

TOILETTE OF THE GODS

A ten-minute play

by Philip Heckman

Characters

ZEUS -- male, ageless, out of shape but used to power
HERA -- female, ageless, past her prime but used to privilege
ATTENDANT -- female, 20s, attractive but nondescript

Time

Any.

Place

An upscale bedroom, with a bed upstage and a vanity and chair downstage. The vanity's surface is covered with cosmetics and accessories, its mirror removed so that the audience can see through its frame. A wardrobe, table, and/or clothes rack as needed for costumes and props.

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TOILETTE OF THE GODS

ZEUS and HERA are getting dressed in elegant formal wear. HERA sits at the vanity, facing the audience, applying makeup while ZEUS paces behind her.

A simply clad ATTENDANT waits unobtrusively on the couple. She quietly anticipates every cosmetic and article of clothing they require. Although constantly dutiful, she does nothing to draw attention to herself until necessary.

ZEUS

...outrageous. You have to give me more notice.

HERA

Of dinner? Don't be silly. It's every day at this time.

ZEUS

Hera, you know what I mean -- how I detest dress up.

HERA

You? With a mirror on the ceiling of your closet...

ZEUS

You know what I mean. These infernal social events.

HERA

They're your family, Zeus. Your personal friends.

ZEUS

You know what I mean. I had plans.

HERA

To do what?

ZEUS

All you need to know is that I had them. Plans.

HERA

Don't expect me to accommodate your schedule if I'm not on it.

ZEUS

All I'm saying is I deserve a little consideration. Don't spring these things on me without warning.

HERA

Whom should I spring them on if not you?

ZEUS

Damn it, Hera! You know what I mean.

HERA

Anyway, I'd think you'd be eager to dine with your brothers. You haven't seen Randy since last fall.

ZEUS

Randy be damned. Most guests steal the silverware. The last time Randy was here he packed half my kitchen staff into his limo.

HERA

And Roger will be there, too. He steals from Randy and you steal from him. So it all evens out, doesn't it?

(Beat.)

Lighten up. You'll enjoy yourself. You always do.

ZEUS

We could've done this another time.

HERA

But when the stars are aligned, one must act.

ZEUS

What's so special about tonight that couldn't wait?

HERA

Really, you don't think I'd stop with Randy and Roger, do you? I know how to put a guest list together.

ZEUS

So who?

HERA

(Beat, for effect.)

Crazy Lennie.

ZEUS

What!?

HERA

Crazy Humvee Lennie. You know, the car dealer.

ZEUS

That faker, that officious windbag, that pretentious poseur.

HERA

If you felt that way, why'd you buy your new Lamborghini Veneno from him?

ZEUS

I didn't know he was going to drive the very same model to the club and try to pass himself off as me.

HERA

Relax, nobody thought it was you.

ZEUS

Of course not, but the ridicule was equally distributed.

HERA

You're just upset he put the most expensive audio/video system with voice command in his Veneno and not yours.

ZEUS

He painted flames on the sides and drove up to the clubhouse blowing his horn and yelling, "All hail, Big Zoo!"

(Beat.)

I know your brother's spreading the tale everywhere. When I get my hands on him...

HERA

Well, my brother's not invited tonight. You'll have to content yourself with Lennie.

ZEUS

Oh, I'll content myself all right. I agree, this little dinner party couldn't have come at a better time.

HERA

I knew you'd see it my way.

ZEUS

Crazy Lennie. I intend to make him eat his own organs one by one. Too bad the little toad doesn't have one of those self-regenerating livers...

HERA

Don't make too big a mess. I just had the carpet cleaned.

ZEUS

...with a sorbet between courses perhaps, to cleanse his palette.

HERA

And you insist you hate ceremony.

ZEUS

I never said ceremony, I said dress up.

HERA

Still, I don't see you appearing in public naked.

ZEUS

Perhaps I should -- that'd discourage would-be imposters.