashion!

BERYL

Dear me. How stupid.

ANNIE

Do you like to swim? There's a pool not far away.

BERYL

I'm sure. And simply brimming over with chlorine and body odour.

ANNIE

Well!...I don't suppose you play Ping-Pong...what can we...

BERYL

You actually have a Ping-Pong table?

(She puts her needles back into the bag - from which she takes out a Ping-Pong racket.)

That's my favorite sport. Ping. Pong. I love it. (She smiles!)

Wack (feverishly) The Walter Wiggenwick Municipal Sports Centre! I was sixteen! They called me "Beryl the champion girl!" Everybody looked at me! Won! Again and again and...And then... (brooding) The Walter Wigginwick Municipal Sports Centre ran out of funds. Typical! Henceforth it was used for the projection of erotic films. I weep to think of it. Never again was I given the opportunity to practise my favorite sport.

(She pulls herself together. A ray of hope:) We're going to play Ping-Pong?

ANNIE

No - that ball going back and forth makes me seasick -

BERYL

I don't wish to be difficult, Madame. But it is unnerving to play Ping-Pong all by oneself.

ANNIE

Which is why the table's never been put together. It belongs to my husband. We'll assemble it and tonight you can try to beat Henri. Ping. Pong?

BERYL (touching , in her refound youth..

As she goes out:)

Ooooooh!

(Annie looks off to follow the game:)

BERYL'S voice

But no Monsieur Henri. In England...

ANNIE

Night after night, a warm family atmosphere settled over my house...

BERYL

We English. Great Britain. God save the queen!

(Beryl enters, walking backwards. Using her bat, she plays "Ping-Pong" during the following:~) Wack! Another point for me! Who...Annie? Your wife? What a wonderful lady that is. I adore her.

ANNIE

Compliments? (mischievously) Ssh!

(Annie hides and eavesdrops.

Beryl, backing up, takes the stage. She speaks to the audience as if it were her Ping-Pong partner:~)

BERYL (very positive)

Annie is a genuine business woman. I personally think that a woman is what she's always been. A mother. A housewife. A cook. The real woman makes the real man's cup runneth over. Don't you think? What an enchantment for a real man to frolic through the landscape of a real woman...its alternating patches of rapture...and of pain. But of course, those little aches that make one feel so good! The spice! you know? You want to tell where to find a real woman? Monsieur! I'm going to blush  
Stop it!

(She snickers, sexy. Expertly, undoes her hair. Vamp)

Henri, you are looking at a real woman. Don't you even know. Oh, that's your point...again. You're so virile...Oh...Henri.

(chuckling, swinging her hips and her bag, a real "pro", she exits.

Annie's expression has gone from satisfaction to horror. She hums the Valkerie...then:)

ANNIE (sweetly)

Beryl..?

(Change of lighting.

Enter Beryl, "beautified":)

BERYL (sweetly)

Yes....?

ANNIE (sweetly)

Uh...you're fired. Bye-bye! (to the audience) And one more down!

BERYL (innocently)

Fired? I don't understand. Have I done something wrong? Something...legally wrong?

ANNIE

Nooo, you unquestionably do the job. But how to put it...the job's mine!

BERYL

And you're only just discovering that?

ANNIE (firmly)

Beryl: farewell.

BERYL

Noo. You're the one on her way out -

(She pulls up her sleeves and advances on Annie who backs away, terrified.)

ANNIE

Stay where you...were. This house is mine - you don't deny that I hope - it's my child, my husband - mine - mine -

BERYL

Pah! And what have you done to deserve any of it? My God, come nightfall, do you know what a man, a real man, needs -

ANNIE ("vamp")

A real woman?? My dear, aren't you still living in the last century? Times have changed.

BERYL

But of course! And all my efforts have been to prod you into changing with them. You were obviously born to be single. Simple question of personality. At the moment, thank God, a woman like you - independent, industrious - and not caring a hoot about hubby home and offspring -

ANNIE (suddenly)

I'm not well.

BERYL

Can I be of assistance?

ANNIE

No no, it's just that - I think I've "déjà vu"ed this conversation - but with someone else whom you eerily resemble -

BERYL (musing)

Hmmm?

ANNIE

And the two of you seem to be grilling me on some spit of my own barbecue - except this time we're doing it in Chinese from right to left..

BERYL

I see. That is clear. Therefore...off you go, duck - toward a more suitable destiny. Don't fret; I'll straighten up the abandoned house. I'll straighten up your husband as well. You are going to take that brat with you - Uh, I'll keep him if you prefer. Isn't there a day nursery in the neighbourhood?

ANNIE

No but there's a nifty orphanage

BERYL (radiant)

Why not?

ANNIE (evenly)

I'm afraid we've somehow got off the track. Let's try something else.  
(Annie firmly pulls up her sleeves like a gruff army major:)  
Miss Beryl - this is goodbye. Be British.  
(That hits home. Annie offers her hand:) Fairplay?  
(Pause. Disdainfully Beryl takes Annie's hand — and squeezes it hard.)

ANNIE

AAAAAH! (Annie falls to the floor.)

BERYL

That at least you deserve! Wicked as you are! You old meany !!

ANNIE

Why do they keep calling me that! I'm not!

BERYL

Yes you are! Oh! I'm going to put a curse on you!

(Rhythmically) Cursed be the house  
 Cursed be the tot and cursed be the spouse.  
 By this solemn cry  
 I invoke the powers of Hell  
 and tomorrow I shall  
 file a complaint at the unemployment board, at social security and at the British  
 Embassy s well.  
 (diabolical music)  
 You're going to pay for this.  
 (Crescendo. Beryl leaves...  
 Annie crawls toward the phone...)

### Scene 6

ANNIE (on the phone)

Oh yes, I did pay - I'm still making instalments! And what's worse, I still need an au pair girl. What's that, you know one who's available? What's wrong with her? Nothing at all. She's nice - sweet? Between you and me, I'm looking for someone stupid. Someone who won't keep yapping at me "Madame's a meany! Meany meany." Ah? That she'd never say - This one's going to say..

(Enter Star 2 as Boglinde, highly pregnant.)

BOGLINDE (a homey peasant,  
 German accent)

Monsieur's a meany! Ach mein gott! He turned red as a beet. He talked like a beet. And den he threw me on an unvaxed floor!

ANNIE (into the phone)

Yes, in a moment of contusion he got her mixed up with the other one. Beryl. And then he took off. He's fled! My husband! My own darling Henri! Normally such a reliable man...so predictable., a real bore.

BOGLINDE

Dat yah! He bore into me.

## ANNIE

What's done is done. Don't worry. I'll put up with you...put you up ...you and your baby...for the rest of your lives if I have to. Oh what a good idea... ("noble") Since I consider my own life more or less over.

## BOGLINDE

But mine has just got undervay, Frau Annie!...I don't want to live with you!...I'm eighteen years old...All things considered...I don't want this child..You be it mother...You! I give birth - as a personal favor - and after I wash my hands. (leaving)  
Ach! Did you ever?

(Annie hears angel voices)

## ANNIE

...Say now...what if I did take care of her child...all by myself? If I adopted it legally? That way...I'd no longer be a meany. I'd be like everybody else! Oh yes - yes yes! With open arms I shall welcome Henri's mistake into my house. Do I see the sun rising in the east? Will this child save my soul —  
(Abrupt entrance of Bibi, the first au pair girl:)

## BIBI (to the audience)

Annie! Beuch, ghastly woman!

(As she shoos Annie off, then— changing the set—

She threw me out! Fired me! And for nothing...just little things! Take my word, it's much harder being an au pair girl than the lady of the house!

## (PART 2)

## Scene 1

Mind you...the night I danced off to Paris...come on now, you remember...I'm Bibi...on a certain level, I knew that her little Teddy Bear left alone might possibly break his neck. I did know...and I hid that information...from myself? Hold on...is that my conscience bothering me? I didn't think I had one. Though why not? I'm like everybody else! Why shouldn't I want to be loved as much as you? I want nice things said about me too...like "What a good girl that is.!" And if I turned into a goody - for good? Why not? Then I wouldn't keep getting into trouble...I'd just have to be reliable for a change...why not? I am going to accept my responsibilities! Yes! The very next mother who innocently welcomes me into her house with open arms - this nice young woman –

(Enter the First Star. She's no longer Annie but Granny: white nightcap, shawl etc.)

GRANNY (severe)

Just don't think I'm rolling in money! Despite the luxurious looks of this mansion, paying you your salary is going to be the ruin of me. To show a little gratitude, it's understood that you help with the housework! Young lady, do you know the meaning of the word "scrub"?

BIBI

I'll scrub away!...floors, furniture. And...your child?

GRANNY

No, him you take out inside the garden for walks. Always within the garden gate! And after, within the garden. And then you scrub the lou.

BIBI

...I see.



GRANNY

So do I. Into your thoughts: "Won't be easy working for Old Lady Pisspot."

BIBI

Madame! Crikey...what a thing to say!

GRANNY

I don't mince my words. EH?

BIBI

Let's talk about...your darling little son! Is he asleep or...What've you done with him??

GRANNY

But Pierrot isn't my son. Do I look like I'm up to giving birth? No, I'm just old Granny. He's the son of my son, Jean-Claude, whose employer, my brother-in-law, Claude-Jean, has had transferred to Marseilles. So it's old Granny who has to do everything as usual. I assure you, keeping that little toad in hand... in this enormous house...at my age...Young lady, I am falling apart.

BIBI (addled)

You poor thing!....Pull yourself together!...and...Pierrot's mother?  
(The word "mother" provokes a terrible glare from Granny.  
(delicately) Is she...kaputt?

GRANNY

Worse!! Alive!! His mother is a brazen frump!!!

BIBI

Oh...that is a shame.

GRANNY

And whose fault is that? EH??

BIBI

I just don't know!

GRANNY

Mine It's obvious, everything's my fault! My father worked in the coal mines; my mother was a washerwoman. As for me - 14 years old and on my feet 10 hours a day in a sweatshop. Where would you have me go from there? Into a factory, of course. And then I tickled the owner's fancy...this old man. That's right. I married him. (croaks a few strains of the Wedding March..)

You don't think that Raoul Marsaudin - my one true love - had it in him to yank me out of the hole of poverty by my pink little bum? EH? No. Sooo. To continue. Later, when I gave birth, it was only natural that I wanted my son to have an easier time of it. Result: I gave birth to a pile of wood. A man who pushing forty could still only get it up for his Gallo - Roman coin collection. Eh? Sooo. To continue.. .

BIBI (to herself)

...it isn't true..

GRANNY

When he met Marissa Lovejoy - this nitwit from the provinces - I was sincerely pleased to see my zombie of a son it up for something that seemed to be alive. Between the two of us, Marissa married him for his money. EH? What's wrong with that? You would've done the same thing!! Better yet, I did the same thing. And that there was another man hidden somewhere or other didn't make Granny bat an eyelash. What put me off about Marissa - she completely neglected her child! Oh yes she did! She didn't give a damn about Pierrot. Never cuddled him, never changed him! She was never around! Needless to say, everything fell on whose back? Old Granny's! Of course! With my debatable personality, I never do keep a servant more than a few days. So there I was - at my age - run ragged by this little boy - his weeping and screaming. (she gives a good shriek herself) And the housework! and the cooking! One morning, I was stirring up a pot of his favorite muck, croaking a lullaby and scrubbing the floor - Suddenly I said to myself: Why am I doing this? For a brazen frump? Immediately I brought someone in to change all the locks, as well as my lawyer, two witnesses, and when I saw Marissa slinking up the sidewalk.. (singsong as if Bibi were Marissa) "You've left the premises, Marissa,

abandoned your child. Just go away, Marissa! Scat!" Shamefully she slunk down the sidewalk!

BIBI

But...Madame...that's...perfectly disgraceful!

GRANNY

Isn't it! And now I suppose you don't want to work for me. And who'll pay the consequences? The only innocent one around. Pierrot! A child! Having no one to keep him company all day long but a rambling old bitch. I'm talking about myself.

BIBI

No, there's a limit to what anyone can endure. Prepare yourself for a shock. I actually accept the job.

GRANNY (to the public, on her way out)

She must be bonkers!

(Bibi puts on an apron. Rag in hand, she "scrubs". Change of lighting. The telephone rings.)

Scene 2

BIBI

Yes yes I'm coming - I can't do more than three things at a -  
(She gets hold of the receiver:

Entrance of the First Star as "Marissa", an effusive young woman.)

MARISSA (as if in a phone booth, lowered voice)

Issssss thisssss...the new au pair girl?

BIBI (projecting)

IF YOU WANT TO SPEAK TO MADAME —

MARISSA (plaintive)

Oh please no! No more lies! From inside this notably filthy telephone booth in which I'm standing...facing the depressing house in which you're standing.. I've just seen with my own two tearful eyes my mother-in-law cram herself into that horrible car of hers and drive off! Yes, you've guessed right. I am Marissa...née Lovejoy..the daughter-in-law... unfortunately... Mademoiselle ... could we possibly get to know each other a little better, through the grill of the sinister metal door in the garden - shutting me out...before she comes back... How about...immediately?...You don't answer? The guardian of the flesh of my flesh? I see. You're just one among many who makes a mockery of their conscience!

BIBI

No -I don't - not anymore! I'll be right with you!

(She runs toward Marissa.

The two women face each other as through grillwork.)

MARISSA

Oh you look nice bluch! I suppose she forces you to do the housework? As a young bride, she put me on my knees and ordered me to scrub! It was unbelievable and after my child was born...it got worse!...I admit that I was somewhat clumsy with Pierrot... ocasionaly neurasthenical...and frequently hysterical... (She screams!) Which is understandable...I had stage fright, I was making my debut in this mother role. And she gleefully seized on every opportunity to rub it in. After a while, she insisted on doing everything for my son herself - while I was relegated to the ranks of cleaning woman. You'll never know how I suffered...morally, physically, lamentably...One gloomy morning, I went out...for a little constitutional!...and returning found - all the locks changed and my suitcases lined up on the pavement! What a little fool I was! Marissa you were an idiot!! I simply slunk away! Or - in legal terms - I abandoned my child. Well, what did I know about the law, I still don't much. It appears that I was in the wrong to have accepted that truly stingy settlement of hers...with which I rented a furnished room. A sordid room...yerrk!...Sitting there, day after day, you can imagine my remorse ...and my contempt at my own cowardice in having left an angel child in the hands of

that monster! Oh Marissa how could you have? That's why I ran out and hired my own lawyer! They're so expensive!! For six months now, he and she do nothing but chew the fat over my simple right to see Pierrot...on Sundays!...Ah, Sundays, I'd give my life for five seconds with him...I hope you don't think I find all of this very agreeable. No it's highly disagreeable. (She weeps.)

BIBI

You poor dear! Listen - why don't you come round by the main entrance. I'll let you in.

MARISSA

You'll what?

BIBI

Yes! You're going to see your child again!

MARISSA

Oh no! It's too much!

BIBI

Not at all...you couldn't stay very long but...

MARISSA

Oh Mademoiselle...you...you aren't like her! You're a good gir! Oh yes you are!

BIBI

How wonderful!!

(Marissa runs off.)

(to the audience) My conscience is clear!

(happily as she runs of:)

I'm a goody!

(Immediately she returns, walking backwards and looking off:)

Oh...the young mother approaches her child! Tenderly she whispers to him... She gently draws him toward her...My conscience is cl -

(Sound of a car stopping short -)

A car? Who's that man getting out of it?

And why is he going into the garden as well? He shouldn't...How odd...she's throwing Pierrot at him as if her son were a sack of grain? But no they mustn't do that...

(She runs off - and is immediately thrown back on stage - she falls. Sound of the car tearing away -)

Police!! Quick!! There's been a kidnapping!! Get the police to come...and lock me up in gaol? As accomplice to a serious crime? It isn't fair! I was only obeying my conscience! I'm just an au pair girl! What did I do - let a mother see her son?!

GRANNY'S voice

Bibi?? Where is that frump?

BIBI

The old bag!! Quick, to the train station, the first train - I'm on it and out!

(as she changes the set:) The garden wall...I'll never get over it. That's right: you'd better! One - two - three -

(Lighting: dawn Bibi, seated, exhausted.)

Scene 4

BIBI

And I fell asleep...on the train...after five minutes...almost as if I'd wanted to.

Abruptly - I woke up! In the middle of the night - Panicked, I clamber off the train -

Where am I? (squinting) "Old-ville" A deserted train station..Brr...it's chilly... I'm so tired... (breaking down) I've never in my life been so tired! Oh my own little bed, way back home.. in my parent's house. So soft! So warm. So easy to nestle into. It's still there - that bed I took for granted all those long lovely years! Another tear? What good does that do? Wipe your nose, stupid!

(looking for a handkerchief in her apron pocket, she comes upon a letter.)

A letter from my mother! And I never even bothered to read it. I guess I took her for granted...as well as dear little Papa! parents! When you come right down to it, it's folks like them, a little silly, a little old- fashioned, who are the salt of the earth. Oh, I'm going to see my parents again. I'll be sleeping in my little bed...tomorrow!

(She kisses the letter)

“A Letter From My Mother!”

(A Letter has appeared.)

We'll read it, silly.

(The Letter is revealed as Bibi's mother (Star i)

MAMA

“Dear Elisabeth...”

BIBI

Elisabeth! My real name!

MAMA

How're you doing?

BIBI

Well...uh...

MAMA

I rang you up yesterday but as you'd gone out I spoke to your employer. I am pleased that you've found a nice job. And that you are where you are.

(Bibi looks around, not so pleased.)

At the moment, things are going a little less well for us. Papa and I are getting divorced.

(pause)

BIBI

...strange...Why did she write that... (looking more closely at the letter) I'd say she'd made a typing mistake...if the letter wasn't hand-written...It's not possible! You can't do that to me! I need you!

MAMA

You're a big girl now -

BIBI

No! I'm small! Teeny-weeny!

MAMA

I know you won't understand but -

BIBI

I understand! It's Papa! What's he done that's so terrible? Humped his secretary on her xerox? All men do that, Mother. He was just cutting up! Oh but you, you'd break up a home for that? Now listen to me: you are to forgive my father immediately - and sound as if you mean it!

MAMA (calmly)

One lies so often. One hits 50 and one's never told the truth to anyone - not even to one's own child. That's over. I want you to know, dear child, that for the last several years I've been having a romantic love affair with Ferdinand Wolfhoof.

BIBI (astonished)

...that imbecile...in overalls? who rings doorbells begging for odd jobs? But mother...he's...dirty. I mean really, he's disgusting. I've seen him spit on the street. And even pee against a wall!

MAMA (ferociously)

Yes and I love him!! And till the end of time!! He knows what tenderness means, Ferdinand does! He's sensual! You don't waste time talking with Ferdinand! He makes you one with him, lifts you away, takes you through the gates of seventh heaven!! Your father? Pahl He never really cared about me! The only thing that's ever counted for him...his work! His "company"! He can just take his old company and shove it up his —

BIBI

Mother! He's right to work hard...'cause, 'cause work, now that's the road to lasting happi —

MAMA

He's wrong because his company's just gone bankrupt. (pause) Hardly surprising. Stubborn old mule, he never listened to anyone and now he's got what he deserves. He's lost everything, Bibi - he owes money to everybody, his employees are suing him and everybody else is pursuing him. He's had to hide! Bibi, your father is a



disaster. Nightfall. At Ferdinand's Shack, Ferdinand and I...Oh is it ever good! "My turtle dove..." "Ferdinand you great big woolf!" Aaah!! frump!! frump!! frump!! Is someone knocking at the door? It's him - your father! His eyes are popping out of their sockets! He's gone mad! And then that bastard - your father - begins to slug your mother! Now Ferdinand's an old softy - but don't push him too far! He showed your father a thing or two! "Take that - take that - " Bing! He punched your father - gave him a walloping he'll never forget - he even kicked him in the groins — Schtrack! — and stepped on him. And then Ferdinand handed your father a bottle of wine and let him sleep on the floor! But, thank you, one night like that is enough.

BIBI

...my bed...my own little bed...

MAMA

The bailiff has seized our house. What did you expect? That's life. You see: we were wrong to lie to you. All of this is just to let you know - my dear dear child - that it's a good thing you are where you are. Stay there. For Gods sakes don't come home! It's not the moment.

Love and kisses: Mama.

(Bibi breaks down again. Mama turns her back on her...turns completely...Now she's Alice, a rather plain woman in her 40s.)

ALICE (a different tone, very comforting)

Weep, my child, weep...it makes it better to let go. So let go.

BIBI (suddenly aware of this stranger's presence)

Oh! I beg your pardon! I didn't see you.

ALICE

But I saw you! An unhappy child, obviously needing nothing more than someone to talk to!

BIBI

But - we don't know each other!

ALICE

All the better...telling your troubles to a disinterested party.

BIBI

Perhaps...you see, I've just received bad news from my parents...and I've lost my job as well. On top of which I don't even know where I am. And furthermore -

ALICE

Now now. That's quite enough for one nice little girl all by herself! That job you lost - what was it?

BIBI

I was an au pair girl.

ALICE

Why, just imagine! That's exactly what I'm looking for at the moment!

BIBI

What a coincidence. You're looking for an au pair girl in a deserted train station at five o'clock in the morning?

ALICE

Don't be smart! I'll explain .Since the death of my husband... (murmur of sympathy from Bibi) It is sad, anyway, as we weren't so well-off, Alice - that's me! - has had to go out and find herself a job...Therefore...there's nobody at the house to take care of my little daughter! Cora Lee! So bright and early every Monday morning I send her to my parents on the Brittany coast - on the train you just got off of! Such a long trip for a seven-year old...and I do miss her so! Well, she does come back every weekend and that's my treat! And I've had a little idea...enrol Cora Lee again at the school here and take her back for good...on condition that I find a truly sweet au pair girl to look after her during the day! Haven't I just met a truly sweet au pair girl?

BIBI

..Oh...I don't know what to say...

ALICE

Say yes. I believe you're free to accept the offer?

BIBI

Noone could be freer! But...you don't know me and...

ALICE

That's fine. Before Cora Lee's return next Saturday, we'll have had nearly a week to get to know each other! Come along then...to my little cottage...right away!

(while Alice changes the set:) Oh, don't you like me?

BIBI

But I do...very much...it's only that...

ALICE

You look so tired. My cottage is a simple one but there's a kind of peacefulness about it. No one else ever comes by! Today, while your Aunt Alice is working away at the office, you can have a nice rest! Come along, we're going to my place, there's no problem...

BIBI (gullibly)

Really...?

(Childlike music.

Change of lighting.)

Scene 5

(At Alice's. Bibi, seated. Alice comes toward her, with a bowl of milk:)

ALICE

Good morning, little girl. Here's your breakfast, oodles.

BIBI (darkly)

My name, Alice, is Bibi.

ALICE (imperturbable)

And you must call me "Aunt Alice", that would please me so. Here's a bowl of nice hot milk, chock-full of sugar!

BIBI (between her teeth)

Once and for all - Alice - I take strong black coffee in the morning.

ALICE (a little distracted)

I'll get you a pillow...you'll be even more comfortable.. Oh at the same time! I'll make your bed!

BIBI

Stop it! Bed - dishes - errands - you still don't let me do anything! If you continue this way, I'll get too flabby to ever take care of Cora Lee.

(Alice looks bewildered.) Cora Lee? Your daughter. It's for her that I'm here - isn't it? Even if her stay with her grandparents has been stretched out two weeks in a row and we still haven't had a sight of her? But she's coming back today - right? Answer me!

ALICE (evasive)

It's like this....Grandma and Grandpa have decided to keep Cora Lee for one more week.

BIBI

Again?

ALICE

I know, you're terribly keen to meet your new little sister...but how could I refuse such a joy to Gramps and my own Mummy-Moo! Particularly as the weather's so lovely on the coast at the moment...it would be sheer cruelty to lock poor Cora Lee up in here...

BIBI (slowly)

According to yesterday's papers - the weather is cloudy - stormy - on all the coasts of France.

ALICE

Tosh, what do those newspaper men know? It's always lovely where my parents live. They...they...live in...in...in an inlet. You know, in a cove.

BIBI

In a what?

ALICE

A cove...it's protected against bad weather! When it's awful for everybody else, it's lovely for them. Drink up your milk now. It'll do you good.

Trust me... (bowl in hand, she advances on Bibi...)

Trust your Aunt Alice. The sun is shining on the Normandy coast.

(There's something almost menacing in her movement -)

Drink.

BIBI (suddenly)

...Norrnandy? You told me - before - that they lived on the coast of Brittany!

ALICE

Why - I suppose - they must! They must live where the two coasts bump into each other! Drink.

BIBI (moving away from her)

You're trying to poison me!

ALICE

But...but...the girl's gone mad!

BIBI

What are you trying to get out of me - money? I don't have any! To watch me die a horrible death? You sadist! HELP!

ALICE

No no no! Now stop being sassy! You're getting the same milk I give to Catrine!

BIBI

To whom??

ALICE

To my daughter, Catrine...? Ceiine? Damn it, what was her name?

BIBI

Cora Lee. There's no child in this house - there's never been -  
(she goes for the exit - Alice bars the route -

ALICE

You drink my milk!

BIBI

Drink it yourself you old witch!

ALICE (deranged)

Me...drink this milk? (she laughs bizarrely)

Me...oh...all right! Yes. (brings the bowl to her lips)

BIBI

Noo it's poison, don't —

(Alice drinks down the milk.)

ALICE

You see...it was good for me. I'm still alive...in one way or another...Oh...just go away now.

BIBI (astonished)

But. .Madame...who are you...

## ALICE

I don't know...anymore. Please forgive me, Mademoiselle. Believe me...I never meant to do you any harm. But since my husband's death...I've been behaving rather oddly! What can I say? For over twenty years, night after night he came home, Jean, from the office. We ate those little stews he so looked forward to! Then he told me all about his day. He looked at me and looked at me with these beautiful powder-blue eyes. Yes, he considered that we had achieved a state of grace. Ours was a "real marriage". Obviously there's little place for other people in such a marriage. Even our families seemed to avoid us...they must have felt like intruders in our house. One day a cat wandered in through the front door, meowling with hunger. I gave him a steak...with milk on the side! He purred! He fell asleep on my knees, leaving his little hairs all over my skirt! Sweet! Jean wasn't very talkative that night...rather ill at ease. Later, in bed, I heard him open the back door - and throw pussy cat out - clearly pronouncing, "That's done - Alice." You don't think a man who won't let his wife keep a cat is going to calmly accept a child around the house? How many times did Jean assure me he needed nothing else in the whole world but his own Alice. Of course, alone, I smiled at this high blown idea he had of me. But then I would think "No, my husband is so intelligent. Somehow I must be exceptional." I am exceptional, I'd say to myself as I peeled potatoes. For twenty years I floated in a dream of romance and I scrubbed the toilet. One night...he was looking at me as usual with his powder-blue eyes . Such a good man, Jean: a heart of gold - and he fell out of his chair - heart attack. At the hospital, waiting vigilantly by the side of his bed - if only he'd open his eyes just once more...he would surely be reanimated by the sight of his Alice! And I saw his eyelids feebly flutter...he opened his mouth as in the middle of a sentence..."what's absurd about it all...Alice...never had a child." "What does that matter, my darling!" I called out to give him courage. "I've had you and that was more than enough!"

"...well, having you wasn't much at all! Good God that woman's impossible!"

I was, how to put it...taken aback!

"But...a child? you didn't want one...so I..."

"Any other woman would've cheated, found a way. But you! You cringe, you're self-effacing. You are uninteresting. All one wants to do with you is to see how far one can go in making you grovel. "

"You worshipped me!" I pleaded.

“Oh at twenty I suppose you were kind of cute. Now you’re nothing at all.

And then...and then...”

And then - he was dead. Not long after I was working as a secretary - for the first time since all those years with Jean. I typed away and all day long dark thoughts whirled inside me. “My big mistake - there he’s right - was not to have wiped his face with a child. Here I am, past forty, unlikely now that I’ll ever have one.” I began to daydream about being a mother. Jean? I no longer thought of him at all. No, I dreamt about a little girl, my daughter, always a daughter...How her little...brown eyes would light up...what name I’d give her. Coming home every night, it was almost as if I did find a little girl waiting for me. But I wasn’t sleeping well. Tossing and turning one night...I felt so stifled ...that I went outdoors...for a breath of air. Without quite realising...I was at the train station...I saw you and... (suddenly) Stay with me. Be my child - for good. I need you. You need me. Stay with me.

BIBI

But Madame -

ALICE

Aunt Alice! Better yet: Mama!

BIBI

Alice - period. You’re not my mother! I’m not your daughter!

ALICE

Don’t worry, we’ll get there -

BIBI

No! I’ve already got a lifetime behind me. It is me! I’m sorry, I don’t want to hurt your feelings. But you’re not my mother!

ALICE

I see. (closing up) I’ll pay you what I owe and then...you can...just get the hell out.  
(She looks away.)



BIBI

My goodness...not like that! please! I'm terribly concerned about you.

ALICE

I couldn't care less. One is alone in the world.

BIBI

Listen...please...couldn't we be...euh...pals?

ALICE

Pals??

BIBI

...continue...to chat...a little...like we've been doing.. about you...and me...and anything that comes to mind?.. to try...to see more clearly...at least a little? Come on Alice, look at me now. Don't be so childish. We're not children anymore - either of us. Let's be friends...that's what you need. Look at me. Oh what a child you are!...

## Scene 6

(The two women, humming, are out walking, each with a baby carriage. One is Bibi, the other Annie...They pass each other by, continue...then slowly look back just a little..)

ANNIE (to herself)

Bibi...it is Bibi?

BIBI (to herself)

..Annie...? the house by the river?

ANNIE (to Bibi, on the cool side)

Bibi?

BIBI (on the cool side as well)

Annie. What a surprise. It has been ages.

ANNIE

So...how're things?

BIBI

All right.. (Uncomfortable pause. Motions to Annie's carriage) Another little boy?

ANNIE

A girl.

BIBI

Ah. She's cute.

ANNIE

Is she? I'm blasé. I've got three of 'em at the house to cope with,

BIBI

You take care of all of them by yourself?

ANNIE (cautiously)

Yes. At present, I'm not looking for an au pair girl, thanks. Besides, you've got a child to take care of?

BIBI

Yes I'm baby-sitting for this one for the time being...oh more competently than before!

ANNIE

That's a good thing!

BIBI

It's only normal. I've got a sure-fire trick for babies. ("expert") The first thing you do is cook the baby.

ANNIE

Cook?

BIBI

That's right. Literally boil it on a high flame in a big pot inside your own body for nine months. After, you just kind of improvise.

ANNIE

Bibi...is this little bugger yours?

BIBI (beaming)

All mine!

ANNIE

It isn't true...

BIBI

Hey, I'm a big girl now!

ANNIE

Bibi!

BIBI

Annie!

BIBI and ANNIE (embracing)

How wonderful! ...Wonderful!

BIBI

By the way - you don't know of an au pair girl - I mean a reliable au pair girl..

ANNIE

Ah! Not so easy!

BIBI

Between the two of us, the last one -

ANNIE

They're all a bunch of - (catching herself) Most of them -

BIBI (amused)

You were simply furious with me, eh? And your husband, God, how we loathed each other! He must still be a little resentful...no?

ANNIE

Why, not at all. He even claims that without you, he and I would never've really got married.

BIBI

You mean you weren't legally married to that... electric lawnmower...what was his name...Henri?

ANNIE

I was legally married to Henri. Now we're legally divorced.

BIBI

Oh, I'm sorry...

ANNIE

I'm not! And in a way it was you that started the chain of events that catapulted me into that divorce - and my second marriage - with Jacques.

BIBI

...Ah you married Jacques?...your boss? But didn't you used to say he was "distressingly ugly"?

ANNIE

Oh I don't know...One day at the office just after closing time, we were alone and I burst into tears. And he said, "Henri never appreciated you" and he was caressing me, and I thought, funny, he's not all that ugly. Well it was rather dark in there, and with all my tears, I couldn't see much of anything. And he's got a beard now, it hides the worst - like it or not I'm his wife.

BIBI

Then you don't work anymore?

ANNIE

Are you kidding? Jacques carried me over the threshold, then he let me know that I was at his mercy! I give him breakfast, he talks, his mouth open, he dribbles. I give him coffee and, more important; advice and pastry and more advice and another cup of coffee and advice. And all day long he's calling me! It's nerve-wracking! And these three screaming brats! (she screams!) And the minute he walks in at night he's still talking and dribbling! And he has the gall to tell me that if I didn't like that sort of thing I shouldn't have married him because with him at least I knew what I was getting into. And if I wanted to find another creep like Henri I should go to an agency, with unemployment the way it is, he'll have no trouble replacing me with another wife!

BIBI

You poor darling! Your second marriage is even worse than your first! It's hopeless!

ANNIE

But no...why do you say that? Jacques's right...life with him is terribly interesting! Is your marriage so much better?

BIBI

Oh well...nine...you see...Xaviar —

ANNIE (cutting her)

It's going to rain. (as the two women quickly cover their carriages)  
Listen, we simply must have a meal together, all four of us, with all the kids -

BIBI

Marvelous, I invite you.

ANNIE

Oh no, I invite you.

BIBI

I said it's me this time! Sunday lunch...around one?

ANNIE

That sounds fine.

BIBI

No...I've got to tell you - Xaviar...this will crack you up -

ANNIE (looking up, cutting her off)

It's really clouding over -

BIBI

We're going to get soaked - we'll talk on Sunday!

ANNIE

Till Sunday!

(Each one takes a carriage and off they go, running in place. They come to an abrupt halt:)

ANNIE: Oh my..

(overlapping)

BIBI: My God.

ANNIE:

I didn't take her

BIBI

I didn't give her my

ANNIE and BIBI

Address!

(They turn round...and then realise that each one has walked off with the other's baby carriage.)

ANNIE and BIBI (fatalistic)

And I've got her baby.

Blackout.

End of "The GOODIES".

Performance rights must be obtained before production. For contact information, please [see the information page for The Goodies](#).