

The Nose & The Face

a play

by Peter Delaunay

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Perfume is the Holy Grail of designer product licensing

Parisian haute couture is a loss leader. Perfume is almost pure profit.

At \$250 for a 7ml bottle, a top perfume is the same price per ounce as liquid gold.

Worldwide perfume sales exceed \$10 billion every year.

There's no business like the nose business...

CHARACTERS

EDOUARD BELLEVUE, *The Nose* – a middle-aged Parisian parfumeur

MICKEE CARBEAU, *The Face* – an American model, formerly a catwalk queen, but now approaching the status of une femme d'un certain âge

And appearing on television:

Angelo Cellini, a young Italian-born Paris-based couturier

Franco Barberini, Angelo's business partner

Zigou, a fashion journalist

A Hollywood actor

The action takes place in an apartment on the outskirts of Paris

ACT ONE: Late on a Spring evening

ACT TWO: The following day

ACT ONE

An old, rundown apartment on the outskirts of Paris.

Through the only window the light of sunset illuminates the ill-matched furniture: an upholstered armchair, a single bed, a wardrobe and a small dining table and chairs.

To one side of the stage is a kitchen area; to the other a closed door with a frosted glass insert. In the centre of the back wall is the apartment's front door beyond which are heard heavy footsteps climbing the stairs.

We hear a key in the lock and then the door opens wide to reveal a monstrous figure silhouetted against the hall light.

As the figure moves forward we see that it is EDOUARD carrying the inert body of MICKEE over his shoulder. Staggering to the bed, he lowers her down. He straightens up, brushes down his suit, adjusts his tie and smoothes down his hair. But then he hears footsteps coming down the stairs. He hurries back to the door and quickly closes and locks it; then watches through the security spy-hole until whoever it is has passed.

Edouard finds the light switch and turns it on. And now we see attempts have been made to brighten the decor: a large bowl of fresh fruit and an even larger vase of fresh flowers on the table; a stylish throw draped over the armchair, and a television positioned where it can be watched from the bed.

Edouard catches sight of his reflection in the window and goes to draw the curtains. As he turns back Mickee stirs and from his pockets he quickly takes out a handkerchief and a small brown bottle. He unscrews the bottle top as he approaches her. About to moisten the handkerchief with the chloroform –

EDOUARD

Mademoiselle Carbeau ? Mickee ?

He nudges her. She does not respond. He replaces the bottle top and pockets both it and the handkerchief. From the inside pocket of his jacket he now takes out a mobile phone and dials a single speed dial number – he composes himself as he waits and then -

EDOUARD

Franco ? It is Edouard. Edouard Bellevue. Now listen to me very carefully. I have to tell you that I have –

Allo ? Allo ?

Angelo? I was speaking to Franco. Let me speak to -

Yes, Angelo. She is with me and.....No, you can not speak to her.....

But Mickee stirs and Edouard reaches into his inside jacket pocket.

MICKEE
(through a yawn)
Where am I ?

EDOUARD
(covers phone, to Mickee)
No, do not move. I have kidnapped you !

MICKEE
Don't be ridiculous !

EDOUARD
(struggling with his pocket)
I have a gun !

MICKEE
(looks at him)
No you don't.

Mickee doesn't look at him as she struggles to stand up and he finally produces a silver plated lady's "Saturday Night Special" revolver.

EDOUARD
Look !

MICKEE
Oh!

He points the gun at her. She quickly sits.

EDOUARD
Allo. Angelo ? Allo ?

He closes his phone.

MICKEE
What the - ?! Who are you ?

EDOUARD
I am Edouard Bellevue. I am the nose who created 'Savoir',
the perfume that you –

His phone rings and he answers it -

MICKEE

What the –

EDOUARD

(to Mickee)

Silence.

(to the phone)

Allo, Franco. Now, listen.No, I will not listen to you.

You listen to me..... Yes, I have a gun. So, you will listen.

- I have kidnapped Mickee and unless you pay me one hundred and eighty thousand euros

Another phone begins to ring. Mickee reaches into her bag and takes out her phone –
Edouard mouths at her not to answer but Mickee continues until -

EDOUARD

(pointing his gun at her)

No!

She stops. He approaches her still pointing the gun at her.

EDOUARD

(to phone)

Un moment.

(to Mickee)

Give it to me.

Mickee stands up and holds out the phone to him.

EDOUARD

Merci.

(But he has the gun in one hand and the phone in the other)

Oh, pardon

(He puts his phone on the table then takes her phone.)

Thank you.

He looks at her phone's screen and answers it.

MICKEE

You're welcome.

EDOUARD
(covering Mickee's phone)

Silence.

(then to her phone)

Allo, Angelo. I am talking to Franco so listen.

Edouard bends over the table so that he can talk to his phone on the table and to Mickee's phone in one hand while still covering Mickee with the gun in the other hand.

EDOUARD
Franco? Good. I am talking to Angelo also.
.....What ? You are in the same room? So why can't I speak to -

But in trying to watch Mickee and keep her covered with his gun, Edouard nudges his phone off the table and it falls on the floor. He kneels down to continue talking to both phones but in doing so turns his back on Mickee.

EDOUARD
(to the phones)
Allo, Franco ? You are still there ?
Angelo ?Good. So, you both understand me ?
When you pay me the one hundred and eighty thousand euros -

But with a terrifying yell Mickee leaps towards Edouard and as she crashes into him he drops the phone and the gun flies out of his hand. They both scream as they fall to the floor, both scrabbling for the gun -

MICKEE
Give it to -

EDOUARD
It's mine !

MICKEE
Get out of my - !

EDOUARD
No! I have it!

Edouard snatches up the gun but as he leaps up in triumph holding the gun out of Mickee's reach his nose smacks into the edge of the table with a sickening crack. He screams. The gun flies out of his hand and as he clasps his hands over his nose and slumps to the floor Mickee snatches up the gun and gripping it with both hands covers him TV-cop-style.

MICKEE

Don't move a muscle!

Edouard groans. Keeping him covered, Mickee picks up the nearest phone from the floor.

MICKEE

Hello ! Franco ? Angelo ? Hello !

The phone is dead. She tosses it aside. Edouard tilts his head back to stem the flow of blood from his nose.

EDOUARD

Oh, my God - ! My nose !

He scrambles in his pocket for his handkerchief and clamps it to his nose.

MICKEE

I said don't move !

Edouard starts to collapse as he breathes in the chloroform from his handkerchief. Mickee picks up the other phone.

MICKEE

Hello ? Angelo ? Franco ?
(but it too is dead)
Dammit !

She throws it aside. Turning back to Edouard she advances on him with the gun.

MICKEE (cont)

Sit up!

She grabs hold of his upward facing head and pushes it down. His hand holding the handkerchief falls limply away from his face.

MICKEE (cont)

Face forward ! Come on, you creep!
Don't play dead with me !

Edouard starts to come to and finds himself staring down the barrel of the gun.

MICKEE (cont)

Okay. That's better.

He throws back his head in despair – and begins to choke again.

MICKEE (cont)

Sit up ! Keep your head straight ! Don't lean back !

Mickee grabs him by the back of the neck and pushes his head forward.

MICKEE (cont)

Keep it straight! That's it. Now don't move. Okay ?

Edouard nods.

MICKEE (cont)

Okay.

She takes a moment to gather herself.

EDOUARD

Merci.

He stops as he sees her eyes change focus from him to the gun and weighs it in her hand.

MICKEE

What the - !

She turns the gun to point it at her face.

EDOUARD

No ! Don't !

Edouard looks away, distraught. Mickee slowly squeezes the trigger. A fine mist sprays from the end of the barrel. She sniffs the air.

MICKEE

What the - ?! You have got to be - ?!

Edouard throws his head back in despair, and starts to choke again on his blood.

MICKEE (cont)

A perfume spray !

You kidnapped me - with a perfume spray !

Edouard starts to get up but Mickee swings the gun round on him again.

MICKEE

Hey !

Edouard freezes.

MICKEE (cont)

You just stay right –
Oh, jeez, you got me at it !

She throws the gun away onto the bed -

EDOUARD

Pardon.

MICKEE

What ? Stop apologising ! No I don't pardon you.

EDOUARD

No. Pardon.

MICKEE

Hey!

EDOUARD

I'm sorry –

MICKEE

What did I say!?

Edouard is silenced, but cannot restrain a gesture of apology.

MICKEE

Ha!

Edouard is silent and immobile.

MICKEE

I don't believe this. You really thought you were going to get
a hundred and eighty grand armed with a perfume spray?

EDOUARD

Oui

MICKEE

You're crazy, you know that? It's a – a toy !

EDOUARD

No, it's not – it is very old – an antique -

MICKEE

Oh, well that's....

EDOUARD

Yes. I would never use a real gun. I do not know anything about guns.

MICKEE

Well, that's great. I guess that should make me feel a whole lot better. But somehow it doesn't.

EDOUARD

Yes, of course. I'm sorry –

Edouard cuts off his apology before Mickee reacts.

MICKEE

What is this all about ? Eh ? Who are you ?
 What are you ? Are you a stalker ? You got a thing for me ?
 Jeez, I thought those days were gone.
 (checking the fastenings on her clothes)
 Did you do anything to me when I was out of it - ?

EDOUARD

- No – No I would not -

MICKEE

- And you didn't – you know – do anything – to yourself.

EDOUARD

NON ! .

MICKEE

(checking her clothing and bare feet for evidence)
 Yeah, well. You better not have.

EDOUARD

What I was trying to do is nothing personal against you.

MICKEE

What do you mean it's nothing personal. Of course, it's personal.
 You kidnapped me. You drugged me. You pulled a gun on me –

EDOUARD

Yes. Ah, mais non –

MICKEE

Oh, yes you did. Well, no. But I thought it was a gun.

EDOUARD

Ah, yes. But it was not supposed to be like that.

MICKEE

I don't care how it was supposed to be.

EDOUARD

Yes. I apologise. You must be upset.

MICKEE

Damn right, I'm upset.

EDOUARD

Would you like some champagne?
I have it all prepared.

MICKEE

No, I do not want champagne. I want you to tell me
what this is all about.

EDOUARD

Yes. Of course.

(but where to begin?)

Do you think Angelo and Franco will think something has
happened to you?

MICKEE

Yeah, very possibly.

EDOUARD

Oh

MICKEE

Just tell me –

EDOUARD

Yes. Ah. My name is Edouard Bellevue.

He waits for her to respond to this information.

MICKEE

And ? That should mean something to me?

EDOUARD

You have no idea who I am.

MICKEE

No.

EDOUARD

I am the nose who created Savoir.

Again, he expects some response to this information.

MICKEE

Okay. And I am the face of Savoir. In other circumstances I might have been pleased to meet you, but aside from the fact that we both work for Angelo Cellini I don't see how –

EDOUARD

You know what is 'the nose' ?

MICKEE

Sure. You're the guy who puts all the chemicals together and makes a nice smell.

EDOUARD

No ! Not chemicals. I use no chemicals. Never !

MICKEE

Well that's good. I guess. No chemicals is very good – the environment and –

EDOUARD

I use only the pure essences. Always. All my life I never use chemicals. Everything is natural –

MICKEE

Okay, I got that. No chemicals, okay. But –

EDOUARD

All my life I have used only the most pure, refined essence –

MICKEE

Enough. Okay? I get the point. Now can we get back to me?
Yeah? Like, why I'm here and – and – and where is here?
Because I'd really like to get out of here and back to my hotel.

EDOUARD

Yes, of course.

(he gets unsteadily to his feet)

I don't know what I was thinking..

(and takes out his keys)

I have my car. I will take you back.

But as he bends to pick up his bloodstained handkerchief he stumbles.

MICKEE

You're not driving me anywhere.

EDOUARD

Oh, yes. I will be fine.

MICKEE

I'm not going anywhere with you in that condition.
Sit down and tell me what this is all about.

EDOUARD

It is of no interest to you.

MICKEE

Don't tell me what interests me. Getting kidnapped is interesting.
And a failed kidnapping is – ridiculous – but still interesting.
Come on. I've never been kidnapped before. Sit down.

Edouard sits on a dining-table chair.

MICKEE (cont)

Okay. So. Tell me. Why did you kidnap me?

Edouard doesn't know where to begin.

MICKEE

We got as far as you're the nose who created Savoir.
And you never use chemicals. Never. Jam-ais. Okay.
And we both work for Angelo Cellini.

EDOUARD

Ouis. Mais non. I work for myself. I am – I work only for commission. So, I invest my time, my skill, my experience – my essences – the best – always the best. I invest everything. And when the perfume is a success – then I expect to be paid.

MICKEE

Yeah, but Savoir isn't on sale yet. That's why I'm in Paris, to shoot the commercials. Then when my face is in all the magazines and all over the TV and Angelo sells millions of bottles of Savoir because everyone wants to be me – then you get your money. Isn't that the way it works?

EDOUARD

Yes, it is. You are correct. But, you know the perfume called Jeunesse? Angelo's first perfume.

MICKEE

Yeah. The perfume for innocent youth. Who was the face for that one? That cute Serbian kid – what's her name? All legs and arms and diamond sharp eyes. God. How old was she? Sixteen? Ooh, a real Jeunesse – not ! Vesna - that's her name. Vesna - .

EDOUARD

Vesna Drobac

MICKEE

Right. Nothing young and innocent about Ms Drobac. Lucky you didn't kidnap her. She'd have sliced and diced you before you could -

EDOUARD

Yes, yes. But I create Jeunesse.

MICKEE

Yeah ? Angelo and Franco gave me a bottle –

EDOUARD

Oh, Yes? It's nice for you that they give you presents. Very nice. And nice hotel they give you – the Georges Cinq – yes?

MICKEE

Never stay anywhere else when I'm in Paris.

EDOUARD

Only the best for Mademoiselle Carbeau.
The best hotel. Perfume. First class ticket from New York?

Mickee makes to object –

EDOUARD (cont)

Oh yes. And today, I saw – in the studio – everyone is running
around after Mickee Carbeau: champagne, chocolats –

MICKEE

You were at the studio? I didn't see you.

EDOUARD

No one saw me. Everything is for you.

MICKEE

That's the way it works.

EDOUARD

And they are paying you a million dollars. For your face.

MICKEE

Yeah, well, they get the rest of me thrown in.

Edouard gives up.

MICKEE (cont)

Anyway, So you created Jeunesse. It's very popular.
It's everywhere. All those cute little jeunes filles with a spring
in their heels bouncing along the boulevards and avenues, leaving
a trail of broken dreams. And it's not just the young wearing it.
There are plenty of old women drenched in Jeunesse, trying to
remember their youth that's long gone.

EDOUARD

That is the power of my creation. What is true is what you
believe to be true.

MICKEE

Yeah?

EDOUARD

That is the power of perfume.

MICKEE

So, what d'you make on each magic bottle of youth that Angelo sells?

EDOUARD

I get nothing. Because I do not get my commission!
That is why we are here. Since Jeunesse was launched they
have sold half a million bottles – Franco calls them “units” –
what is that ? What is a unit of perfume? That is typical of
Franco, units, percentages, cash flow, investment. Nothing real.

MICKEE

Franco is the brains of the operation. Angelo's cute –
and he's got talent – but he's no businessman.

EDOUARD

You are correct. Angelo is an artist. Like me.
We create beauty. For me it is perfume – for Angelo, couture.
They say he is a genius. I don't know, he is young.
But he is an artist. He knows the reality, the truth of making
things. But Franco ? No. He is not an artist. He creates nothing.
He is the businessman. He is the dreamer. When I tell him that
he owes me one hundred and eighty thousand dollars for Jeunesse,
he says to me: 'in my dreams'! He will not pay me. For two years
I have been trying to get my money.

MICKEE

But if he won't pay you for Jeunesse, then why did you agree to
make Savoir for them?

EDOUARD

Because. Franco says if I create Savoir then I will get my
money. So what can I do? If I refuse he will go elsewhere, to some
cheap horrible nose – who use chemicals! – and Edouard Bellevue is
forgotten. I have to trust him. He tells me that if we make Angelo
Cellini famous and I make another perfume then we will all be rich.

MICKEE

That's the dream.

EDOUARD

But I create a beautiful perfume and Franco still refuses to pay me.
He says, “Oh we 'ave terrible seasons in couture – Angelo makes
beautiful clothes but the company make nothing but loss, loss, loss.”
So, I say that is your problem. That is not my problem.

MICKEE

Well, it kind of is.

EDOUARD

Of course it is my problem! Do you know how much I pay for a kilo of rose essence?

MICKEE

No.

EDOUARD

For one kilo - eight thousand euros.

MICKEE

Eight thousand - !

EDOUARD

Mais oui !

MICKEE

But, that's – eight – twelve thousand dollars!

EDOUARD

You know how many different essences I blend to create Savoir ? I tell you. One hundred and thirty-two.

MICKEE

Wow. So many. Who'd have thought it?

EDOUARD

No one. No one thinks of Edouard.
And you know how long it takes me to create this perfume?
Eight months. Eight months from when Angelo tells me what he wants. Last summer he gives me the story for Savoir. Edouard, he says, I want you to create the perfume pour une femme d'un certain âge. You know this phrase.

MICKEE

Sure, it's a perfume for old women.

EDOUARD

No, no. Absolument pas. Not old. That, Angelo tells me most definitely: the Savoir woman is not old. The Savoir woman is a woman who 'knows', who has lived a life, she has le savoir faire. You understand? She is strong. Clever. No, more than that – ah –

MICKEE

Smart?

EDOUARD

Yes, smart. The Savoir woman is smart. She knows what she wants - and she gets it. She is demanding, yes, because she knows. She is not a silly young girl, here, there, everywhere – the Savoir woman is – experienced. She is not pretty like a little girl. She is beauty. She is wisdom. She has no illusions. Her face tells a thousand stories. She is a woman who has lived. This is the story Angelo tells to me. And I have to create this woman, in my head. I have to create her as a living woman, to stand before me – and then I must capture her personality, her soul, in one fragrance. So that every man who encounters the fragrance, perhaps just the faintest trace of Savoir in the air... as he leaves a building, or enters a room, or in the street...he will know that the Savoir woman has been there. That is the challenge Angelo gives to me.

MICKEE

Yeah?

EDOUARD

It is a big challenge. But not for me, for Edouard Bellevue.

MICKEE

And then here I am – Mickee Carbeau, the Savoir woman.

EDOUARD

Yes.

MICKEE

Not quite what you had in mind, eh ?

EDOUARD

Oh, I – I - I don't know. I don't care. Perhaps, for the publicit  you are what is required. But when I discover that they pay you one million dollars ! Ah non, pardon, but that is too much. So I say enough. Edouard Bellevue will have his money that he should have had two years ago. So. Here we are.

MICKEE

Yeah, well, it's a sad story. But why didn't you get yourself a lawyer. I mean, you're really gonna need one now, but shouldn't you have got one back when -

EDOUARD

Oh yes, I think of that. I'm not stupid. I say to Franco, okay, you don't pay me, I see you in court. You know what he said? Nothing. He laughed. Okay, Edouard, we see you in court: for the next ten years. You know, it's not just Franco and Angello who are the company "Angello Cellini". Oh, no. Angelo Cellini is just a little piece of an international corporation. You know what is Industrie Boulanger – you this company?

MICKEE

No, I gave up reading the financial pages when I lost my second million.

EDOUARD

Industrie Boulanger is one of the biggest chemical company in Europe.. You know what they make ? Pig Food. Yes. They are the biggest manufacturer of pig food in Europe. And fertilizer. And paint. And much more – even the liquid for washing up in the kitchen. All over the world. They make billions of Euros every year. So, you know what Franco says to me: Ha! Stupid little Edouard Bellevue, trying to fight the power of Industrie Boulanger. They will tie you up in the courts for the next ten years, and still you will get nothing.

MICKEE

But didn't you go to Boulanger and tell them what Franco was up to?

EDOUARD

Yes, I go to them. I wait for two hours to see Monsieur Boulanger. I go in his office, I say Monsieur Boulanger, I am Edouard Bellevue, the nose. You know what he says to me? Merveilleux, I already got a nose – in the middle of my face – now go away. So. Rien. Nothing.

Edouard is downcast, and begins to choke again as his nose starts to bleed again -

MICKEE

Keep your head forward ! Look up. Straight ahead.
Okay ? Now just stay like that.
You never had a nosebleed before?

EDOUARD

No.

Edouard's phone starts to ring. He looks at it. Then at Mickee.

MICKEE

It's your game.

Edouard picks up his phone.

EDOUARD

(a blocked-nose nasal voice)

Franco.....Yes, it is me.....

But I'm not trying to disguise my voice.

(he tries to clear his breathing and speak normally)

You can hear me now?

Good. No. No, she's not hurt.

Mickee moves closer to him so she can overhear the conversation.

EDOUARD

No, no – the gun is – it is quite safe.....

Yes. Mickee is free to go whenever –

Mickee finally attracts his attention, rubbing her fingers and thumb together and mouths “money”

EDOUARD

(to Mickee, without covering the phone)

Money ?

Franco explodes at the other end of the phone –

EDOUARD (cont)

No, Franco....Listen...Please...I will bring her back –

Mickee suddenly lets out a long, piercing, gut-wrenching scream that goes on and on.

Edouard freezes. He stares at her open-mouthed.

Finally, he cuts off the phone-call.

And Mickee stops screaming.

MICKEE

It was getting out of control.

(taking his phone from him)

You were losing it.

EDOUARD

But –

MICKEE

Do you want your money ?

EDOUARD

Yes, but –

MICKEE

Well, then -

(she pockets his phone in her jacket)

- cool it.

(she aims the gun at him)

Don't panic.

EDOUARD

(approaching her)

But they will think I have hurt you.

Mickee squeezes the trigger and a jet of perfume sprays into Edouard's face.

MICKEE

Good.

He coughs and splutters and then takes a deep breath through his nose, then stops. Then a series of rapid short breathes through his nose.

EDOUARD (cont)

Oh ! Oh no!

(clutching at his nose)

Oh my God !

MICKEE

What ?!

EDOUARD

My nose ! Oh my God ! My nose !

He grabs a flower from the vase and sniffs the bloom furiously, then throws it aside.

MICKEE

What's wrong ?

EDOUARD

Nothing.

Edouard snatches an orange from the bowl of fruit and crushes it; sniffing urgently from the orange, then throws it aside.

EDOUARD (cont)

Oh my God, I am finished.

He hurries to the bathroom.

MICKEE

Edouard ?

EDOUARD

My life. My work. Everything.

(turning on the bathroom light to inspect his nose in the mirror)

Oh, my God!

MICKEE

(following him into the bathroom)

Here - let me look at it ?

EDOUARD

No. Leave it.

MICKEE

Let me see.

(she turns his head towards her)

It's not broken - it looks a bit bruised but -

EDOUARD

Who cares what it looks like. I cannot smell. Don't you understand ? My nose is my life. Now I am a nose with a dead nose. Without my nose I cannot work. Without my nose I cannot eat. Without my nose I am nothing.

MICKEE

Well, you should have thought of that before you pulled a gun on me.

EDOUARD

(guiding her out of the bathroom)

Excuse, please. I am sorry to have troubled you. You must leave now. Go. Please. Tell them what happened. I will wait here. Go. Go ! Go to your five star hotel. Your champagne. Your million dollars. Go. Go !

He goes back into the bathroom, slams the door and locks it.

Mickee stands looking around. She picks up the squashed orange and the crushed flower and takes them into the kitchen.

From the bathroom, we hear the tap running and see Edouard's silhouette as he tries to clean himself up.

Mickee goes to the bed and puts her shoes on. Then she notices the pistol and picks it up. She goes to the bathroom door.

MICKEE

You'll be okay ?

EDOUARD (off)

Go !

MICKEE

You won't do anything stupid ?

A beat.

EDOUARD (off)

I already did.

MICKEE

You want me to call anyone?

EDOUARD (off)

PLEASE ! GO !

MICKEE goes to the bed and puts the gun down. She picks up her handbag and goes to the apartment door – then stops and opens her bag. She roots around in it for a moment then closes it. She goes back to the bed, takes off her handbag and jacket and sits down. She unpins the wig she is wearing and removes it. She shakes out her own hair which is simply though expensively styled. She makes herself comfortable then picks up the pistol and begins to examine it as the bathroom door opens and Edouard reappears in his T-shirt, carrying his jacket and blood-stained shirt and tie.

MICKEE

(reading along the revolver's barrel)

"Arrest".

(she sniffs the muzzle)

One of yours ?

Edouard puts his blood-stained shirt and tie over the back of a chair then puts on his jacket.

EDOUARD

Yes.

MICKEE

It's nice.

EDOUARD

I said you should go.

MICKEE

Yeah. But, well, funny thing, I don't have any cash.

Edouard reacts, dismissing her excuse.

MICKEE (cont)

It's true. Like you said, Angello Cellini Incorporated pays for everything. I got no need for cash. I'm Mickee Carbeau, Queen of the Catwalk. Well, I used to be queen of the catwalk. Now I'm the face of Savoir – the fragrance for – how did Angelo put it –

(parodying Angelo's Italian accent)

"The Savoir woman is a woman who is strong. She is not young, she is wisdom. She is not pretty; she is beauty."

Yeah, yeah. Bull! It's a perfume for old women.

Because they're the ones with money. Kind of clever really. Jeunesse for the kids. Savoir for the old folks. Got to give to Angelo and Franco. And who better to be the face of Savoir but good old Mickee Carbeau.

EDOUARD

I am sure you will be a great success. Now, I will take you back.

(he has taken out his car keys and shows them to her)

Yes? My car is outside.

MICKEE

Oh, is that how I got here? I remember being in the studio.
Did you see the eagle ? Wasn't she beautiful. Did you see her?

EDOUARD

I saw. Now –

MICKEE

The way she just floated across the studio. She was really beautiful. And that sweet little man who'd trained her. He'd had her since she was a chick. He found her in a forest near where he lives. Reckoned she'd fallen out of the nest, or something. Anyway he raised her. And tried to release her back in the wild but she wouldn't go. I guess she really loves him.

(She picks up the wig with revolver)

So there I am sitting on a plaster rock – in my leather and lace and my Medusa wig. Like some siren luring sailors to their death. Say, does that sound like a twenty-first century woman to you ? Anyways, the poor old eagle's supposed to fly past the back of my head with her wings outstretched – and snap ! – that's the great picture. The image of Savoir. Everyone told Angelo what a great concept it is. Do you get it ? Do you get the meaning. It's not just a pretty picture for the pages of Vogue and Cosmopolitan and Marie-Claire - or to be stuck all over billboards or on the back of buses. It has symbolic meaning, you know. You know what the meaning is?

EDOUARD

Yes. Beauty and wisdom. Angelo told me.

MICKEE

Right. Beauty and Wisdom. United in one image. Ha!
I said to Angelo, well I guess I'm the wisdom, 'cause the eagle sure is a beauty. Oh, no, no, no, he says; the eagle is the wisdom. True. That's what he says, the eagle is the symbol of wisdom. Well. I said to him, my darling sweet boy, the eagle is not the symbol of wisdom. It's the owl that's the wise old bird. But Angelo doesn't know what I'm talking about. Do you know what owl is in Italian? No? Nobody did. So we're all going round like

(she imitates the twit-twoo sound and the face of an owl)

And finally Angelo gets what we're doing. Civetta. That's the Italian for owl. Civetta. But Angelo goes crazy.

(continues)

MICKEE (cont)

No, no, no he ain't having no civetta. You know why ?
 "Yeuch, civetta is h-ugly! Eagle is beautiful." Can you believe it?
 You know. I mean, what kind of garbage is that!

(a beat)

So you know how many times they had that eagle flying backwards
 and forwards past my head ? How many you think? You said you
 were there. Go on, how many ?

EDOUARD

(shrugs)

I only stay for three times.

MICKEE

Well, lucky you! Me and the eagle had been there since seven
 o'clock in the morning. Who knows how many times we did it.
 Ten, twenty, fifty – a hundred, whatever? But it was never right
 for Angelo. Either my hair was wrong, or my eyes were closed,
 or the eagle's wing was wrong, or the lights were wrong. Insane.
 I said to Angelo, this is bullshit. Why don't you just take a picture
 of me and a picture of the eagle and stick 'em together. That's
 what computers are for – even I know that. And who's gonna know?
 That's what this twenty-first century woman told him. You know
 what he said ? But, dar-ling, I want this picture to be real – to be
 natural – nothing phony! No lies! Only truth ! Tuto verissimo!
 Can you believe it ! In the fashion business ! And he wants it to
 be real !

(a beat)

So I said well you can take your natural eagle that you've
 got doing unnatural things and you can shove it! And I walked.
 I was out of there – and free!

(a beat)

Jeez! My agent is gonna kill me.
 Well, I guess I must have been free for a while.
 Til I met up with you. How'd you grab me?

EDOUARD

When I leave the studio I wait in my car outside.
 When you come out I follow you. They were chasing after you –
 Angelo and Bernard, the photographer and everyone.
 You were looking for a taxi so I stop and -

MICKEE

- I get in. My saviour. Pretty dumb of me. But you didn't
 know I was gonna throw a tantrum and walk out.

EDOUARD

No.

MICKEE

So – what - you figure she's just another crazy screwed up American super model ? Sometime she's gonna go off on one ?

EDOUARD

No.

MICKEE

What if I hadn't taken you up on your offer ?
Told you to get lost, made a break for it on my own.

Edouard shrugs. A beat.

MICKEE (cont)

How long you been tailing me?

EDOUARD

Just today.

MICKEE

You got lucky.

EDOUARD

Yes.

MICKEE

So, what happened after I got into your car?

EDOUARD

I tell you I have to make a detour – to pick up a parcel.
When we arrive here I get out of my car. You close your eyes,
you are très fatigué. I tap on your window.

MICKEE

And I open it.

Mickee accidentally releases the gun's safety catch and something pops out of the chamber into her lap.

MICKEE (cont)
 Oh ! Oh, I think I broke it. I'm sorry.
 (but she finds the object)
 Oh ? What - ? A - bullet !

Holding up the silver "bullet" she twists it and a blood red lipstick appears -

MICKEE (cont)
 A lipstick ?! Euugh! That is gross.

EDOUARD
 (standing over her holding out her phone to her)
 Please. We must go now. I am in enough trouble already.

MICKEE
 (not taking the phone)
 But you started this - maybe you got to see it through.

EDOUARD
 No. Please. It is not funny.

MICKEE
 No, you're right. I've been kidnapped. I'm not going anywhere.

EDOUARD
 (putting her phone on the bed beside her)
 Mademoiselle Carbeau, please, it is finished.

Mickee doesn't touch her phone but continues toying with the pistol

MICKEE
 You haven't done this kind of thing before have you ?

EDOUARD
 No. It was a big mistake. Now, please -

Mickee's phone starts to ring. Edouard waits for her to answer it but she doesn't move.
 Then as he starts to move to pick it up -

MICKEE
 If you take me back what d'you think's gonna happen ?
 What do you think Franco's gonna say ?
 "Gee, Eddie, you really had us worried there."
 Huh ! He'll have your arse in jail before -

The phone stops ringing.

MICKEE

I don't think you'd like prison, Eddie. More than your nose'd get bruised.

Mickee reassembles the revolver and lipstick and puts it aside.

MICKEE

You got a beer ?

EDOUARD

No. But I have champagne. Or fruit juice? Or tea – or coffee ?

Edouard goes to the kitchen

MICKEE

I think I need something a little stronger than tea.
But I warn you, champagne gives me gas.

Edouard opens the fridge and takes out a bottle of champagne.

MICKEE (cont)

Say, you got anything to eat ?

EDOUARD

What would you like ?

MICKEE

(crossing to join him)

What've you got ?

EDOUARD

(checking off the contents of the fridge)

Patés. Frommages. Some smoked salmon - smoked duck.
Jambon – ah - ham. Asparagus. Some salad, haricots verts,
artichauts – I could make you a Nicoise ? Or would you
prefer some caviar? Or an omelette ?

MICKEE

(looking in the fridge)

My Lord, no wonder you're broke !

EDOUARD

It is all for you.

MICKEE

Eddie, you are the nicest kidnapper I ever met.
But what d'you take me for ? I'm a quarter-pounder girl –
with a large fries and coke. But, it sure looks good.

Edouard pops the cold champagne and pours two glasses.
Taking a glass Mickee offers a toast.

MICKEE (cont)

Here's to us. To you – to getting what you deserve.

She drinks. Edouard sniffs the bouquet.

MICKEE (cont)

Anything ?

He puts the glass to one side.

MICKEE (cont)

You have to give it time.

Mickee takes a dish of paté from the fridge; and scoops a finger full and swallows it with relish.

MICKEE (cont)

Mmmmm.

Edouard takes a stick of bread from a cupboard and gives it to Mickee. She breaks it in two then splits one half.

MICKEE (cont)

Jeez, I am hungry.
Drugs always make me hungry.
What did you use to knock me out ?

Edouard produces a knife from a drawer and gives it to her.

EDOUARD

Chloroforme

MICKEE

Well, that's one I haven't made a habit of.

EDOUARD

I use it for my work. For extracting the essence –

Edouard decides Mickee is making a mess of the sandwich and he takes over.

EDOUARD (cont)

- Laissez-moi.

She sips her champagne and watches him expertly put the sandwich together.

MICKEE

Are you married ?

A beat. Edouard opens the fridge and takes out some salad leaves.

EDOUARD

No.

MICKEE

Gay ?

EDOUARD

(decorating the plate with the salad leaf)

Quoi ?

MICKEE

Are you gay? Homosexual.

EDOUARD

I understand. Why do you think - ?

MICKEE

It doesn't matter.

EDOUARD

No. I am not homosexual. Divorcé.

Edouard presents the completed sandwich on a plate with a linen serviette.

MICKEE

How could she bear to lose you ? Merci, monsieur.

Mmmm. This looks great.

Mickee takes her sandwich through and sits on the bed. Edouard brings the champagne bottle, puts it beside her and goes to sit at the table as Mickee tucks in to her sandwich.

MICKEE

This is great. You not eating?

Edouard's mobile phone rings in her jacket pocket. Mickee hardly reacts to it. Edouard gets up to get it.

MICKEE

Leave it. Not while I'm eating. Screw em. Let em sweat.
They probably think I'm floating in the Seine or -
(then seeing the look on Edouard's face)
Sorry. But. Just be cool.

The phone rings unanswered.
When it stops Edouard returns to his chair.

MICKEE

(looks around the room)

So whose place is this?

EDOUARD

I rent it. Just –

MICKEE

Just to kidnap me ?

EDOUARD

Yes.

Edouard watches Mickee eat and drink.

EDOUARD (cont)

Why are you doing this ?

MICKEE

I'm hungry.

She stuffs the last of the sandwich into her mouth.

EDOUARD

No. Why are you still here? Why haven't you gone back?

She chews, swallows and puts her plate on the floor beside the revolver before answering.

MICKEE (cont)

Truth, justice and the American way.

She stands up and begins to roam the room

MICKEE (cont)

I don't like to see someone getting screwed.

(she crosses to the window)

Where are we? Are we still in Paris?

EDOUARD

Yes.

MICKEE

(looking through the curtains)

I can't see the Eiffel Tower. I've been coming to Paris for twenty years and I don't think I've ever been anywhere I couldn't see the Tower.

(then in an excited whisper)

Hey! Eddie! Come here. Quick. Eddie!!

Edouard hurries to the window and peeks through the curtain. Mickee is giggling.

EDOUARD

What ?

MICKEE

There !

EDOUARD

Where ?

MICKEE

Look !

Edouard looks for a moment. Then quickly closes the curtains and moves away.

MICKEE

Hey! They're not interested in us.

(she looks out again)

It's beautiful. They're in love – or something.

Now they have seen us.

(She waves)

It's nice.

Edouard returns and closes the curtains in front of Mickee.

MICKEE (cont)

Oh, Eddie, what d'you think they're going to do?
Call Franco and Angelo and report us?

EDOUARD

Why not ?

MICKEE

Because they don't know who we are. No one knows we're here.

Mickee moves away from the window.

MICKEE (cont)

Did you use a phony name ?

Edouard doesn't understand the question.

MICKEE (cont)

Did you rent this place in your own name ?

EDOUARD

Yes.

(then realising his mistake)

Oh.

MICKEE

Don't worry about it. Franco and Angelo are going to keep this
whole thing very quiet. They aren't going to tell the world
what you've done.

EDOUARD

Why not ?

MICKEE

Because. It doesn't fit in with the fantasy.

Edouard looks quizzically at her.

MICKEE

We're all part of the same dream. Fashion. Perfume.
Beauty. Luxury. And in that dream everything's perfect.
It's a kind of paradise. It's the dream world we all create.
Angelo and Franco need us back in that world. They won't
come down into this world. So they'll pay - eventually.
And when they pay us they'll be buying us back into their
perfect future.

(suddenly Mickee lets out a large belch that surprises her)

Oh Lord, I'm sorry.

(and another)

I did warn you.

(and again)

Oh, dear. I think that's got it. Okay.

Mickee reaches into her jacket and takes out a pack of cigarettes and a lighter.

EDOUARD

Oh. Pardon, non. You cannot smoke. My nose.
It is very sensitive.

MICKEE

Ah, well, I hate to bring it up, but actually, at the moment,
your nose isn't sensitive at all.

Edouard slumps, head in hands. She takes a cigarette out of the box and puts it in her mouth.

MICKEE

I guess you didn't get me any cigarettes.

EDOUARD

No.

MICKEE

You're lucky. I only got one left.

She rattles the box at him – then lights her cigarette.

Mickee sits on the bed – and finds her phone which, together with cigarettes and lighter,
she puts on the floor under the bed. She picks up her plate to use as an ashtray.

EDOUARD

(standing up)

Michelle, I think I have to take you back now. It was kind of
you but –

MICKEE

Oh, sit down, Eddie. We aren't going through all that again.
Sit. Eddie –

He sits. Then stands up again.

EDOUARD

(vehemently)

But, please. I do not like it this 'Eddie'. I am not 'Eddie',
I am Edouard. Edouard Bellevue.

MICKEE

Okay. I'm sorry. Edouard.

EDOUARD

I know you think I am ridiculous. That I am just a stupid nose who
is also a very stupid kidnapper. Perhaps. But my name is all I have.
It is a name that is respected throughout my profession. So. Please.

MICKEE

Okay – Edouard.
So, how'd you get to be a nose.
I mean, you didn't just wake up one day and say, I think I'll
be a nose. How'd you get into it? Come on, I'm interested.
How did you earn the respect of your profession.

EDOUARD

It's what my family has always done.

MICKEE

Oh, so your father was –

EDOUARD

No. Not my father.
(then softening)
My grandfather, Our family has been parfumiens for more
than two hundred years.

MICKEE

Really? Wow.

EDOUARD

We have been Court Parfumiens to four Kings of France.
My great-great-great-great grandfather created perfumes
for Marie Antoinette.

MICKEE

Yeah? Did he get his head chopped off in the revolution?

EDOUARD

Mais non. Not at all. We made perfume for Robespierre and de Villeneuve – and then later for Napoleon – and Josephine. We were very democratic.

MICKEE

Well, I guess everybody wants to smell nice.

EDOUARD

And everyone wants to be seduced.

MICKEE

Yeah. I guess. So you joined the family firm.

EDOUARD

Eventually. I made my first fragrance when I was fifteen.

MICKEE

Fifteen ! Shouldn't you have been out playing football, chasing girls - ?

EDOUARD

Maybe. But there was never anything else I wanted to do. I started to learn when I was seven. One day my grandfather found me in the kitchen mixing herbs and spices, and he liked what I had created. From then he took me under his wing and began training me. At meal times he would blindfold me, and I was not allowed to eat anything until I had identified everything by its aroma. Not just the dish itself but each of the ingredients.

MICKEE

That is - weird.

EDOUARD

For me it was only like learning the alphabet at school. And then my grandfather let me into his laboratory and I was allowed to experiment with the essences that give each perfume its unique character – marjolaine sauvage, patchouli, ylang, wintergreen, vetiver java, rhodine, menthe – mint, méroli – and hundreds more. My grandfather made me copy out all the recipes for our competitors perfumes. By the time I was eighteen I could identify more than a thousand different fragrances - and I was ready to join the family business: Parfums Rochet.

MICKEE

Rochet ? They made L'Amour. L'Amour par Rochet.

EDOUARD

Bien sur. My grandfather's favourite. He created it in nineteen twenty-nine –

MICKEE

- Really -

EDOUARD

- It was his wedding present to my grandmother -

MICKEE

- Oh, this is – it was my mother's favourite perfume.

EDOUARD

A woman of good taste. And she was in good company. Edith Piaf, Marlene Dietrich, Carole Lombard - all of them wore L'Amour. They were all customers of Parfums Rochet. Or their lovers were.

MICKEE

My daddy brought it back for mom from Saigon in nineteen sixty-nine. He was just an auto mechanic in Athens, Georgia. He could never have afforded to buy it back home. It had such a special memory for her; it was like, her – 'thanksgiving' - for daddy coming back alive from the war. She only ever wore it on special occasions; you know, like their anniversary...and Christmas and their birthdays. Mom said that every time she opened the bottle it filled her head with memories. She'd be transported back to the day she opened our front door and there was daddy, with his kitbag slung on his shoulder and a three-foot grin splitting his face. And she'd remember all the emotions of that day – joy, relief, love, hope.

(imitating her mother's Georgia accent)

"I thought I'd faint clean away. 'stead of which I just cried all over your daddy's shoulder and he picked me up in his arms and carried me straight upstairs and we made your baby sister." Twenty years later she used the last drops of that same bottle on the day of his funeral.

(a beat)

When I got my first big pay cheque I went to Saks Fifth Avenue to get her some more. But they told be there was no more.

EDOUARD

No.

MICKEE

Mom said she didn't care, she only had to think of daddy and she could remember the smell of L'Amour. I tried everywhere to find another bottle but they told me the company had gone bust.

A beat, as Mickee expects Edouard to explain, then.

MICKEE (cont)

What happened ?

EDOUARD

Rochet was the name of my mother's family. When her father – my grandfather – died, my father took over the business. He was not a nose. And he was not a good businessman. Five years later Parfums Rochet was forced to close – and my father shot himself. Unfortunately, I inherited my grandfather's talent as a nose, but my father's skill as a businessman.

MICKEE

Why don't you start the business up again. You could make L'Amour. I bet people would love it.

EDOUARD

No. That is all in the past. Now I work only for other people.

Mickee gets up and as she goes towards the bathroom she puts a hand on his shoulder.

MICKEE

I'm real glad I met you. I'll tell Mom all about you – and your grandfather. That's a beautiful story – making a perfume for his wife, for their wedding day. My mom'll get a real kick out of that – and me knowing you.

Edouard watches her as she continues on into the bathroom, but she doesn't shut the door behind her. Then Edouard suddenly looks away and stands up and moves away from the door as we hear Mickee pee. Edouard moves quickly as far away from the door as possible and looks around at the room, uncertain what to do. He sees the plate Mickee has used as an ashtray and takes it and her glass through to the kitchen.

We hear Mickee belch.

MICKEE (off)

Pardon me.

We hear the toilet flush and then we can see Mickee washing her hands and face.

Edouard continues to busy himself cleaning up in the kitchen as Mickee returns.

MICKEE

Okay ? You want some help ?

EDOUARD

Non, merci. Thank you.

Mickee wanders the room. She veers towards the window and is about to look through the curtains again but then changes her mind and moves towards the kitchen area.

But when she joins him to help, though there is little left to do. Putting her hands into the pockets of her jacket she takes out a mobile phone.

MICKEE

Oh, here.

(holding out his phone)

It's yours.

He takes the phone and checks the screen.

MICKEE (CONT)

I don't think we're going to hear from them again tonight.

EDOUARD

No ?

MICKEE

They can't produce a couple of hundred grand in the middle of the night. They'll have to wait for the banks to open in the morning. We might as well get some sleep.

EDOUARD

Oh, no. I couldn't sleep – I have to...

But there's nothing he has to do.

MICKEE

You don't have to do anything – 'cept wait.

Mickee goes to the bed and sits down. But when she looks at Eddie again he is standing isolated in the middle of the room. She gets up and goes to him –

MICKEE (cont)

Come on. Edouard.

(she takes his hand)

Take the weight of the world off your feet. You're real tense.

(she leads him to the armchair)

Sit down.

(she sits him down)

There you go.

(she moves round behind him)

I know what you need.

(massaging his shoulders)

There. You're all knotted up. You've got to relax, Eddie.

I know you're stressed but –

(she works on his shoulders)

How's that?

EDOUARD

Thank you.

She bends down to him.

MICKEE

What we need is something to take our minds off all this.

She straightens up and then notices the television.

MICKEE (cont)

I know - how about an old movie? Something romantic.

Mickee switches it on. She takes the remote control back to the armchair and gives it to him –

MICKEE (cont)

See what you can find for us.

He starts flicking round the channels while Mickee returns to the bed and gets under the covers. From the television comes the sound of a passionate French political debate.

EDOUARD

Politics ?

MICKEE

I don't think so.

He changes the channel and a weather report comes on.

EDOUARD

The weather ?

MICKEE

Do we care if it's raining ?

She finds her cigarette pack on the floor and takes out her last cigarette but doesn't light it. He changes the channel: enthusiastic applause is followed by a quiz show host congratulating a contestant on a right answer.

MICKEE

A quiz show? Definitely not.

Then Edouard stops at an on-screen station ident and listens. The announcer speaks and we hear the words, Michelle 'Mickee' Carbeau" in his speech -

MICKEE

What was that ? Did he say my name ?

EDOUARD

Oui.

MICKEE

Why ?

Edouard doesn't answer but just listens to the announcement.

MICKEE

Why did he say my name ?

Then, as the opening credits begin –

EDOUARD

You know this film? "L'Amour en Ete" ?

MICKEE

Nah.

EDOUARD
(sarcastically)

Ho – hooo.

On the TV screen the opening shot of a Movie: a sixty year old actor trying to look thirty creeps through the garden of a Beverley Hills mansion -

MICKEE
Oh my Lord - ! "LA Heat"

EDOUARD
What ?

On Screen: the movie cuts to Mickee in the mansion's master bedroom, asleep under black silk sheets.

MICKEE
LA Heat – that's what it's called. Los Angeles Heat.

EDOUARD
Oh. Je prèfer en français.

MICKEE
And I'd prefer it if you'd shut it off.

Movie : cuts snappily between the sleeping MICKEE and the man breaking into the mansion -

EDOUARD
I didn't know you were an actress.

MICKEE
I'm not.
(she lights her cigarette)
Shut it off.

Edouard watches as the Man silently creeps into her bedroom -

MICKEE (cont)
Please, Eddie. I don't want to watch this.

Mickee reaches across for the remote control but he snatches it out of reach.

EDOUARD

No. I want to see you.

Movie : the Man creeps to the bed then slips a hand over Mickee's mouth

MICKEE

Well, I don't want to see me.

Movie : Mickee's character wakes but not with any great surprise - his hand slips from her mouth.

MICKEE (ON FILM)

You couldn't use the front door -

MICKEE

Eddie ! Please, shut it off. I mean it.

Movie : the Man kisses her and their mouths lock together.

EDOUARD

(encouragingly)

No. Mickee. Let me see.

Mickee nervously smokes. Edouard watches intently as the Man and Mickee's passionate love-making develops with moans and groans to the accompaniment of intense music. As the moans, groans and music rise to a climax Edouard points the remote at the TV and turns it off.

SILENCE.

Until Edouard looks at Mickee. Their eyes meet.

MICKEE

Thank you.

EDOUARD

I'm sorry.

(Mickee doesn't respond)

But you were good - at the beginning.

When you said - you know, about the front door.

MICKEE

Oh, yeah, a killer line.

EDOUARD

But it sounded just like you. Smart, but “amusant”.

MICKEE

Yeah ? Real funny.

(Mickee holds out the end of her cigarette to him)

Get rid of this.

Edouard gets up and gingerly takes the cigarette to the kitchen.

MICKEE (cont)

Oh, if it got you horny - those weren't my tits. They got a younger, plastic pair. In fact, it wasn't any part of my body. The producer told me my body wasn't what he had in mind. Though he spent quite a time checking it out before he made up his mind.

Mickee turns over and snuggles under the bedclothes. Edouard settles down in the armchair.

EDOUARD

I'm sorry if I -

MICKEE

Did you put your phone on charge ?

Edouard finds his phone and then takes the suitcase on top of the wardrobe, takes out the phone charger, finds a socket and plugs it in. He returns to the armchair and as he is about to sit back down -

MICKEE

Wanna turn off the light.

EDOUARD

Oh, yes.

Edouard gets up and goes to the light switch – but before he reaches it a mobile rings. Mickee realises it is her phone ringing in her bag under her bed.

She reaches down and takes it out of her bag.

EDOUARD

I should answer it.

Mickee holds out her phone to him.

MICKEE

(as Edouard takes her phone)

Don't screw up.

Edouard answers without checking the display –

EDOUARD

Allo.....Oh!.....No, I'm sorry.....No - Mickee cannot speak to -

Now a fusillade of abuse rattles down the phone and Edouard holds the phone away from him and Mickee sits up.

EDOUARD (cont)

It is your agent.

Edouard holds the phone to her –

MICKEE

(whispering)

No. I don't want to - .

Edouard covers the phone with his other hand –

EDOUARD

What do I say - ?

MICKEE

Just hang up!

Edouard summons up the courage to obey – but Mickee reconsiders –

MICKEE

Give it to me.

He gladly gives her the phone. Mickee composes herself.

MICKEE

Hi, Elizabeth, how are -

(rattling monologue until Mickee manages to interject)

I'm just out with some friends.....In a restaurant.....

It's a very quiet restaurant. It's sophisticated.....

No-one shouts here. Elizabeth, have you spoken to Angelo ?

(she shakes her head to Edouard indicating

Elizabeth's negative reply)

No, no reason.....No reason at all.....I was just asking -

.....I don't know why I asked. I was just making convers-

.....Oh, him. He's just a guy -He's just a guy I met....

at the shoot - he works for Angelo, he's a -

I don't know, because my phone was on the table next to him.....

No, the table isn't beside the bed.

(Mickee turns away from Edouard)

Jeez, Elizabeth, quit treating me like a.....Look, I got to go,

Elizabeth.....Because there's nothing to say. Everything's

fine.....Yes, it went fine. Great pictures.....--

Oh the usual craziness. Me sitting on a rock and an eagle flying -

An eagle.....It's symbolic.....It means wisdom and beauty.

And I'm the beauty.....Yeah, yeah, I know. Elizabeth we did

all that.....Because owls are ugly, and Angelo said that - Look,

Elizabeth, I'll tell you all about it when I get back. I got to go, my

battery's running out -

I am behaving myself.....I am.....No, I won't screw

anything up. I'm going now. Thanks for calling.

I'll talk to you soon.....Okay. Bye.

Mickee cuts the phone off and drops it beside the bed. She pulls the bedcovers tight around her.

EDOUARD

Elizabeth is - very - she is a good agent?

A beat -

MICKEE

You wanna turn off the lights.

EDOUARD

Oh. Yes.

Edouard goes and turns off the light. The room is now lit only by moonlight through the thin curtains. Edouard gets back into the armchair and tries to make himself comfortable. He takes off his jacket and drapes it over himself.

EDOUARD

Good night, Mickee.

Mickee does not reply

EDOUARD

I – I hope you sleep well.

A pause.

Then suddenly he gets up from the armchair and as he crosses to the bathroom –

EDOUARD

Pardon.

He goes into the bathroom and closes the door behind him and locks it.

We hear him peeing. He washes his hands. Switches out the light and crosses back to the armchair in the dark. He settles down in the armchair and tries to snuggle down under his jacket.

A moment.

EDOUARD

Mickee?

No reply

EDOUARD (cont)

(tenderly)

Sweet dreams.

A pause.

MICKEE

Edouard.

EDOUARD

Yes, Mickee.

MICKEE

This is a nightmare.

EDOUARD

Oui. Pardon.

He watches Mickee until his eyes droop and sleep overtakes him.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

The following morning. Daylight filters through the curtains.

Edouard is still asleep in the armchair, his jacket draped over him. On the bed the covers are so disarranged that it is impossible to distinguish whether Mickee is there or not.

Edouard wakes with a start. He pushes his jacket off and starts to stretch his cramped muscles then sniffs the air but his sense of smell has not returned. He looks over to the bed.

EDOUARD

Mickee.

(getting to his feet)

Mickee ?

He strides to the bed and pulls back the bedclothes to reveal that Mickee is not there.

EDOUARD

Ah, non !

He hurries to the bathroom door and opens it.

EDOUARD

Mickee?

He looks in. He comes out. He shuts the door and goes to the light switch and turns it on, as if further illuminating the room might reveal her presence, but it only confirms her absence. He hurries to the curtains and peers tentatively through. Then stretching to look down into the street what he sees, or rather doesn't see elicits a cry,

EDOUARD

Ah, non, non, non !

He goes to the armchair, picks up his jacket and searches the pockets: which confirms the worst - his keys are gone.

He tries the apartment's front door expecting it to be open – but it is locked.

EDOUARD

MICKEE

Hi.

Edouard nods. Mickee starts unpacking the groceries from her bag: the fresh bread, milk, croissants & patisseries. Edouard edges guiltily towards the suitcase on the bed.

EDOUARD

Did you sleep well?

MICKEE

Yeah – fine.

Looking over to him Mickee realises why he was packing.

EDOUARD

I thought you had gone.

MICKEE

Yeah? Thought I'd run out on you?

EDOUARD

Yes.

(replacing the suitcase on the wardrobe)

What was I supposed to think?

Mickee unwraps a fresh pack of cigarettes from her bag.

MICKEE

That you trusted me? I went to get us some breakfast.

(she lights a cigarette)

And then I discovered that 'Monsieur Kidnapper' had left his car parked right outside his secret hideaway.

(taking a newspaper from her bag and tossing it to him)

Here ! See if we're in it.

Edouard scans though the paper with some urgency while Mickee opens a cupboard and finds a cafetiere and coffee. She begins to prepare the breakfast.

MICKEE

You're lucky your car was still there. Nice neighbourhood you picked for us. I don't think Franco and Angelo are going to come looking for us round here. Though maybe the area isn't totally unfamiliar to them. All sorts of dreams being sold on the streets down there. I met an old woman who lives upstairs.

MICKEE (cont)

Her days of selling dreams are long gone. You should meet her. Now she's really got a face that tells a million stories. A real Savoir woman ! Bet you didn't have her story in mind when you were mixing your essences. Here. I left your car a couple of miles away.

Edouard looks up as Mickee inaccurately tosses him his keys. He picks them up and pockets them, then resumes searching through the paper. From the bottom of her bag Mickee takes out a six-pack of beer and puts them in the fridge.

MICKEE (cont)

You know, most kidnapers park their car some ways away from the scene of the crime. You never go to the movies? Oh, and I borrowed some euros
(she tosses Edouard his wallet)
I'll get Franco to add it to your hundred and eighty thousand –

EDOUARD

Mickee, that is not necessary.

Mickee turns back to preparing breakfast.

EDOUARD (cont)

It was not unreasonable of me. I kidnap you – then you hit me and break my nose and destroy my life – so I let you go – but you won't go – but then you leave and you take my car and you go – and then you come back. Now I don't know what is happening. No, I don't go to the movies – and I don't live my life like a movie. This is all very strange for me. I don't understand –

MICKEE

No, you don't do you? You don't understand what's going on at all. And you don't understand me.
(a beat)

You don't get it do you? Why I'm still here. You think maybe I got the hots for you? Is that it? What do they call it? When a hostage falls for her kidnapper -

EDOUARD

No!

MICKEE

Well, I hate to disappoint you, Eddie – you're cute guy but it's

a lot more straightforward than that.

EDOUARD

Then tell me.

MICKEE

Okay, here it is. Franco and Angelo are screwing me.

Edouard is speechless. Mickee stubs out her cigarette.

MICKEE (cont)

Do you get it now? Franco and Angelo are ripping me off too.

EDOUARD

Wha- ?!

MICKEE

Franco and Angelo aren't giving me any money either.

EDOUARD

But! That is ridiculous. They are paying you a million dollars. I read it in the newspapers. I see it on the television.

MICKEE

That's all bullshit, Eddie. It's PR. Publicity. It's just another story. Another fantasy.

EDOUARD

No, I don't believe you.

Mickee turns her back on him and shrugs.

MICKEE

Believe what you like.

EDOUARD

But - ? I don't - ? It's -

MICKEE

Well, why not? Is it so surprising? We're two of a kind, Eddie.

EDOUARD

No

MICKEE

I'm on a percentage too. Just like you. If everyone in the world buys a bottle of Savoir then I get rich too.

Edouard scoffs –

MICKEE (cont)

We've both been suckered.

EDOUARD

But how can this be? What about your agent?

Mickee gets another cigarette from the pack.

MICKEE

My agent? Oh yeah. Elizabeth. My agent. And my oldest friend in the business. Elizabeth told me I had to think long term. Don't grab the instant fix like you usually do, Mickee. You see agents always look at the bigger picture.

(she lights the cigarette)

Oh, she did tell me I'd get a couple of thousand dollars running around cash – but of course I haven't seen a nickel of that. I guess they reckoned I'd only blow it on booze or drugs or some cute little boy. And so long as I'm getting champagne and chocolates and a five star hotel then why should I worry my pretty little head about having cash in my pocket? So, now do you understand? When you told me your story I figured that if I stick with you then when you get your cash I'll shake them down for what they owe me. That's why I'm still here.

EDOUARD

But what if they don't give me my money?

MICKEE

If it all goes pear-shaped – and you get taken out by a police marksman and I get splattered with your blood and brains? In that case, how can they refuse me?

EDOUARD

Oh.

She turns back to finish preparing breakfast. She pours two cups of coffee. Then she glances back at him.

MICKEE

Oh, Eddie. Nothing like that's going to happen. Come on, let's give ourselves a big old caffeine and carb kick up the backside. And then we'll be ready to face whatever comes.

Edouard goes through to help her. She hands him a cup of coffee. Edouard sniffs the aroma.

MICKEE (cont)

It looks a lot better. I know you say you don't care what it looks like. But you should. It's a nice nose.

Edouard brings his cup of coffee back to the dining-table. Mickee follows him through with her coffee and the plate of patisseries -

MICKEE (cont)

Drink your coffee. And eat something. You shouldn't commit a major crime on an empty stomach. Come on, eat. Take one. Go on.

Reluctantly he takes one and she waits until he takes a bite. Mickee takes a croissant, takes a bite and then takes it and sits on the bed. Edouard chews and swallows – without any enjoyment.

EDOUARD

But - you must have money.

MICKEE

Hoh, Eddie - I wish it were so. There were times when I had a lot of it. Times when I was almost rich. But that was all over a long time ago. A lot can happen to a girl in twenty years. Of course, some girls are smart and take care of themselves and they get to grow up and become women. Me, I let men do my growing up for me. They didn't rip me off. I was really stupid. I gave them my money.

EDOUARD

Mickee, you are not stupid.

MICKEE

Oh, yeah? How d'you know what I am?

Mickee finishes her croissant and gets up to get another –

MICKEE

Why'd your wife dump you? You're not stupid.

EDOUARD

Comment?

MICKEE

Why did your wife leave you?

EDOUARD

How do you know it was she who left me?
Perhaps it was I who leave her?

MICKEE

(returning to the bed)

Just a hunch. You're a good looking guy. You're pretty handy in the kitchen. You don't like dirty movies. That makes you quite a catch. So why'd she dump you?

EDOUARD

She said I think only about my work.

MICKEE

Ha! That's original! So, who'd she run off with?
Come on.

EDOUARD

She left me for my accountant.

MICKEE

Really! Now that would have been smart of me –
to marry an accountant. I always aimed higher.
No, I guess it was lower. Whatever.

EDOUARD

You are not married?

MICKEE

Uh-huh. I'm finished with all that stuff. Made too many bad choices. I tried all kinds – junkie rock singers, trust fund bad boys, wanna-be artist photographers, I had them all. Or rather, they had me. Cleaned me out - body and soul and bank account. I even tried to be someone else for three years: an Austrian baroness. I got to live in a castle – a real-life Cinderella fairytale castle.

MICKEE (cont)

Of course, it turns out the baron's big castle meant a small – bank account. While I'm working my backside off to rebuild his castle he's screwing the maids. And when I confront the charming Baron, know what he told me: 'Mickee darlink, you are too beautiful to make love to'. So I went back to what I knew best. Married a photographer who worshipped the fabulous, beautiful Mickee Carbeau. He was so in love with me he photographed us making love and called it art. Then he put the pictures in a book, and made his fortune. At a hundred and fifty bucks a time it damn near holds the record as the most expensive stroke book ever. So. That's how stupid I am. Pretty dumb. They either pinned me as a goddess or a Barbie doll. Which do you think I am ?

Mickee gets up and fetches her cigarettes from the kitchen –

EDOUARD

I think you're a gangster.

MICKEE

Ha ! I've known a few of them.

(lighting a cigarette)

So when Mickee the goddess had been knocked off her pedestal too many times, and Barbie doll Mickee began to look a little frayed round the edges – and what should have been up was down and what should have been in was out. Then along comes Angelo with his Savoir woman – the woman of the twenty-first century – and everyone's telling me how lucky I am – how it's gonna be my big chance at a comeback - because I hadn't worked in four years and here's one last chance for Mickee to set the world alight. This was going to be my big pay-day. My chance to set myself up for – I don't know – the future – whatever that is. I don't know. But it was a chance to say good-bye to dragging this tired body around trying to pretend that keeping thin and working twenty hour days and not eating and staying up all night having fun and all that crap is just the most fun a girl can have this side of slitting her throat. Well, how could I refuse? 'Cause this was gonna be the one. The one where I get to say hello to the big bucks and no-one gets to steal it away from me.

EDOUARD

Yes. It will be your chance. It has to be. We have to make it happen.

MICKEE

Hmm. From your lips to God's ears.

Edouard watches as Mickee returns to the couch and sits. She idly flicks through the newspaper as she smokes.

MICKEE

We got a lot in common, Eddie. No, we do. We got talent. And we got skills. We just don't know how to use them to our advantage. Other people get to take their share first – and we get left with nothing.

She looks back at the newspaper, then something in it makes her sit up.

EDOUARD

What ? Is there something about us ?

MICKEE

No. I got an idea. Where's your phone? Let me see your phone.

EDOUARD

(getting his phone out)

Why? Who do you want to call?

MICKEE

No one. Let me see it.

He passes over his phone – Mickee quickly checks it over.

MICKEE

Great.

Mickee pans round the room looking at the image on the screen.

MICKEE

This place looks even worse on camera.

EDOUARD

I'm sorry.

MICKEE

No, it's perfect.

EDOUARD

Why do you want to take pictures?

MICKEE

I don't.

(she gives Edouard the phone)

You're going to take them –

Mickee fetches one of the dining-table chairs into the centre of the room as Edouard pans the camera round the room.

EDOUARD

What do you want me to photograph?

Edouard's pan ends on her sitting in the chair.

MICKEE

Me.

EDOUARD

What ?!

She holds her hands behind the chair-back as though they were tied and contorts her face

MICKEE

How do I look ?

EDOUARD

Not so good.

MICKEE

Okay, then I'll make it worse.

She gets up and gets her handbag from the kitchen.

EDOUARD

I don't understand what you're doing?

MICKEE

We're going to give Franco and Angelo a little nudge.

EDOUARD

What ?

She takes a make-up bag out of her bag and comes back to the chair.

MICKEE

Truth is, Eddie, I reckon we should have heard from them by now. That doesn't mean you're not going to get your money. We just need to push them a little –
 (taking a mirror from the bag)
 Would you move out of my light ?
 (he does, she looks in the mirror)
 Oooh. Not good. But it can always be made worse.

Edouard watches as Mickee starts using her make-up to make herself look more like a kidnap victim - darkening her eyes and adding shadows to her cheeks -

MICKEE (cont)

So. How bad shall I make it?

EDOUARD

What are you doing? Why are you making yourself look so... They will think I have hurt you.

MICKEE

Uh-huh.

EDOUARD

But - !

MICKEE

Oh, Eddie. We're not doing anything real. We're just trying to make them realise how bad my situation is – that I'm in real danger.

EDOUARD

But - !

MICKEE

It's okay, Eddie. It's just an illusion. Just another move in the game.

EDOUARD

It is ?

MICKEE

Sure. When you get you your money we'll tell them what really happened. I'll tell them you never laid a hand on me. You've been a perfect gentleman. Now, pass me the newspaper. We need to have a newspaper in the picture.

EDOUARD

Why ?

MICKEE

I don't know. Every kidnap movie I ever seen the victim is holding a newspaper.

Edouard is no wiser but gets the newspaper and gives it to her.

MICKEE

I don't remember why – something to do with the date.
(she scans over the front page of the paper)
The kidnapper makes the victim hold a newspaper with the date showing.

EDOUARD

He does ?

MICKEE

Yeah.

EDOUARD

Why?

MICKEE

I don't know. Oh yeah I do. The kidnappers send in a photograph of the victim holding up that day's paper and that proves the victim was alive on that day. So if I'm holding up today's paper it'll prove you didn't kill me yesterday.

EDOUARD

Oh. Good, I'm glad they will know that.

Mickee arranges the paper on her lap to display the front page, then re-assumes the hands-behind-back position.

MICKEE

What do you think ?

EDOUARD

It is horrible.

MICKEE

Just shoot one. Go on. Just one to see what it looks like.

He points the phone camera at her.

MICKEE

Have you got the newspaper in shot?

He steps back a pace

MICKEE (cont)

Okay?

EDOUARD

Yes.

MICKEE

Right.

(she assumes the pose)

Now fire one off.

Edouard does and the flash fires. Then he looks at the picture on the phone's screen.

MICKEE

Show me.

Hey, that's pretty good.

EDOUARD

It is ?

MICKEE

But it needs something else.

EDOUARD

It does ?

MICKEE

Yes.

EDOUARD

What ?

MICKEE

A message. It should have a message. Stating our demands. You got a pen? And a piece of paper? Oh, no, we'll write it on the newspaper.

Edouard produces a pen from his inside jacket pocket and gives it to her -

MICKEE (cont)

Thanks.

(then immediately she gives it back to him)

No. You have to write the message. You're the kidnapper.

EDOUARD

Ah, oui.

(he takes the pen and newspaper)

What do I write ?

MICKEE

Umm? It needs to be short – tough - no bullshit.

Like. "Give us the money" Yeah, that'll do it.

"Give us the money."

Edouard starts to write – but he only writes “Give” before he stops.

EDOUARD

No. "Give me the money - "

MICKEE

Right ! You're getting the hang of this!

"Give me the money - "

(another thought)

“- or she gets it."

(leaning over Eddie's shoulder as he writes)

That's it. Or. She. Gets. It.

EDOUARD

Anything else?

MICKEE

Ah, no.

EDOUARD

Should I sign it?

MICKEE

Uh ? I think they'll know who it's from.

Okay. That's good. Let's try another shot.

Edouard moves away to frame the shot as Mickee composes herself and the paper.

MICKEE (cont)
How does it look? Got the paper in.

He takes a step back.

EDOUARD
Yes. Ready? Smile.

MICKEE
Eddie!

EDOUARD
Oh, yes. Ready ?

MICKEE
Yeah.

EDOUARD
Now.

Edouard takes the picture – the flash fires. Edouard looks at the picture –

MICKEE
Let me see. Come on. Mmmm?. It's not very scary.
The problem is I'm not very scared. Try another.

Edouard goes to line up another shot -

MICKEE
I have to think myself into the role: the victim.
(method acting, to herself)
So. A terrifying man has kidnapped me.

Edouard takes a photograph – the flash fires –

MICKEE
No! Wait ! I'm trying to act.

Mickee starts working through her Method Acting: developing fear and terror, which, in the spirit of LA Heat has a certain erotic quality.

MICKEE (cont)

So. A man has kidnapped me. I accepted a lift in his car.
He drugged me. I wake up in a strange room.
I don't know what he wants. I'm a defenceless woman.
He's crazy. Maybe he wants to –

Edouard, at first captivated by her performance – then takes the picture to stop her. The flash fires –

MICKEE

Hey !

EDOUARD

(bringing her the phone)

It was enough.

MICKEE

I was building up to a -

EDOUARD

Look –

MICKEE

Hey! That's pretty good. Maybe I am an actress.

Okay. Let's send it off.

(Edouard takes the phone back)

You know how to do it ?

EDOUARD

Yes.

But he makes no move to send the picture.

MICKEE

No. Wait. Don't send it.

(she gets up)

I've got a better idea. Where's the gun? The perfume spray.

Do you have it ? I had it here.

(she looks on and under the bed)

Oh Eddie, this is going to be great! Ah!

She gets up with the revolver and gives it to him as she takes the phone and starts to flick through its menu -

MICKEE (cont)

Oh, this is going to be so great! You'll love it.

EDOUARD

I will?

MICKEE

This will scare the pants off them.

EDOUARD

It will ?

MICKEE

Now. Somewhere in this thing. It's got to have - Yes! Fantastic!
Oh, Eddoe, if this works we're going to be -

EDOUARD

Mickee. A moment, please. Who is Eddoe ?
Eddoe - No. Please, it is too much.

MICKEE

Okay. Edouard. But I'm telling you -

She goes to the dining table with the camera.

EDOUARD

Now what are you doing ?

MICKEE

I'm trying to get us our money. And if this works we'll be out of
here before -

EDOUARD

Mickee, what are you doing with the fruit ?

MICKEE

This time we're both going to be in the picture!

She wedges the phone in amongst fruit in the bowl and lines it up aimed at the chair

EDOUARD

We are ?

MICKEE

Uh-huh.

EDOUARD

Why am I going to be in the picture?

She returns to him.

MICKEE

Stand next to the chair. Go on. Move over a bit. A bit more. Fine.

(she sits down beside him)

Face the camera. Now point the gun at me. Right here.

(she positions his hand so the gun is pointing at her head)

Do it like you mean it, Eddie. Try and look a bit fierce.

Yeah, okay. I guess if you do it too good they aren't going

to believe it's you. Okay. Let's try one. Ready. Don't move.

Mickee gets up – hurries to the camera - .

MICKEE (cont)

Stay right where you are. Okay? You look great. Hold it –

She presses the button to set off the timer and rushes back to the chair –

MICKEE (cont)

- absolutely still!

EDOUARD

Mickee ! This is - ?!

MICKEE

(setting the newspaper on her lap)

Shush.

She assumes her position of terror – then glances up at Edouard.

MICKEE (cont)

Eddie!

She moves his hand so the gun points at her head; and just reassumes her position as the flash goes off. And immediately the phone that has just taken their picture starts to ring. They both freeze, holding the pose and looking at the camera/phone, until -.

EDOUARD

My God ! The picture? They have seen it already ?

MICKEE

No, no! We haven't sent it ! But this is it, Eddie.
 You got to answer it. Okay? But remember - don't agree to nothing
 but the whole caboodle. Yeah? One hundred and eighty grand.
 Okay, now you're doing this for both of us - agreed ?

EDOUARD

Oui. Yes. Agreed

MICKEE

Right.
 (she takes the revolver from him)
 Go answer it.

Edouard hurries to answer the phone –

MICKEE (cont)

(urgently)

And Eddie –
 (he stops)
 Remember - they're the ones who're worried.

Edouard tries to get a handle on that concept as he answers the phone, .

EDOUARD

(nervously)

Allo.

MICKEE

(urgent whisper)

Ed-die!

He turns and she points the revolver at him

EDOUARD

(to phone)

Oui, c'est moi.

Mickee hurries to him – and punches his arm to encourage him –

EDOUARD (cont)

Stop !

(to the phone)

Pardon. You are ready to pay.

No, you listen to me. I want my money.

But still not enough for her – she points the gun in his face.

EDOUARD (cont)

No ! Franco ! Give me my money !

Mickee is shocked but pleased – but then Edouard suddenly turns away from her

EDOUARD (cont)

Franco! Don't try to –

(sudden switch in Edouard's tone)

What ?Yes, we – I have a television. But why - ?.....Oh.....Allo? Franco?

Franco has clearly hung up on Edouard who disconnects the phone and stands thinking.

MICKEE

So? What did he say ?!

EDOUARD

He said I should watch tele-journal – the news.

MICKEE

Uh? But - why ?

EDOUARD

I don't know. That's all he said: watch the news on Tele-France 1.

MICKEE

But what about the money? Didn't he say anything about the money?

EDOUARD

Nothing. He laughed.

Edouard goes to the television and turns it on -

MICKEE

He laughed?

EDOUARD

Yes. He laughed. And not a funny laugh. A very serious laugh.
(he changes the television to the TF1 channel)
Then he asked if we have a television. I said, yes. And he said:
watch the news.

MICKEE

Hmm. I don't get it. What are they up to...?

EDOUARD

You don't know? Ha, for once Edouard understands what is
happening. Because they have told the world what I have done –
- and now the police will be looking for me – and I rent this
apartment in my own name...and they will come here with guns.
Real guns!

MICKEE

No! I don't believe it.

TV PICTURE: The name above Angelo Cellini's boutique on the Rue St Honore silences
Mickee –

MICKEE (cont)

Look! It's Angelo's shop – turn it up.

TV PICTURE cuts to a beautiful still shot of Mickee from the previous day's shoot for the
Savoir advertisements - and Edouard turns up the television sound to hear the voice over
of Zigou a Parisian fashion journalist -

ZIGOU	Mickee Carbeau – présentée au grand public il y a deux jours tel qu'étant le visage de Savoir a disparu.	MICKEE	What is she saying about me? Eddie! Tell me!
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EDOUARD

That you have disappeared.

TV PICTURE cuts to a modern luxurious office, all white walls, framed drawing/posters
Angelo Cellini creations where Zigou interviews Franco and Angelo.

ZIGOU

Bonjour, Angelo. Bonjour, Franco

ANGELO & FRANCO

Bonjour, Zigou

ZIGOU Alors dites-nous qu'elles
sont les dernières nouvelles ?
Où est Mickee?

MICKEE She said my name again.

ANGELO Je - je ne sais pas ?
Elle est partie.

MICKEE Eddie, tell me !
What are they saying?

ZIGOU Oui, mais où ?

FRANCO Nous savons pas. Elle est partie.

EDOUARD They don't know
where you are. You have
disappeared.

ZIGOU Quand lui avez-vous parlé pour la
dernière fois ?

MICKEE Where ?!

FRANCO Un coup de fil - hier soir.

EDOUARD They spoke on the
phone with you last night.
That's all.

ZIGOU Mais pourquoi ?

ANGELO On croit qu'elle a peut-être
entendu des mauvaises langues dire que
mon nouveau parfum « Savoir » a été
testé sur des animaux. Bien entendu,
je ne laisserai jamais mon nom être
associé à ces choses-là.

MICKEE But what - !

EDOUARD Silence !
What !
What !
No !

ZIGOU Bien entendu c'est faux. Mais
comment allez-vous résoudre ce problème ?

MICKEE What ?!
What they're saying!

ANGELO Nous essayons désespérément de
joindre Edouard Bellevue, pour affirmer
que ce n'est pas vrai.

EDOUARD Of course it is not
true ! You are lying !.

FRANCO Si nous découvrons que Monsieur
Bellevue à faire avec quoique ce soit de ces
atroces pratiques sur les animaux. Nous
retirerons immédiatement du marché tous
les flacons -

MICKEE What's not true ?!
Who is lying ?

ZIGOU C'est incroyable! Angelo, avez-vous
un message pour Mickee cas où elle nous
regarde -

EDOUARD I would never allow
any of my creations to
be used to torture animals.
How can they say such a
thing. Angelo knows that I
would never -

MICKEE

Eddie - !

EDOUARD

Not, Eddie ! Edouard ! My name is - !

MICKEE

Oh shut up, Eddie, Edouard ! Whatever your damn name is, you are not gonna sue anyone. Not unless you do it from inside a prison cell!

EDOUARD

You will see. I don't care.

(he takes out his phone)

I don't care about you – or Franco – or Angelo - I don't care! I will not let my reputation be - .

Edouard hits the speed dial.

MICKEE

What are you doing ?

EDOUARD

Ha ! You will see ! Allo, Franco –

Mickee snatches his phone and disconnects the call.

MICKEE

You got one choice. It's your reputation or your cash. Right now you can't have both.

EDOUARD

I don't care about the money.

MICKEE

Well I do.

EDOUARD

Give me my phone.

MICKEE

No.

Edouard's phone rings and he snatches it back

EDOUARD

Oui. Ah, Franco –.....No, Franco I'm telling you –
.....What ?!But – but you will not
get away with this !

(his tone changes, in this moment he has been crushed)

Oh.....Oui, je comprends.....

Mickee launches another of her wild screams – Edouard covers the phone, and shouts at her -

EDOUARD (cont)

Mickee ! Arrêt ! Stop ! Mickee ! They don't care anymore!

Mickee is shocked into silence by his authority -

EDOUARD (cont)

(to phone)

Yes, Pardon, Franco.....Oui.....Oui.....
.....Oui, j'arrive bientôt .

Edouard hangs up. He throws his phone into the armchair.

MICKEE

Eddie? What's happening? What did he say?

EDOUARD

It is over. Finished. You said they would pay me. No, you were wrong. They will not pay me - ever.

MICKEE

Why, what did he say?

EDOUARD

They won't pay me – because they haven't paid you.

MICKEE

Yeah. So, that's why –

EDOUARD

And they won't ever pay you. They have no intention of ever paying. Not you, not me. Jamais! Never! You were correct. They are – how did you say – ripping us off.

MICKEE

But –

EDOUARD

Franco said that if they can get Mickee Carbeau for free and she is a famous American model, then why would they pay a nobody like me.

Silence.

Edouard gets the suitcase down again and puts it on the armchair.

EDOUARD (cont)

What I do not understand is - you have an agent – she is crazy mad American woman – terrifying – but she – why does she do this to you ?

MICKEE

I don't know. I told you. There's always a bigger picture.

(she lights a cigarette)

And I used to believe in the bigger picture. I feel like all my life I've been trying to figure out the bigger picture. I've had my eye fixed on it right from the beginning. Really. All those years ago, Elizabeth and me – sitting in her office on the 38th floor – looking out all over the Manhattan skyline – big bright pictures which ever way you looked. Big bright dreams. My dreams. Our dreams. Me and Elizabeth – planning and scheming – how Mickee Carbeau was going be the biggest – the most wanted – the most expensive – the most exclusive – the most popular. If Elizabeth could make this happen then that would happen – and then if I was to do that then this would happen. And that was how it happened. But however much we succeeded there was always something – another big picture – away on the horizon. And you know there was no one to tell me I couldn't have it. No one was gonna tell me it wouldn't happen. You know why ? Eh, Eddie ? You know why they couldn't deny me anything ?

EDOUARD

Because you are a super- model...a superstar....

MICKEE

No! No, you're not listening. I wasn't a super anybody back then. Back then I was just some hayseed hick chick straight out of Athens, Georgia with a hundred bucks in my pocket, torn jeans and big dreams.
(continues)

MICKEE (CONT)

No, I'll tell you why the world couldn't deny me a darn thing. Because I was beautiful. Lord, I was so damn beautiful. You never saw anyone like me. I was just so...beautiful. My God. It makes me shiver to remember. That's why they couldn't deny me anything I wanted. You think that sounds arrogant? Well, it was just a fact. I was the most beautiful girl in the world. And not just because my momma told me so. Every mother thinks their daughter is beautiful. Didn't your mother tell you you were the handsomest guy on the block?

EDOUARD

No...She...my father...he was always –

MICKEE

Well, she should have. But whenever my momma told me... there was always something in her voice – like she knew what trouble there was in store and she didn't know how to tell me – She'd tell my sisters exactly the same as she told me – "Oh Ellie, you're beautiful." or "You're just so beautiful, Rebecca." but when she said it to any of the others it was a compliment, an encouragement, something to help them through some little - . There are four of us girls. We're all real nice looking. Kate's the eldest and is like six feet tall – but real shy and she married her high school sweetheart - five kids and happy as.... Sammy-Jo's got too much energy so she just terrifies everyone – hell of a lawyer though... – and Becky...Becky just can't take nothing seriously: lives with a guy who's never had a job more than six months at a stretch...but they're in love, so.... And then there's me. And I was this happy as pie teenager when Elizabeth and her scout crew came to town. And she took one look at me and they all just knew that I was the one. And all I had to do was look at the bigger picture and I could have any damn thing I wanted.

And I just fell for it.

But Elizabeth had that same look in her eye, just like my momma – and the same tone in her voice: "Michelle, you are beautiful."

But it was like she was warning me about everything that was to come. But – I was young and ... It was just what everybody told me: "Mickee, you are so beautiful." It was just the way it was.

At a certain moment, in a certain place. You are the one. And I was the one.

(tears)

But it all seems so – so – so long ago now – so very long ago.

EDOUARD

Mickee, I am sorry that I shouted at you.

MICKEE

You have no idea what I'm talking about.

EDOUARD

You were trying to help me. But now we have to -

MICKEE

It wasn't for you. It was for me.

He opens the suitcase and goes to the wardrobe, but before he opens it he turns to her.

EDOUARD

I would just like to say thank you. You tried to help me. I –

He turns back to the wardrobe and opens it – and he takes out a summer dress and starts neatly folding it into the suitcase. Eventually Mickee looks up and notices.

MICKEE

What is that - ?

EDOUARD

A dress. For you. I brought clothes for you.
I should have given them to you yesterday, but –

MICKEE

Oh, Eddie. You brought all these for me?

Mickee hugs him.

MICKEE (cont)

Oh, Eddie. You really cared. You really are -

She kisses him.

EDOUARD

I will get your bag.

He goes to the kitchen – but before he can pick up her bag.

MICKEE

No. We're not going to give in. We're not gonna let them get away it.

EDOUARD

Yes we are. We have no choice.

MICKEE

Yes we do. The photographs. We'll send the photographs.
Just like we planned.

Mickee goes for the phone but Edouard snatches it first.

EDOUARD

No. Mickee, why ? It won't make any difference.

MICKEE

How do you know?.

EDOUARD

Because Franco doesn't care about me or you. It will do no good.

MICKEE

You don't know that.

EDOUARD

No, Mickee, you will make yourself look a fool. Franco will laugh at you. I won't allow you.

MICKEE

But I'm not going to send them to Franco.

EDOUARD

Then who - ?

MICKEE

- I'll send them to a newspaper. Or to the TV station.

EDOUARD

No! Don't you understand, no-one cares about Edouard Bellevue and Mickee Carbeau.

MICKEE

Give me the phone, Eddie.

EDOUARD

They don't care if I kidnap you.

MICKEE

Give it to me.

They chase each other round the table.

EDOUARD

Maybe they are hoping I will shoot you.

MICKEE

Give it to me, Eddie !

EDOUARD

That would be good publicity.

Mickee makes a dive for Edouard and grabs him

EDOUARD

No! I won't allow you.

MICKEE

You what ?

EDOUARD

I will erase them.

Edouard holds the camera at arm's length out of her reach –

MICKEE

(raging)

Give it to me ! They're my pictures!

EDOUARD

No. It is my phone !

MICKEE

Don't you dare !

EDOUARD

Too late, one gone

MICKEE

Eddie, you - !.

EDOUARD

Two gone!

MICKEE

You give me that phone or I'm going to –

They tumble to the floor where the struggle continues -

EDOUARD

Three gone !

MICKEE

They're my photographs!

EDOUARD

Another !.

MICKEE

You got no right!

EDOUARD

The last - !

MICKEE

They're mine !

EDOUARD

Gone ! All gone.

MICKEE

You bast-

EDOUARD

It is done. Finished. Too late..

Mickee releases her hold on him as Edouard's rises up triumphant – and his nose smacks against the edge of the table with a stomach churning – thud!

He howls and collapses to the floor clutching his nose.

MICKEE

Serves you right. You gutless coward. You had no right to –

But Edouard is not moving.

MICKEE (cont)

Eddie! Eddie? Speak to me. Eddie.

He moans.

MICKEE (cont)

Come on. Let me see it. Lie back. Is it bleeding? No.
Oooh, you poor man. That was a hell of a whack.
And you deserved it.

EDOUARD

I would not allow –

MICKEE

Let's get you up.

EDOUARD

Those pictures were horrible – and you are –

MICKEE

Quiet now, Eddie – just -

She lifts him and he helps himself get unsteadily to his feet..

EDOUARD

- you are still beautiful.

MICKEE

Shhhh....

EDOUARD

And you are my friend. Without you –

MICKEE

- you don't know what you're saying -

EDOUARD

- Oh, yes.

(he slumps onto the bed)

It was good.

(he reaches up to her)

It was very good. Because we tried.

MICKEE

Shhhsh. Just lie still.

EDOUARD

Yes. Mickee –

MICKEE

Ooh, you got a nasty graze there.
 (she searches in his pockets)
 Have you got a handkerchief ? –

EDOUARD

I want to tell you –

MICKEE

(taking out his folded handkerchief)
 Here we are -

EDOUARD

- I think that I -

She puts the handkerchief on his nose –

EDOUARD (cont)

Love..yooouuuu.....

He faints away.

MICKEE

Eddie ? Eddie ?

– she smells the handkerchief.

MICKEE

Oh ! Oh, Eddie! I'm sorry !
 (she throws the handkerchief aside)

Eddie ?

(leaning close to his face)
 Eddie ? Eddie !

EDOUARD

Hmmm?

MICKEE

Are you alright ?

EDOUARD

Hmm

MICKEE

Oh, Lordie –

Mickee adjusts the pillow under his head. A mobile phone rings. Mickee looks around for it and realises it comes from her bag in the kitchen. She goes and takes out her phone, opens it and reads the screen ID.

MICKEE

(to the phone)

Hi, Elizabeth..... Oh, really...All the papers and the TV stations. Well, I guess that means you can up my fees.
You know what I'm trying to do here. I'm trying to get my money.....Elizabeth, you know damn well this has nothing to do with the animals. It's about money.....
Oh, for Chrissakes, Elizabeth, don't pat me on the head. I'm your client not your child!.....
 Just tell me about the deal.....The deal you did with Franco
I said don't treat me like a child.....And don't give me that "bigger picture" bullshit. I'm not sixteen.....
 I don't have a future to invest in.....This is my future
No - Elizabeth! No, you do not have anyone else on the other line. You have me on this line.....Elizabeth ! Don't you dare hang up on me ! Elizabeth ? Elizabeth !

Furious, Mickee tosses her phone away. She opens the fridge and takes out a beer, snaps off the cap on the edge of the work surface and slugs down a long shot. She paces with the beer – fighting back her tears until she slumps onto the chair which she used to set up the pictures. Then she picks up the newspaper and reads the message Edouard wrote on it. And she has an idea. She begins setting up the chair and finding the newspaper and setting up the original photos.

EDOUARD

(dreamily, but still unconscious)

Mickee.

Mickee hurries to the bed. Edouard begins to stir. She finds his handkerchief on the floor – and then searches in his pocket and finds the small medicine bottle.

MICKEE

(strokes his hair)

I'm sorry, Eddie –

Opening the bottle she sniffs it warily. She shakes out the last few drops onto the handkerchief and covers his nose just before he regains consciousness.

MICKEE (cont)

- but we got to take care of business.

She waits a moment – he sleeps – and then with a kiss on his brow –

MICKEE (cont)

Sweet dreams.

Mickee quickly gets up and goes back to the upright chair. But before she sits down she looks across at Eddie.

She checks her make-up in her hand mirror and then goes to the phone. She sets the self-timer in operation and hurries back to the chair. She assumes the position, grabs the paper and puts it on her lap, just as the flash fires. She goes to the phone and looks at the photograph.

MICKEE

Hm. It's no good without you in it.

She takes a swing of her beer – looks at the photograph in the phone – takes another hefty belt from the bottle - and she's made a decision.

MICKEE

Okay, then....let's show them a real Savoir woman.

She returns to the living area with the beer; she is about to take another belt but sets the bottle aside. She takes off her shirt.

Mickee takes a series of pictures of herself. Each picture is progressively more revealing; deconstructing and parodying the fantasy Savoir woman. The photographs need to be shocking enough to convince us that Mickee believes they will do the trick.

When she has taken five pictures she gets the newspaper and searches through it until she finds what she wants – referring to the paper she dials a number and sends off the pictures. Job done, she tosses the phone aside on the kitchen counter and finishes her beer.

She is about to light a cigarette when Edouard stirs. She quickly gets dressed and then sees the chloroform bottle and handkerchief beside the bed and replaces them in his pocket just before he wakes –

MICKEE

Hello, sleepy man.

EDOUARD

(dreamily)

Allo.

MICKEE

How are you feeling?

EDOUARD

Yes. How long have I been – ?

MICKEE

Just a few minutes.

EDOUARD

What happened ?

MICKEE

You whacked your nose - on the table. It was quite a crack.

She gently touches his nose. Edouard lets out an exclamation of shock; but suddenly clasps her hand to his nose and inhales deeply.

MICKEE

I'm sorry!

He sits up – still clutching her hand,

MICKEE (cont)

Hey !?

He inhales deeply with every breath he takes

EDOUARD

My nose !

MICKEE

What ?!

EDOUARD

It works! My nose is working! I can smell!

MICKEEE

Really ?

EDOUARD

Oh, Mickee. You don't know – I – I'm so happy. I am me again.

He inhales deeply

MICKEE

Everything working ?

EDOUARD

(beaming)

Yes, everything is perfect.

(leaning towards Mickee he takes another deep breath)

Nothing matters now. They can keep my money.

I have my life back.

He hugs her and she hugs him. They hold the embrace and then he looks at her – and she at him – and they kiss. But as their passion grows his nose clashes with hers and he suddenly breaks away with a yelp.

MICKEE

Oh, careful.

EDOUARD

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have –

MICKEE

It's okay. I liked it.

But he stands up - a little unsteady on his feet.

MICKEE (cont)

Steady. Take it slowly.

An aroma attracts him and he makes a move towards the table

EDOUARD

It is like when I was a child. At my grandfather's house.

Every smell is new.

He bends to inhale the aromas from the vase of flowers. He sits in the chair by the table - and takes a rose bloom from the vase and inhales its aroma.

EDOUARD (cont)

Ah – the rose - my favourite.

He crushes the bloom in his hands to release the full aroma and inhales his palms.

EDOUARD (cont)

The first heady top note. That is how it begins. To make the first impression. But you must wait for the heart to beat. Only then will the full complexity be released.

He takes a geranium stem from the vase.

EDOUARD (cont)

A sweet lightness, floating – like a morning breeze.
But time passes and then the dark strength – day turning into night.
Always we need the contrast. Revealing the fullness.
To make life more interesting.

He inhales the aroma of the flower – and then again crushes the bloom in his hands and inhales the aroma.

EDOUARD (Cont)

But yet – it is like a close friend. So near and yet...it is the attraction of opposites ?

Edouard takes a stem of jasmine and crushes the stem in his fist. He inhales it. Then he drops the crushed bloom with the others on the table.

EDOUARD (Cont)

This is all I ever wanted. All of my life –

He scoops up the crushed blooms and inhales them – and then lets them fall through his fingers onto the table.

EDOUARD (Cont)

- to make the perfume. To make people happy. To make something beautiful. But it is not enough, is it?

He inhales the crushed flower heads on the table then stands up.

EDOUARD (Cont)

I suppose we should go?

Mickee, absorbed in watching him, doesn't move.
Edouard crosses to the kitchen.

EDOUARD (Cont)

But I would like first – a glass of champagne ? Yes ?

MICKEE

Sure. We should celebrate. Your nose. The future.
We are still alive.

Edouard takes a bottle from the fridge and brings two glasses.

EDOUARD

But I have made a big mess of my life.

He brings the bottle and glasses to the table. She joins him. .

MICKEE

No, you haven't. You just tried to get what you were owed.
And now your nose is working again you can make new
perfumes. You are Edouard Bellevue again.

(taking his hands)

Who knows what will turn up.

EDOUARD

Oh, Mickee.

(kissing her hand)

Nothing can defeat you.

MICKEE

No.

(she inhales the mixed aromas from his palms)

This is lovely – all the different perfumes together. You're a
very clever man, Edouard Bellevue. Now open the bottle.

Edouard opens it and pours two glasses as,

MICKEE (cont)

We are going to celebrate the return of your very handsome
nose to full working order. And we're going to think about
the future. And try not think about the fact that we are broke.

(raising her glass to him)

So. Here's to the nose! And may it stay out of trouble forever
more.

EDOUARD

To the nose! And to the face. To all of you.

They drink.

MICKEE

Give me your hand again.

(She takes his hand and inhales the aroma again)

Edouard, this is beautiful. Maybe you got something here,

MICKEE (cont)

A new perfume. In the palm of your hand.

You could call it – “Kidnap” ? Or “Ransom” ?

EDOUARD

Mickee you are –

MICKEE

Why not ? Created with your brand new nose.

She pours some of her glass of champagne on the crushed blooms on the table.

MICKEE (cont)

There. I christen your future. To Kidnap – or Ransom.

So, what is the story of this brilliant new perfume?

Inspired by a newly discovered sense of danger, Master
Parfumeur Edouard Bellevue, launches his latest creation.

Edouard laughs.

MICKEE (cont)

It's gonna be a huge success. Yes, it will. Because I will
be your face. Yes, I will. Who else knows the real story?

EDOUARD

Mickee!

MICKEE

Are you telling me I'm not going to be the face ? You think
you're gonna get some anorexic teenager to take my place ?
You traitor !

EDOUARD

Oh, no.

MICKEE

Well, then. With my face and your nose we'll make our fortunes.
And no one will ever know the secret of how you created the
world's favourite perfume.

EDOUARD

I cannot refuse you.

She moves to him just as Edouard's phone rings. They both look around for it.

EDOUARD

What do they want now? Haven't they done their worst?
Ah, of course, they want us back. To humiliate me.

But before he can find it it has stopped ringing. Mickee has seen his phone on the kitchen counter, goes to it, opens it and checks the display screen.

MICKEE

It's a text.

EDOUARD

A text? Ha ! Now I am not worth even a phone call.

MICKEE

It says, "Vous gagnez".

EDOUARD

Quoi ?

MICKEE

"Vous gagnez".

EDOUARD

(going to her)

Let me see.

MICKEE

Does "vous gagnez" mean – ?

EDOUARD

- you win.

Edouard takes the phone as Mickee smiles, and then she begins to laugh.

EDOUARD

But what does that mean ? Vous gagnez? What did I win?

MICKEE

You won the game, Eddie. Don't you get it ? What you did this all for Eddie. You won. You're going to get your money!

(she hugs him)

One hundred and eighty thousand euros!

EDOUARD

(embraces her)

But I don't understand.

MICKEE

What's not to understand?!

EDOUARD

How did I win? Why have they –

MICKEE

They tried to bluff us out. But we held our nerve. And they folded. So we scoop the pot! We win.

EDOUARD

I can't believe it..

MICKEE

Well, you better start believing it. See, you didn't make a mess of everything. You're a winner, Eddie. Now you really can celebrate.

(she gets the bottle to refresh their glasses).

You did the right thing. You played it cool.

EDOUARD

No, you played it cool!

MICKEE

We played it cool.

(raising her glass)

So here's - to us.

EDOUARD

To us.

- they drink.

MICKEE

So – now you have your money.

EDOUARD

Yes, I do.

MICKEE

And you have a new perfume. And you could make L'Amour again.

EDOUARD

I could ?

MICKEE

Sure, I told you –

EDOUARD

But I would like – to be with you – perhaps – it could be more – more than business?

MICKEE

Oh. Yes. Maybe.

EDOUARD

Yes?

MICKEE

But – first, you will have to ask me out on a date. A proper date. No drugs – no chloroform.

EDOUARD

No.

Caught unawares, Mickee belches.

MICKEE

Pardon.

EDOUARD

No champagne.

MICKEE

No. No champagne

Mickee laughs, then –

MICKEE

Come on – let's go and get your money.

Mickee goes to get her coat and bag - Edouard looks at the screen on his phone again –.

EDOUARD

I am glad about one thing, Mickee.

MICKEE

What's that ?

EDOUARD

That we didn't send the pictures.
Aren't you glad I destroyed them?

MICKEE

Oh -

EDOUARD

You see, you were right. We held our nerve and we won.

MICKEE

Yes. Can I see -

But as she reaches for his phone Edouard closes it and puts it in his pocket.

EDOUARD

And now you will get your money too. I will tell Franco and Angelo: Mickee is to have everything she wants. How much do they owe you ?

MICKEE

I don't know –

EDOUARD

A million dollars. That's what they said – then that is what you'll get.

MICKEE

Oh, yes. I'll get what I deserve.

Mickee moves away.

EDOUARD

And I think that you should get another agent.

MICKEE

Yes. Yes, I'll have to get another agent.

EDOUARD

Someone who cares about you.

MICKEE

Yes. Well, I guess this is it. Time to face the music.

EDOUARD

Face the – ?

MICKEE

Time to get what's coming to us.

Mickee and Edouard look around at the room. Mickee doesn't look at Edouard.

MICKEE (cont)

I'm gonna miss this place.

Edouard gets out his keys and goes to unlock the apartment door.

EDOUARD

Ready ?

MICKEE

You've forgotten something.

(crossing to the table)

Your new perfume.

EDOUARD

Our perfume. But I will remember.

She scoops up handfuls of the blooms.

MICKEE

Maybe. But no one ever made a perfume for me.

Whenever I smell this I will think of you.

EDOUARD

Mickee, you will have as many bottles as you want.

She puts some of the champagne-wet blooms in her bag and then carries a handful to him and to his horror she puts it in the jacket of his pocket.

MICKEE

But this is the original. Eddie. I want you to remember everything that happened here.

EDOUARD

Of course -

MICKEE

Sure. But in this room. Just the two of us.

(she holds her hand to his nose and he inhales the aroma)

Whatever happens from now on? Remember how it was.

EDOUARD

Yes. But what -

MICKEE

Just remember. When it was just you and me. In this room.

EDOUARD

(kissing her hand)

Yes. I will remember.

MICKEE

Okay.

(she moves to the door)

Then let's go get our money.

She goes.

Edouard looks around the room. Then he follows her out, locking the door behind him.

His footsteps fade into the distance.

THE END

The perfume brand names referred to in the script -

Jeunesse par Angelo Cellini

Savoir par Angelo Cellini

Arrêt par Parfums Rochet

L'Amour par Parfums Rochet

Kidnap par Parfums Rochet

Ransom par Parfums Rochet

- are the author's (TM)