

UPGRADE
– a one-act by Daniel Curzon

CHARACTERS: (3)

GENT, over forty, a bit full of himself

LADY, over forty, seems normal

FLIGHT ATTENDANT, age age, either sex

LIGHTS UP: Two seats (chairs) representing airplane seats

GENT: (entering down the “aisle,” seeing his seat) Mine at last! Mine at last!

LADY: (no response)

GENT: They said I could upgrade to First Class, from back there. (Indicates where)

LADY: (Removes some of her stuff from his seat, says nothing)

GENT: Thank you so much, my dear. I've never traveled in First Class before.

LADY: Don't mind me.

GENT: (taking his seat) Hope I'm not disturbing you, doll.

LADY: I'll live.

GENT: I promise to behave! Now that I'm finally in First Class.

LADY: Don't try so hard.

GENT: Was I trying hard? I'm sorry! I'm not really sorry. I just said that.

LADY: What made them put *you* in First Class?

GENT: Could it be because I look so First Class?!

LADY: I sat next to Leonard Cohen once.

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GENT: Did you? How was that?

LADY: We didn't speak.

GENT: No?

LADY: And he didn't sing me a song, in that deeply dark tone of his.

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GENT: I don't suppose he'd want to give them away.

LADY: I was joking.

GENT: So was I. . . . I won't disturb you any more.

LADY: Promise?

GENT: Cross my heart and hope to die!

LADY: What if I disturb you?

GENT: I'll call for help!

LADY: They most likely won't come!

GENT: Hi, I know you don't want to talk. But I'm Brad. (Offers to shake hands.)

LADY: (not shaking hands) And you're from the lower classes. (Points back)

GENT: But obviously not for long. Now that I'm here, look out, World!

LADY: What did you say you did to get this upgrade?

GENT: I had to shoot four people in line.

LADY: I believe it.

GENT: Actually it was only three. How many did you have to shoot?

LADY: I see that you have some vinegar in you.

GENT: Always have! Some people can't take it. Some love my sizzle and pop.

LADY: Sizzle and pop?

GENT: I spy some vinegar in you as well.

LADY: Don't get so personal.

GENT: Sorry!

LADY: My vinegar indeed!

GENT: Oh, you can mention my vinegar, but I can't mention yours!

LADY: Maybe we should move seats.

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GENT: Fine with me. Let me summon the flight attendant. (Looks back, waves hand)

LADY: There's a button.

GENT: Thanks, but I prefer to wave. Like royalty! (Waves, but there is no response) They must be busy. Where would you like to move to?

LADY: You should move. You arrived after I did.

GENT: If you're so unhappy, I think you should move.

LADY: All right. (Starts to get up, waves for attendant, gets no response) They're ignoring us! (Sits again) First Class, my ass!

GENT: Yeah, it's not all it's cracked up to be.

LADY: You can say that again.

GENT: (with no humor) Yeah, it's not all it's cracked up to be.

LADY: I think I see an empty seat up ahead. (Points)

GENT: Why don't you take it?

LADY: You take it.

GENT: You take it!

LADY: Never mind. You can stay here.

GENT: Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

LADY: Actually you're strangely interesting..

GENT: I know that.

LADY: In a lower-class kind of way.

GENT: You're joking.

LADY: Not at all. I'm rich but lonely. I put up a barricade at first. But if I like somebody, I soften. You make me soften.

GENT: That's funny. When I like somebody, such as a lady in First Class, I harden!

LADY: Are you married?

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GENT: Divorced.

LADY: That's good.

GENT: That's good?

LADY: It makes it easier for us to explore "us."

GENT: You mean here?

LADY: I mean after we de-plane. When we go on a date.

GENT: Oh. Okay. On a date?

LADY: I can see myself spending more time with you.

GENT: Why wouldn't you? Ta-dum!

LADY: You have a certain . . .

GENT: *Je ne sais quoi?*

LADY: I guess. I don't speak French.

GENT: Me either, but sometimes these phrases just pop into my brain.

LADY: And sizzle. Why wouldn't they!?

GENT: Where would we go on a date, if we went on a date?

LADY: Somewhere in public.

GENT: Yes, at first. But then somewhere in private?

LADY: Do you have a place?

GENT: I might have, for the right person!

LADY: And who might that be?

GENT: Only First Class ladies! . . . You're not a prostitute, are you?

LADY: No.

GENT: A contract killer?

LADY: Not any more!

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GENT: Isn't that what they all say?

LADY: Oh, let's not talk about my old job. Let's talk about us!

GENT: Actually I would entertain the idea of a date with you.

LADY : Where do see us five years from now?

GENT: How about five hours?!

LADY: Let me see. Five years from now we'll be married and celebrating our anniversary on Maui.

GENT: You can see all that?

LADY: As clear as crystal.

GENT: Sounds amazing.

LADY: You won't be working anymore, because we will be living on my money. I have lots of money.

GENT: And you're not already married?

LADY: No, I've waited for the right man.

GENT: . . . Me?

LADY: . . . You!

GENT: You're kidding.

LADY: I'm not kidding. The more I talk with you, the more I . . .

GENT : Soften?

LADY: Soften.

GENT: Of course you would.

LADY: And you've found a gem and you weren't even looking.

GENT: Do you think maybe we're rushing this a bit?

LADY: When you know, you know. I know.

GENT: But we may not be compatible, in all ways, if you catch my drift.

LADY: You mean sex?

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GENT: Yes.

LADY: (loudly) I love sex!

GENT: Maybe you should keep your voice down.

LADY: That's how I like my sex – loud!

GENT: Shhh.

LADY: Don't shush me. Would you shush me during sex? I wouldn't like that.

GENT: I'm feeling a little uncomfortable right now.

LADY: Why?

GENT: It's all too much, too soon.

LADY: Do you like anal?

GENT: Anal sex?

LADY: No, anal wine tasting! Have you tried that?

GENT: I have not. I've always wanted to.

LADY: I absolutely adore it.

GENT: Now you're getting me . . .

LADY: Good boy.

GENT: I just had a thought.

LADY: And what is that?

GENT: I don't even know your name.

LADY: Do you really need a name to have anal sex? Or do wine tasting.

GENT: I suppose not. But . . .

LADY: But?

GENT: Do you fly often?

LADY: About once a month.

GENT: And talk to strange men?

LADY: You're not that strange. I've seen stranger, much stranger.

GENT: Well, good.

LADY: How about you? Do you speak to strange women on your flights?

GENT: You're my first.

LADY: I think I smell destiny here.

GENT: I think I've hit the jackpot.

LADY: You have, darling. A kiss to begin our journey?

GENT: Okay. Sure.

(They kiss)

LADY: (imagining a toast) To our wonderful, fabulous rich future together!

GENT: Yes – with perks!

ATTENDANT: (coming down the “aisle”) We're about to land, folks. We hope you've had a pleasant flight.

GENT: We did. Very much so. And it's about to get even better!

ATTENDANT: And you Ma'am?

LADY: It was great.

ATTENDANT: All right, Ma'am, it's time we got you where you're going. Your son and his wife are waiting for you at the gate. They'll take you back to the Home, as usual.

LADY: Thank you.

(The Attendant helps the Lady get up, gather her things, and starts up the “aisle” with her)

ATTENDANT: (turning back to Gent) She's a lovely woman. Takes a trip by herself at least once a month. Just a word of advice: don't take anything she says too much to heart. She's a little . . . (Taps head, then shakes it sadly to indicate senility) Early onset. I think it's just so brave of her to get out on her own? Don't you?

GENT: (not convinced) Yeah, it's terrific.

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ATTENDANT: Thank you for talking with her. She gets lonely.

GENT: You mean there's not gonna be any anal sex?

BLACKOUT