

La Comédiathèque

# Ménage à trois

A comedy by Jean-Pierre Martinez



[comediatheque.net](http://comediatheque.net)

**The text of this play is to free download.  
However, an authorisation is required from the author  
for any public representation.  
To get in touch with Jean-Pierre Martinez  
and ask an authorisation to represent one of his works –  
<https://comediatheque.net/>**

# Ménage à Trois

**A comedy by Jean-Pierre Martinez**

When three people live in a two-room apartment,  
it means there's one too many. But who?

## **Characters**

Alex

Clark

Julia

© La Comédiathèque

*In the modest living room of a two-room apartment, Clark sleeps soundly on the sofa, draped in a sheet. Julia, appearing freshly awakened, emerges from the kitchen holding a coffee pot, nonchalantly setting it on the table without acknowledging the slumbering Clark. Pouring herself a cup of coffee, she is joined by Alex, who shuffles in with a zombie-like demeanour. In a tender gesture, he leans towards Julia, planting a kiss on her lips.*

**Alex** – Good morning, my love.

**Julia** – Good morning, darling.

*Alex takes a seat across from her, not bothering to check on the sleeper.*

**Julia** – Coffee?

**Alex** – Thanks.

*She hands him a cup, and they share silly smiles while sipping. Alex yawns, powers up his computer, and starts typing.*

**Julia** – Already?

**Alex** – Sorry... Did you sleep well?

**Julia** – Like a log. *(Smiling with a hint)* Once you finally let me sleep... And you?

**Alex** – Like a baby.

**Julia** – A baby?

**Alex** – Yes, well...

**Julia** – Who knows... Maybe we created one last night...

**Alex** – Didn't we agree to wait a bit longer? Until I secure a proper job again...

**Julia** – And until a spot becomes available...

**Alex** – In daycare?

**Julia** – Right here!

**Alex** – Of course...

**Julia** – I'm still on the pill, don't worry... But you know, accidents can happen...

**Alex** – I'm aware...

*Julia grabs a newspaper from the table.*

**Julia** – Let's see... What's my horoscope saying? *(Reading)* Love: Venus is smiling upon you. Fully enjoy the fruits of passion...

**Alex** – Mm-hmm...

**Julia** – Money: Your issues might resolve quickly. You'll come out on top, but stay cautious. (*Alex's gaze is irresistibly drawn to his computer screen.*) I'm talking about our future, Alex! And you're checking stock prices!

*Alex folds the screen to resist the temptation.*

**Alex** – Sorry, Julia... (*Alex turns to a shelf with a Chinese vase.*) Wasn't there another vase there?

**Julia** – I broke it yesterday while cleaning... I'm really sorry. It was a gift from your mother.

**Alex** – It was just a vase, after all... But the one left looks a bit lonely. We'll have to find another companion for it.

*Julia smiles. They continue sipping their coffee.*

**Julia** – I hate to bring up touchy subjects early in the morning, but did he mention how long he roughly plans to stay here...

**Alex** – Who?

**Julia** (*nodding toward the sleeper*) – Clark!

**Alex** – Ah... Him... Listen, I'm not exactly sure, but it's meant to be temporary...

**Julia** – Temporary?

**Alex** – Just to give him some time to get back on his feet...

**Julia** – He's been sleeping on our sofa for almost a year. I think he's had plenty of time to get back on his feet, hasn't he?

**Alex** – He's currently without a home... We can't just toss him out onto the street like that...

**Julia** – But Clark has always been homeless! Before squatting with us, he squatted at my place. And my place was already here, precisely...

**Alex** – That's true.

**Julia** – He just moved from my bed to the sofa! I don't know... He's my ex, after all.

**Alex** – It doesn't bother me, I assure you...

**Julia** – Well, it bothers me!

**Alex** – It's thanks to him that we met. We owe him that much. He's got no one else!

**Julia** – Do you want to adopt him? That way, he'll really be part of the family!

**Alex** – Well, he hasn't exactly had the best luck...

**Julia** – You're right. I mean, when your name is Clark, you're off to a bad start in life.

**Alex** – That's for sure... Unless he's secretly Superman...

**Julia** – Which he clearly isn't... Actually, I wonder if it was that ridiculous name that led me to take pity on him and end up in bed with him back then. Clark... It's not a nickname, right?

**Alex** – No, no, I assure you. He showed me his documents once. His name is really Clark. He suffered a lot because of it, you know... From daycare onwards, he was the sole Clark in his generation.

**Julia** – True, it's tough to picture a baby named Clark. Or, if we do, we imagine a not very normal kid...

**Alex** – Yeah...

**Julia** – And for our baby, if it's a boy? Any preferences for a name?

**Alex** – I don't know... Donald? (*She looks at him horrified.*) I'm kidding...

*The doorbell rings. Julia goes to answer it. Alex takes the opportunity to lift the lid of his computer and starts typing on it again. Julia returns.*

**Alex** – Who was it?

*Julia throws a stack of letters on the coffee table.*

**Julia** – The postman... So, how much has our stock portfolio gained since last night?

**Alex** – As long as we haven't sold, we haven't lost...

**Julia** – I see... I still wonder if investing all your severance pay in Costco stocks was a good idea.

**Alex** – Why not?

**Julia** – You used to work at Costco before they laid you off!

**Alex** – So what?

**Julia** – I don't know... If they're downsizing, it means the company isn't doing well, right?

**Alex** – That's where most people go wrong, and a savvy trader spots a good deal.

**Julia** – Oh really?

**Alex** – If companies are laying off employees today, it's to boost their stock prices. It's called stock market layoffs, precisely.

**Julia** – Okay... And how much have your Costco stocks gone up since you were fired?

**Alex** – You know, the stock market is more a long-term investment.

**Julia** – That's why you spend your days in front of your screen monitoring stock prices... (*She takes the pile of letters and comments.*) Electricity, water, gas, mobile, internet... Well, that's short-term, you see, and it's always on the rise...

**Alex** – That's true...

**Julia** – Fortunately, at least one person is bringing in a salary in this house...

**Alex** – I have to invest in something while waiting to find a job again. Would you prefer me to just sit around doing nothing and getting depressed?

**Julia** – You're right, I'm sorry...

*She kisses him.*

**Alex** – We'll get through this, you'll see... I have a feeling... And there are traders who make a lot of money, you know?

**Julia** – Hmm... There are also those who end up in prison...

**Alex** – Indeed...

*Julia picks up a business card from the middle of the letters and hands it to him.*

**Julia** – Look, there was also a business card in the mailbox.

**Alex** (*reading*) – African marabout and clairvoyant. Work, money, love, pregnancy... Guaranteed efficiency and quick results in complete discretion...

**Julia** (*reading over his shoulder*) – Occult protection and exorcism... What if we asked him to exorcise Clark? I think that would be a more profitable investment than the stock market... In the short and long term...

**Alex** – You might be onto something...

*They share a kiss.*

**Julia** – Anyway, he seems to be sleeping soundly.

**Alex** – True, he hasn't moved an inch since we got up.

**Julia** – Maybe he's dead...

**Alex** – Seriously?

**Julia** – It would finally be a way to get rid of this burden.

**Alex** – That would solve all our problems...

**Julia** – And his.

**Alex** – We shouldn't joke about this...

**Julia** – You're right, he's not moving at all.

**Alex** – Yeah, it's starting to worry me a bit.

**Julia** – It would be too good to be true...

**Alex** (*lightly shaking the sleeper*) – Clark...?

*Clark remains stiff as a corpse. Alex and Julia exchange a worried look.*

**Julia** – No...

*Alex leans over Clark's body.*

**Alex** – It looks like he's not breathing anymore...

**Julia** – He's always been a heavy sleeper, but usually, he snores...

**Alex** – Oh, damn... I wonder if I've messed up...

**Julia** – What are you talking about?

**Alex** – Last night, Clark mentioned he had a headache...

**Julia** – So what?

**Alex** – I gave him an Effervescent Aspro...

**Julia** – And you think that aspirin could...

**Alex** – The problem is, without telling him, I added one of your sleeping pills to the aspirin...

**Julia** – No?

**Alex** – In fact, since you told me they were very mild, I added two...

**Julia** – But why did you do that?

**Alex** – You complained that because of Clark, we had no privacy anymore... It's true that from here, you can hear everything happening next door... I know because I used to sleep on this sofa when Clark was sleeping in the bedroom with you, and I can tell you that...

**Julia** – Yes, okay...

**Alex** – Since it was Saturday night, I thought... That's why this morning, I wasn't worried that he was sleeping in. Maybe he's allergic to sleeping pills... Can you imagine if he doesn't wake up?

**Julia** – I'm more concerned about the aspirin...

**Alex** – Aspirin?

**Julia** – In case of internal injury, it can cause bleeding.

**Alex** – Internal injury? Clark?

**Julia** – You asked me earlier where the second vase had gone... Well, if Clark had a headache last night, it's because I smashed your mother's vase over his head...

**Alex** – But... why?

**Julia** – Because he tried to jump me, your friend, believe it or not!

**Alex** – No?

**Julia** – He started by suggesting that we get back together... Mostly to avoid ending up on the street, I imagine... And when I turned him down, he got a bit pushy, if you catch my drift...

**Alex** – What a little jerk...

**Julia** – Now, if he's really dead, we're screwed...

**Alex** – You think so?

**Julia** – I mean, between you drugging him without his knowledge and me smashing a vase on his head, we can hardly pass this off as a simple domestic accident...

**Alex** – What's the plan then? Should we call an ambulance at least?

**Julia** – If he's dead anyway...

**Alex** – The police then?

**Julia** – We'd have to get our story straight first.

**Alex** – Let's just say that...

*While they confer, Clark finally turns over and falls off the sofa. Alex and Julia glance at him.*

**Clark** – Oh, damn, I slept like a log. I don't even remember what happened last night...

**Julia** – Good thing...

**Alex** (*sarcastic*) – Your headache is gone, then?

**Clark** – Headache? I don't remember having headache. Why do you ask?

**Alex** – Just like that...

**Clark** – No, it's weird; I'm even in great shape. I don't know why, I feel fantastic! Usually, I wake up with a hangover...

**Alex** – No surprise there...

**Clark** – But today, I'm extra clear-headed.

**Alex** – Don't get too comfortable, it surely won't last...

**Julia** – Well, while you're feeling fantastic, how about putting that energy into finding a job?

**Clark** – A job?

**Julia** – Don't tell me you're not familiar with the concept.. Have you never worked in your life?

**Clark** – Work? What's that supposed to mean?

**Julia** – Forget it...

*Clark gets up. He is in his underwear.*

**Clark** – Is there any coffee left?

**Julia** – You just need to warm it up. Do you think you can manage that?



**Clark** – Don't bother for me, I'll drink it as it is.

**Julia** – Of course...

*Clark pours himself a coffee and starts drinking it.*

**Clark** (to Julia) – Oh, it's fine, still warm... (*He sips his coffee in a slightly awkward silence.*) By the way, how's your mother?

**Julia** (*surprised*) – She's doing very well, thank you.

**Clark** – She got out of the hospital, then?

**Julia** – Hospital? My mother is on vacation in Corsica...

**Clark** – But she had an accident, right?

**Julia** – Not to my knowledge.

**Clark** – Sorry, I must have dreamed it.

**Julia** – Yeah...

*Clark continues to drink his coffee.*

**Clark** – It's strange, I also dreamed that Alex found a job. Funny, isn't it?

**Alex** – What's so funny about that?

**Julia** – Did you happen to dream that you found a place to live? Now, that would be amusing...

**Alex** – Sure, with three in a two-room apartment, of course... We end up a bit on top of each other...

**Julia** – By the way, it smells a bit like a wild animal in here, doesn't it?

*Clark gets up.*

**Clark** – Okay, I'll take a shower...

*Clark leaves.*

**Julia** – I wonder if I wouldn't have preferred him to be really dead, after all...

**Alex** – There's still another vase...

**Julia** – My mother... He's really weird, isn't he?

**Alex** – Alright, I'll talk to him...

*Julia moves closer to Alex.*

**Julia** – Thanks. Because you have to admit, with my ex between us on the sofa...

**Alex** – It's a bit of a ménage à trois.

**Julia** – If only he did the cleaning...

*They share a kiss. Julia's mobile phone rings. She answers.*

**Julia** – Yes? Dad? So, how's the holiday going? Is the weather nice in Corsica? (*Her smile fades*) No? But what happened? And is it serious? OK... No, no... Yes, yes, I understand... Give her my love... Alright, call me back as soon as you know more, then... Me too... See you...

**Alex** – What's happening?

**Julia** – My mother is in the hospital in Bastia...

**Alex** – Damn... A bomb attack?

**Julia** – The doctors can't say for sure yet; it's siesta time. And siesta in Corsica is sacred. But apparently, it's more likely to be food poisoning.

**Alex** – What did she eat?

**Julia** – Donkey sausage. It's a Corsican specialty, it seems...

**Alex** – How can they eat stuff like that... Can you imagine if they granted them independence...

**Julia** – Thankfully, my father hadn't eaten it too...

**Alex** – He was right to be cautious... But will they be able to save her?

**Julia** (*teary-eyed*) – Dad will call me back as soon as he knows more...

*Alex hugs her to offer comfort.*

**Alex** – It will be okay, you'll see... We just have to wait, that's all... Food poisoning is treated very well nowadays...

*Julia dries her tears a bit.*

**Julia** – But how did he know, anyway?

**Alex** – Who? Your father?

**Julia** – Clark! He said my mother had an accident...

**Alex** – Well, food poisoning isn't exactly an accident.

**Julia** – He knew my mother was in the hospital!

**Alex** – That's right...

**Julia** – It's unbelievable... Imagine if he had a voyeuristic gift!

**Alex** – Clairvoyance, you mean? Like that African marabout?

**Julia** – Admit it, it's still disturbing...

**Alex** – That would be the only gift he had.

**Julia** – Besides, he's not African. We would have noticed that by now.

*Clark returns.*

**Clark** – There's a black cat on the balcony.

**Alex** – A cat?

**Clark** – Probably the one the neighbour lost...

**Julia** – The neighbour? Which neighbour?

**Clark** – Upstairs! The one with the goth style...

**Julia** – I don't know anyone who dresses goth. And the upstairs apartment has been empty for six months. The previous tenant was a teacher, she hung herself on her shower curtain on the first day of school...

*There's a knock at the door. Julia goes to open it.*

**Alex** – What colour did you say the cat was?

**Clark** – Black.

**Alex** – A black cat... Isn't that bad luck?

*Julia returns.*

**Julia** – It's the new neighbour...

**Alex** – So?

**Julia** – Honestly, she has a strange vibe...

**Alex** – In what way?

**Julia** – Let's just say if she offered me an apple, I'm not sure I would have taken it...

**Alex** – So?

**Julia** – She just moved into the upstairs apartment, and she lost her cat.

**Clark** – A black cat.

**Alex** – Of course...

**Julia** (*to Clark*) – Can you catch the cat and give it back to that witch? I prefer not to touch black cats. Especially now, with my mother in the hospital...

**Clark** – No problem, I'll take care of it... It's just a cat, after all...

*Clark leaves. Alex and Julia exchange a perplexed look.*

**Alex** – It must be a coincidence... Do you believe in witchcraft?

**Julia** – I didn't until today... But you're right, it's probably just a coincidence.

*Alex's phone rings. He looks at the displayed number.*

**Alex** (*to Julia*) – It's the Job Centre... (*He takes the call.*) Yes? Yes, yes... No, no... Yeah, yeah, I understand... Okay, I'll note down the number... (*He scribbles something on a piece of paper.*) Alright, thank you very much. (*He puts away his phone and addresses Julia.*) It was about a job offer...

**Julia** – Great! You see, they're still doing their job at the Job Centre! And what kind of job is it?

**Alex** – Sales representative for a funeral home company. A position just became available...

**Julia** – A retirement?

**Alex** – A suicide...

**Julia** – But that's great!

**Alex** – Yes...

**Julia** – So why do you look so down? It seems like it doesn't make you happy?

**Alex** – What's strange is that Clark also predicted that...

*Julia is stunned.*

**Julia** – Damn, that's true...

**Alex** – He dreamt that I found a job, it's really weird...

**Julia** – Oh yeah, now it's becoming too many coincidences.

**Alex** – Absolutely.

**Julia** – Maybe it's the blow to the head...

**Alex** – Plus the meds...

**Julia** – It must have caused some sort of short circuit...

**Alex** – It's crazy, feels like we're in a witchcraft series.

**Julia** – Or in a zombie movie...

*Clark comes back.*

**Clark** – Ah, a good shower, that feels great. (*He realises the other two are looking at him strangely.*) What, what's wrong?

**Alex** – No, nothing...

**Julia** – A good shower feels good, huh?

**Clark** – Yeah, that's what I was saying, actually...

**Julia** – Want another coffee?

**Clark** – Oh yes, why not?

**Julia** – I'll go make another one... Oh, but no, why me, after all? Shall we do rock-paper-scissors?

**Clark** – What?

**Julia** (*making the three gestures in sequence*) – Rock-paper-scissors, you don't know it?

**Clark** – Oh yes, sure...

**Julia** – Whoever loses makes the coffee, okay?

**Clark** – Okay, but I've never been lucky in games.

**Julia** – Unlucky at games, lucky in love... Ready?

**Clark** – Okay.

**Julia** – One, two, three...

*Julia raises her fist in a communist salute, Clark raises an open palm in a Hitler salute.*

**Julia** – The paper wraps the rock, you won. Now with Alex...

**Clark** – Oh yes, that's funny!

**Julia** – One, two, three...

*Alex extends two fingers in a karate style towards Clark, who clenches both fists in front of his face like a boxer to protect himself.*

**Julia** – And the rock breaks the scissors... Again, you won, Clark! (*To Alex*) He's really good at this, huh? It's like he knows everything that's going to happen in advance...

**Clark** – It's the first time I've won a game.

**Julia** – I'll heat up the rest of the coffee in the microwave...

*Alex is left alone with Clark.*

**Clark** – She's very playful, huh?

**Alex** – Yes...

**Clark** – And you, did you sleep well?

**Alex** – Very well, thank you.

**Clark** – Listen, I completely understand that my presence here is creating tension...

**Alex** – You think?

**Clark** – As soon as I can, I'll leave, I assure you. In fact, I have a plan...

**Alex** – A plan?

**Clark** – You won't believe it, but I think I have an opening with the neighbour upstairs.

**Alex** – The witch?

**Clark** – Yes, well... I'd prefer the term succubus, if you don't mind.

**Alex** – Succubus... No, no, it doesn't bother me...

**Clark** – No, but I'm kidding... She does have a bit of a unique look, but well...

**Alex** – What does she look like exactly?

**Clark** – Well... She looks a bit like a vampire, you know...

**Alex** – A vampire?

**Clark** – Let's say that... if she were a nurse and proposed a blood extraction, I would hesitate a bit...

**Alex** – Oh yes, indeed...

**Clark** – But well... She lives just above. The move will be easier...

**Alex** – You only have one bag...

**Clark** – And we would still be neighbours!

**Alex** – Cool...

**Clark** – There's just one thing that worries me a bit...

**Alex** – Oh yeah?

**Clark** – I'm not a hundred percent sure yet if it's really a woman...

**Alex** – You mean it could be a man?

**Clark** – Or something in between.

**Alex** – In between...?

**Clark** – Well, nobody's perfect...

**Alex** – That's clear...

*Julia returns with a tray, placing it in front of Clark, featuring coffee, orange juice, and toast.*

**Julia** – Here, I prepared a nice breakfast for you. Breakfast is important. It's the most important meal of the day.

**Clark** (*surprised and a bit uneasy*) – Oh yes...

**Alex** – Do you want me to butter the toast for you?

**Clark** – Uh... You're not trying to poison me, are you? To get rid of me...

**Alex** – Don't worry, we'll spare you the donkey sausage, if you know what I mean...

**Clark** – Uh... Yes... Well, not really, but...

**Julia** – Come on, go ahead, the coffee will get cold...

*Alex and Julia watch him eat with silly smiles, making Clark obviously uncomfortable.*

**Clark** – Don't you want another cup with me? Because I feel a bit watched here...

**Julia** – Of course. But let's make it a game at the same time, okay?

**Clark** – Again?

*She turns her back to Clark, pours herself a coffee, and puts two sugars in it.*

**Julia** – A riddle... How many sugars did I put in my coffee?

**Clark** – I don't know... Two?

**Julia** – Yes! Another win!

**Alex** – At the same time, you always put two sugars in your coffee...

*Clark, regaining hope, gives Julia a puppy-dog look.*

**Clark** – Julia, I understand you more than you realize. I knew you even before Alex, remember?

**Alex** – If I'm bothering you, just let me know, okay?

**Julia** (to Alex) – And you were insisting earlier that you weren't feeling jealous...

**Clark** – I'm not, at all... In fact, I'm completely open to sharing...

**Alex** – Are you out of your mind?

*Clark's phone rings. He answers.*

**Clark** – Yes? Oh yeah, hi! (To the other two) Excuse me... No, no, you're not bothering me...

*Clark leaves.*

**Julia** – So?

**Alex** – Clark has a thing with the succubus...

**Julia** – Succubus? What does that mean?

**Alex** – I have no idea... That's what worries me... How can Clark know words that I don't even understand.

**Julia** – Just yesterday, his vocabulary was limited to barely two hundred words... and half of those were beer brands.

**Alex** – Wait, let me check on Wikipedia...

*He looks at his computer, and she reads over his shoulder.*

**Julia** – Succubus: Demons who take the form of a woman to seduce a man during his sleep and dreams...

**Alex** – No...

**Julia** – I'm telling you, Clark has a gift for clairvoyance! And now we know where it comes from!

**Alex** – Oh yeah? Where from?

**Julia** – From the witch who lives just above! She must have enchanted him in his sleep, as they say on Wikipedia...

**Alex** – That's clear...

**Julia** – It's too stupid; we should find a way to take advantage of it...

**Alex** – Take advantage of what?

**Julia** – Hold on, Alex, we have someone at home who can predict the future! Can you imagine? It's better than the horoscope, isn't it?

**Alex** – For sure...

**Julia** – For once, this parasite can be useful... We absolutely need to come up with an idea to exploit this idiot's supernatural powers, and fast.

**Alex** – Why fast?

**Julia** – Because it might not last! It's probably a passing effect...

**Alex** – I see... Like a magic potion, you mean...

**Julia** – Let's stay calm and think. What would we do if we could read tomorrow's newspaper twenty-four hours in advance?

**Alex** – What if we talked to Clark about it?

**Julia** – Are you kidding? Absolutely not!

**Alex** – Why not?

**Julia** – If Clark knew he had a gift, do you think he'd share it with us?

**Alex** – Five minutes ago, he was ready to share you with me...

**Julia** – No, he shouldn't know, that way we won't have anything to share at all...

**Alex** – At the same time, hiding something from a clairvoyant can't be easy...

**Julia** – That's true...

**Alex** – Let's just ask him what combination he would suggest for the next lottery draw?

**Julia** (*ironically*) – Indeed, that's super discreet...

**Alex** – What?

**Julia** – If he suspects anything, he'll play the winning combination without us! It only takes one euro to play the lottery!

**Alex** – You're right.

**Julia** – And finding five numbers plus the bonus isn't easy... It's Clark, after all...

**Alex** – What do you suggest, then?



**Julia** – It should be something simpler... and initially requires a larger investment... An amount that Clark doesn't have anyway...

**Alex** – The stock market?

**Julia** – Exactly! The stock market! He must sense in advance which stocks will go up or down...

**Alex** – You think?

**Julia** – Can you imagine? If a trader could know in advance the stock prices for the next day!

*Clark comes back.*

**Alex** – Everything okay?

**Clark** – Great! I haven't read my horoscope, but I feel like it's going to be a much better day than yesterday... I'm starving, how about you guys?

**Julia** – Tell me, Clark, if you had to invest all your savings right now, what would you buy?

**Clark** – McDonald's!

**Julia** – Why McDonald's?

**Clark** – Why? With all my savings, I can barely afford a Big Mac! That's why!

**Alex** – Got it...

*Alex and Julia exchange a knowing look.*

**Julia** (to Alex) – Well, what are you waiting for?

**Alex** – I'll be right back...

*Alex leaves with his computer. Awkward silence.*

**Clark** – Listen, Julia, I understood the message you tried to convey to me last night...

**Julia** – You mean about the vase... I'm really sorry, I got carried away, I don't know what came over me...

**Clark** – No, no, it's me... I understand that it's a bit awkward that I keep living with you, and I thank you for hosting me for so long...

**Julia** – Not at all, really! You can stay as long as you want!

**Clark** – Actually, it's bothering me now. I still have feelings for you and...

**Julia** – Oh really?

**Clark** – The woman from upstairs offered to host me for a while...

**Julia** – The witch?

**Clark** – Okay, she has a somewhat creepy look, but still...

**Julia** – Well, Clark, you're not going to move in with... that creature! I'm not even sure if she's a genuine woman...

**Clark** – Ah, you also have doubts...

**Julia** – Still, Clark, take the time to think about it. It's an important decision...

**Clark** – Appreciate the advice, but I've been contemplating it for quite some time now. I'll gather my belongings...

*Clark leaves. Alex comes back.*

**Alex** – There we go, I've sold all our Costco stocks, and invested everything in McDonald's.

**Julia** – Bingo!

**Alex** – Now all that's left is to be patient...

**Julia** – Le me see...

**Alex** (*showing her the screen*) – Unbelievable!

**Julia** – What's the matter?

**Alex** – Our McDonald's stocks surged by ten percent within the five minutes since I made the purchase!

**Julia** – How is that even possible?

*Alex looks at the screen.*

**Alex** – Rumour has it Facebook might acquire McDonald's... Just came up! It's unbelievable!

**Julia** – So, how much have we made?

**Alex** – We haven't made anything until we sell. But hold on... I bought them for 10,000 euros.

**Julia** – Is that all we have left from the 15,000 we invested in the stock market?

**Julia** – Unfortunately, I had to sell Costco at a loss...

**Julia** – Cut to the chase... How much did we profit, damn it?

**Alex** – After deducting the fees, if we sell now, we're looking at a profit of... roughly 800 euros.

**Julia** – Well... It's not hitting the jackpot, though.

**Alex** – And it could dip again in five minutes...

**Julia** – Sell right away!

**Alex** – Okay. (*Alex types on his phone*) It's done. 798 euros in profit...

**Julia** – Yes!

**Alex** – Of course, if we had a larger initial investment...

**Julia** – You're right; we need to think big. Now that we know Clark really has a gift for clairvoyance...

**Alex** – Sure, speculating on the derivatives market could involve leveraging...

**Julia** – What's that?

**Alex** – Essentially, it amplifies the potential gains or losses by 10 or 20 times... obviously.

**Julia** – Bingo!

**Alex** – I'm willing, but we're still sitting on only 10,798 euros to invest.

**Julia** – Well, truth be told, I have a bit more stashed away in my savings account than I let on...

**Alex** – How much?

**Julia** – 10,000... And I also have 20,000 in my home savings account. It's a gift from my parents in anticipation of my wedding...

**Alex** – You have a dowry?

**Julia** – My mother made me swear not to tell you about it... To make sure you weren't marrying me for my money...

**Alex** – I'm truly touched by this show of trust...

**Julia** – If we plan on expanding our family soon, we'll need a larger apartment!

**Alex** – That's clear...

**Julia** – It's now or never, Alex! We can't let this opportunity slip away! Fortune favours the bold! And today, I feel like the stars are aligned for us...

**Alex** – And are you really sure that...

**Julia** – I'm completely thrilled. This story is insane. Here are my login details for my internet account...

*She scribbles something on a paper and hands it to him.*

**Alex** – What we need is to extract another insider trading tip from Clark...

**Julia** – Oh, damn!

**Alex** – What's wrong?

**Julia** – Clark just told me he's leaving. He's packing his bag.

**Alex** – We absolutely need to keep him here until he gives us his winning strategy.

**Julia** – How?

**Alex** – You could use your charm...

**Julia** – Are you serious?

*Clark comes back with his bag.*

**Alex** – I'll leave you to it...

*Alex exits.*

**Clark** – Tell him goodbye for me...

**Julia** – But come on, Clark, you can't just leave like that!

**Clark** – It's better for everyone, I assure you.

**Julia** – What if I asked you to stay?

**Clark** – Why?

**Julia** – Because I don't want you to go.

**Clark** – Alex will never agree to a threesome plan, I know him.

**Julia** – Neither will I.

**Clark** – So?

**Julia** – He's the one who's going to leave.

**Clark** – No...

**Julia** – Things haven't been going so well between Alex and me for a while now. I've been thinking, maybe I made the wrong choice...

*Clark approaches her, hopeful.*

**Clark** – The wrong choice? Do you mean that...

**Julia** (*gently pushing away his advances*) – It's still a bit too early, Clark, I'm sorry. That's why I reacted so abruptly last night. You have to give me some time, you understand? But please, don't leave... (*Julia's phone rings.*) Sorry, I have to answer, it's my mother.

*She leaves. Clark looks confused Alex comes back and hands him a sheet, which Clark takes automatically.*

**Alex** – Can I ask you for advice, Clark? As a friend?

**Clark** – Uh... yes...

**Alex** – Here, this is a list of forty names.

**Clark** – Another game?

**Alex** – Pay attention, high concentration! These aren't beer brands, Clark! These are the 30 companies listed on the Dow Jones...

**Clark** – The Dow Jones? What's that?

**Alex** – Ali Baba and the 40 thieves, you know?

**Clark** – Uh... yes...

**Alex** – Well, the Dow Jones is pretty much the same thing. The 40 thieves, that's them.

*Clark has a look at the list Alex is holding.*

**Clark** – You just told me that there were 30 companies listed on the Dow Jones... and I see 40 names on your list...

**Alex** – I added a few of them myself...

**Clark** – Why ?

**Alex** – To make the comparison with Alibaba and the 40 thieves more understandable for you !

**Clark** – I don't understand a word of what you're saying.

**Alex** – Anyway, their treasure is all the money they've stolen. And Ali Baba is you! Well, it's me... Now, listen carefully, Clark, I trust you.

**Clark** – Oh, yeah...?

**Alex** – If I had to bet all my savings on one of these companies, for which one would you give your approval?

**Clark** (*not understanding*) – Ali Baba?

**Alex** – Alibaba! I knew it! Excellent choice! The online retail sector is currently undergoing restructuring... Have you sensed a takeover bid, is that it?

**Clark** – A takeover bid? What's that again?

**Alex** – A takeover bid? It's a hold-up, my friend! The heist of the century! They're thieves, I told you! Thanks, Clark... Thank you so much...

*Alex leaves, excited. Clark, with his bag in hand, doesn't know what to do. Julia returns, still on the phone.*

**Julia** – Okay, call me back if there's any news. Alright, I send you a kiss. Me too... (*To Clark*) That was my mother... Luckily, she's much better now.

**Clark** – That's good... I really like your mother, you know... And I think it's mutual...

**Julia** – You think?

**Clark** – Well, I'm going to put my bag back down, then. I feel sorry for Alex, though. He's a friend. Try to handle it gently. You're going to break his heart, you know...

**Julia** – Of course...

*Alex returns, his eyes fixed on his computer screen.*

**Clark** (*aside to Julia*) – By the way, I wonder if he suspects something. He seems to be losing it a bit, since a while ago, right?

**Julia** – Oh, really?

**Clark** – Well, that's life... The wheel turns...

**Julia** (*excited*) – The wheel of fortune! (*Clark exits, somewhat worried.*) So?

**Alex** – I went all in on Alibaba... After consulting Clark, of course.

**Julia** – Did he explicitly tell you to...

**Alex** – With him, you have to read between the lines, you know... And since we said it was better to hide from him that he had a gift...

**Julia** – The result?

**Alex** – Well, we'll see... But we might have to wait a bit...

**Julia** – Okay... By the way, my mother is much better now... And when she finds out that thanks to you... and Clark, I've tripled or quadrupled the money she gave us for the wedding. Trust me, you're going to rise significantly in her esteem!

**Alex** – Wait, I'm opening the page... (*He types on the keyboard*) Open Sesame!

*They look at the computer screen together.*

**Julia** – Where is it?

**Alex** – There...

*Alex's face freezes.*

**Julia** – Why are you making that face?

**Alex** – I don't understand... Alibaba's stock just dropped twenty percent all of a sudden on the announcement of disappointing financial results compared to analysts' forecasts...

**Julia** – So what?

**Alex** – Well, with the leverage effect, we've lost almost everything.

**Julia** – But as long as we haven't sold, we haven't lost, right?

**Alex** – Well... in the options market, yes.

*Clark returns.*

**Clark** – I heard the tension rising between you, so I allow myself to intervene... Listen, Alex, I know it's difficult for you, but well... For me too, a year ago, when Julia left me to go out with you... It wasn't easy either, believe me...

**Alex** – The Alibaba stock price just collapsed!

**Clark** – I'm pleased to see you're handling it with such humour, Alex. Humour is important... You know, they say, "Unlucky in love, lucky at games." Perhaps your luck is about to change. The stock market is often compared to a casino. Speaking of which, just between us, I wouldn't personally risk my savings in stocks.

**Alex** – But you don't have any savings! You can't even afford a hamburger and a beer!

**Julia** (*devastated*) – I've lost everything I had, even what my parents gave me for the wedding! What am I going to tell them now?

**Clark** – Your parents gave you money for us to get married?

**Julia** (*to Alex*) – Hold me back or I'm going to kill him...

*Clark's hopes for Julia are immediately dashed.*

**Clark** – Okay, I got it, but you guys should really get on the same page. I'm going to grab my bag.

*He exits.*

**Julia** – Oh no, he's not going to leave like that!

**Alex** – Because of that idiot, we're completely ruined!

**Julia** – Where did we go wrong?

**Alex** – You said it... The effects might have been temporary...

**Julia** – Or maybe he's only clairvoyant when he's in deep sleep.

**Alex** – In his case, I wouldn't be surprised...

**Julia** – That's it! It's when he's asleep that the succubus comes to visit him in dreams to whisper stock prices in his ear...

**Alex** – To check that, he would have to go back to sleep...

**Julia** – And we could question him when he wakes up...

**Alex** – We only have a few euros left... Apart from the lottery...

**Julia** – We have no choice! It's our last chance to recover...

*Clark returns, with a travel bag in hand.*

**Clark** – Thanks for everything... And sorry for imposing my presence on you for so long...

**Julia** – I'm sorry about earlier; I don't know what came over me. But you know, my mother is in the hospital, and... Well, yes, obviously, you know, I'm silly. You were the one who told me. How is she, by the way?

**Clark** – Who?

**Julia** – My mother!

**Clark** – How am I supposed to know?

**Alex** – Oh, but you look a bit tired.

**Clark** – Not at all... I've never felt better.

**Julia** – Why not catch a quick nap before you go?

**Clark** – I'm not sleepy, I told you!

*He tries to leave, but Julia stops him by grabbing his arm.*

**Julia** – Hold on, don't rush off like that!

**Clark** – Let go of me, come on!

**Alex** – Just take a little nap, and then you'll give us the winning combination for the next Euromillion, alright?

**Clark** – You guys are crazy, let me go!

*Julia smashes the second vase over his head.*

**Julia** – There, now he's asleep.

**Alex** – Maybe you went a bit too far this time. (*Examining the body*) This time, he really looks dead...

**Julia** – You really think so?

**Alex** – Let's just say it was an accident...

**Julia** – Involuntary manslaughter. I smashed a vase on his head because he was trying to rape me.

**Alex** – Not just one, two...

**Julia** – Two what?

**Alex** – You smashed two Chinese vases on his head... That might be a bit much for involuntary manslaughter.

**Julia** – Do you think it would be better to get rid of the body?

**Alex** – We'll search him and take his identification to avoid leaving any traces.

**Julia** – Yes, we should also burn the tips of his fingers with acid.

**Alex** – Why?

**Julia** – So his fingerprints can't be used to identify him! Haven't you been watching TV or something? (*Alex searches Clark and finds a scratch-off lottery ticket.*) What's this?

**Alex** – A scratch-off ticket...

**Julia** – Well, scratch it!

*Alex scratches.*

**Alex** – We won!

**Julia** – How much?

**Alex** – A thousand euros.



**Julia** – That proves he really had a gift...

**Alex** – We killed the golden goose.

**Julia** – He might not be really dead.

**Alex** – Wait a minute...

*Alex goes out and comes back with a bucket of water, which he throws on Clark. Clark suddenly regains consciousness.*

**Clark** – I had the dreadful nightmare!

**Alex** – No kidding...

**Julia** – Let me guess... someone was smashing a vase over your head and wanted to bury you alive?

**Clark** – No, it was about you two.

**Alex** – Oh yeah...

**Julia** – Spill it...

**Clark** – But it was just a nightmare, I'm telling you...

**Alex** – Forget it, if he doesn't want to spill the beans...

*But Julia panics.*

**Julia** – Are you kidding? I need to know! Clark, you have a gift for clairvoyance, you understand?

**Clark** – What?

**Julia** – You have a gift, trust me! You knew about my mother, the Job Center, the neighbour's cat, even about Mac Do... So, if you dreamed something about Alex and me, it must be true. What was it?

**Clark** – Well, I...

**Clark** – I dreamt that you had a child.

**Alex** – And how is that a nightmare?

**Clark** – Well... he wasn't... like everyone else, that's all.

**Julia** – What do you mean, not like everyone else?

**Alex** – You mean he was an exceptional being? A genius.

**Julia** – I think if that were the case, he wouldn't have called it a nightmare...

**Alex** – Clearly...

**Julia** – No, it's not clear at all! (*To Clark*) He wasn't normal, is that it?

*Clark nods awkwardly.*

**Alex** – But when you say not normal...

**Julia** – Enough to be able to compete in the Paralympics?

**Clark** – Enough to not even qualify for the Paralympics...

**Julia** – Oh, my God...

**Alex** (*to Clark*) – Well done... (*To Julia*) But it's nonsense... The only gifts he possesses are when he begs in the metro. Following his advice, I lost all our savings in the stock market.

**Julia** – Maybe, but in doubt, I could never have a child with you, Alex. It would haunt me forever...

**Alex** – You're joking...

**Julia** – I hope at least that I'm not already pregnant! Clark, do you know anything about this?

**Alex** – This time, I'll really kill him... Julia, please...

*Alex tries to approach Julia.*

**Julia** – Don't touch me! And tonight, you're sleeping on the couch.

**Alex** – And him, where does he sleep? Not in your bed, I hope... Because with Clark, you're sure not to give birth to Superman, I tell you.

**Clark** – That's shabby...

**Alex** – I'm going to strangle him!

*Alex is about to jump on Clark. Julia intervenes.*

**Julia** – But stop, you're not going to fight! Well, since it's like that, I'm leaving. I'm going back to my parents. And I'll buy a test at the pharmacy on the way.

*Julia leaves. Alex and Clark are left alone. They slump into the sofa.*

**Alex** – How did you know about his mother?

**Clark** – I think her father called last night. I must have answered half-asleep. After that, I fell asleep again and forgot to pass on the message.

*Silence.*

**Alex** – I suppose you didn't really dream of us having a child with disabilities?

**Clark** – It was just an idea that popped into my head when Julia mentioned my supposed gift for clairvoyance.

**Alex** – Trying to stir up trouble between us... Well, you see, finally... You also have moments of lucidity...

*An awkward pause.*

**Clark** – Haven't you found my scratch-off ticket...?

**Alex** – Yes. I scratched it, but it turned out to be a loss.

**Clark** – I've never been lucky with games...

**Alex** – You're not that clairvoyant after all. Want a beer?

**Clark** – Sure... *(Alex comes back with two beers and hands one to him. They drink.)*  
In the end, it wasn't a girl for us anyway...

*Alex gives him a fiery look.*

**Alex** – For us?

**Clark** – Okay, I won't say anything else...

**Alex** – If you're tired of the couch, you can sleep with me tonight, I don't mind...

**Clark** – Alright... But I warn you, I have a headache tonight... *(Someone rings the doorbell.)* I'll get it... *(Clark leaves and comes back after a moment.)* It's the neighbour from upstairs...

**Alex** – Did she lose her cat again?

**Clark** – She's asking if she can come watch TV with us.

**Alex** – And what did you tell her?

**Clark** – You know... She's the kind of creature you find it hard to say no to...

*The neighbour arrives in an unreal light, dressed and made up in a gothic or witchy style (the character being played by the actress playing Julia). The two boys turn to her with a worried look.*

*Fade to black.*

**The End.**

## *About the author*

Born in 1955 in Auvers-sur-Oise (France), Jean-Pierre Martinez was first a drummer for several rock bands before becoming a semiologist in advertising. He then began a career writing television scripts before turning to theatre and writing plays. He has written close to a hundred scripts for television and as many plays, some of which have already become classics (*Friday the 13th*, *Strip Poker*). He is one of the most produced contemporary playwrights in France and in other francophone countries. Several of his plays are also available in Spanish and English, and are regularly produced in the United States and Latin America.

Amateur and professional theatre groups looking for plays to perform can download Jean-Pierre Martinez's plays for free from his website La Comédiathèque (<https://comediatheque.net/>). However, public productions are subject to SACD filing.

For those who prefer reading or working from books, printed versions of his plays can be purchased from Amazon for a price similar to that of photocopying this document.

**Other plays by the same author translated in English:**

**Comedies for 2**

EuroStar  
Heads and Tails  
Him and Her  
Is there a pilot in the audience?  
Last chance encounter  
New Year's Eve at the Morgue  
Not even dead  
Preliminaries  
Running on empty  
The Costa Mucho Castaways  
The Joker  
The Window across the courtyard

**Comedies for 3**

A brief moment of eternity  
A simple business dinner  
An innocent little murder  
Cheaters  
Crash Zone  
Fragile, Handle with care  
Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>  
One small step for a woman, one giant leap  
backward for Mankind

**Comedies for 4**

A Cuckoo's nest  
A hell of a night  
Back to stage  
Bed and Breakfast  
Casket for two  
Crisis and Punishment  
Family Portrait  
Family Tree  
Four stars  
Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>  
Gay friendly  
Is there a critic in the audience?  
Is there an author in the audience?  
Just a moment before the end of the world  
Lovestruck at Swindlemore Hall  
One marriage out of two  
Quarantine  
Strip Poker  
Surviving Mankind  
The perfect Son-in-Law  
The Smell of Money

**Comedies for 5 to 6**

All's well that starts badly  
Christmas Eve at the Police Station  
Crisis and Punishment  
Critical but Stable  
In lieu of flowers...  
King of Fools

**Comedies for 7 or more**

Check to the Kings  
Christmas Eve at the Police Station  
False exit  
Just like a Christmas movie  
Miracle at Saint Mary Juana Abbey  
Neighbours' Day  
Open Hearts  
Save our Savings  
Special Dedication  
Stories and Prehistories  
The Jackpot  
The Performance is not cancelled  
The Worst Village in England  
Welcome aboard!  
White Coats, Dark Humour

**Collection of sketches**

Him and Her  
Lost time Chronicles  
Open Hearts  
Sidewalk Chronicles  
Stories to die for

**Monologues**

Like a fish in the air

This text is protected under copyright laws.  
Criminal copyright infringement will be investigated  
and may result in a maximum penalty of up to 3 years in prison  
and a EUR 300.000 fine.

Avignon – February 2024  
© La Comédiathèque – ISBN 978-2-38602-141-1  
<https://comediatheque.net/>  
Play available for free download