THE ODD COUPLE

FLORENCE
Alright, how much longer is this going to go on. Are you going to spend the rest of your life not talking to me?

OLIVE
You had your chance to talk last night. I never want to hear the sound of your voice again. Do you understand?

FLORENCE
Si. Yo comprendo. Gracias.

Olive takes key out of pocket. Crosses to the Florence.

OLIVE
There’s a key to the back door. Stick to the hallway and your room and you won’t get hurt.

FLORENCE
Oh really? Well, let me remind you that I pay half the rent and I’ll go into any room that I want.

OLIVE
Not in my apartment. I don’t want to see you. Cover the mirrors when you walk through the house. And I’m sick and tired of smelling your cooking. I’ve had it up to here with your polyunsaturated oils. Now get that spaghetti off my table.

FLORENCE
That’s funny. That’s really funny.

OLIVE
What the hell’s so funny about it.

FLORENCE
It’s not spaghetti. It’s linguini.

Olive picks up plate of pasta, crosses to the kitchen door, and hurls it.

OLIVE
Now it’s garbage!!

Florence looks into the kitchen, aghast.
FLORENCE
Are you CRAZY??..I’m not cleaning that up...It’s your mess...Look at it hanging all over the walls.

OLIVE
I like it.

FLORENCE
You’d just let it hang there, wouldn’t you? Until it turns hard and brown and yich- I’m cleaning it up!

Florence starts in.

OLIVE
You touch one strand of that linguini and I’ll break every sinus in your head.

FLORENCE
Why? What is it that I’ve done? What’s driving you crazy? The cooking? The cleaning? The crying? What?

OLIVE
I’ll tell you exactly what it is. It’s the cooking, the cleaning and the crying. I can’t take it anymore, Florence. I’m cracking up. Everything you do irritates me. And when you’re not here, the things I know you’re going to do when you come in irritate me...You leave me little notes on my pillow. “We’re all out of cornflakes. F.U.”...It took me three hours to figure out that F.U. was Florence Unger...It’s no one’s fault, Florence. We’re just a rotten pair.

FLORENCE
I get the picture.

OLIVE
That’s just the frame. The Picture I haven’t even painted yet. Every night in my diary I write down the things you did that day that aggravate me and I haven’t even put down the Gazpacho brothers yet.
FLORENCE
Oh! Is that what’s bothering you?
That I loused up your sex life last night?

OLIVE
What sex life? I can’t even have
dirty dreams. You come in and clean
them up.

FLORENCE
Alright, Olive, get off my back.
Off! You hear me?

Florence turns away as if she’s won a major battle.

OLIVE
What’s this? A display of temper? I
haven’t seen you really angry since
the day I dropped my eyelashes in
your pancake batter.

FLORENCE
Olive, you’re asking to hear
something I don’t want to say...But
if I say it, I think you’d better
hear it.

OLIVE
I’m trembling all over. Look how
I’m trembling all over.

FLORENCE
Alright, I warned you. ..You’re A
wonderful girl, Olive. If it
weren’t for you, I don’t know what
would’ve happened to me. You gave
me a place to live and something to
live for. I’ll never forget you for
that. You’re tops with me, Olive.

OLIVE
If I’ve just been told off, I think
I may have missed it.

FLORENCE
It’s coming now.

OLIVE
Good.
FLORENCE
You are also one of the biggest slobs in the world.

OLIVE
I see.

FLORENCE
And completely unreliable.

OLIVE
Is that so?

FLORENCE
Undependable.

OLIVE
Is that it?

FLORENCE
Unappreciative, irresponsible, and indescribably inefficient.

OLIVE
What is that, a Cole Porter song?

FLORENCE
That’s it. I’m finished. Now you’ve been told off. How do you like that?

Florence crosses away.

OLIVE
Good. Because now I’m going to tell you off. For eight months I’ve lived all alone in this apartment. I thought I was miserable. I thought I was lonely. I took you in here because I thought we could help each other...And after three weeks of close, personal contact, I have hives, shingles and the heartbreak of psoriasis...I am growing old at twice the speed of sound. I Can’t take any more Florence...Do me a favor and move into the kitchen with your pots and pans. I’m going to lie down now. Are these liver spots...
FLORENCE
Walk on the papers, will you? I just washed the floors in there.

Olive comes out seething mad. She comes after Florence.

FLORENCE
Keep away from me. I’m warning you, don’t you touch me.

OLIVE
In the kitchen! I want to get your head into the oven and cook it like a capon.

FLORENCE
You’re going to find yourself in one sweet lawsuit, Olive.

OLIVE
It’s no use running, Florence. There’s only six rooms, and I know all the shortcuts.

Olive chases Florence offstage.

FLORENCE
Is this how you settle your problems, Olive? Like an animal?

OLIVE
I hope you can swim.

FLUSH SFX

Florence comes back on stage.

FLORENCE
Stand back! That’s tear gas. You lay another hand on me and you’ll be using eyedrops the rest of your life.

OLIVE
You want to see how I settle my problems, I’ll show you how I settle them.

Olive exits to bedroom

FLORENCE
Alright. I warned you. I’m turning on my siren.
She presses the switch but it doesn’t scream. She holds it to her ear and listens.

FLORENCE
What’s wrong with this? Have you been playing with my siren?

Bangs it on table in despair.

FLORENCE
Goddam it! Twenty-two fifty for a piece of Japanese shit!

Olive enters and puts a suitcase on the table.

OLIVE
I’ll show you how I settle them!
There! That’s how I settle them.

FLORENCE
Where are you going?

OLIVE
Not me, you idiot! You!! You’re the one who’s going. The marriage is over, Florence. We’re getting an annulment. I don’t want to live with you anymore. I want you to pack your things, tie it up with your Saran Wrap and get out of here.

FLORENCE
You mean actually move out?

OLIVE
Actually, physically and immediately.

Olive drops pots and pans into suitcase.

OLIVE
There! You’re all packed.

FLORENCE
You know I’ve got a good mind to really leave.

OLIVE
Why doesn’t she hear me? I know I’m talking, I recognize my voice.
FLORENCE
In other words, you’re throwing me out.

OLIVE
Not in other words. Those are the perfect ones.

FLORENCE
Alright. I just wanted to set the record straight. Let it be on your conscience. I left you plenty of food, you just have to heat it up. You can ask the neighbors how to light a match.

Florence heads for door.

FLORENCE
I’d like to leave now.

Doorbell rings.

FLORENCE
That’s your bell...Aren’t you going to answer it?

OLIVE
Florence, we’ve been good friends too long to end this way. We’re civilized people. Let’s shake hands and part like gentleman...

FLORENCE
There’s nothing gentle about being kicked out.

OLIVE
Okay...I tried.

Olive opens door.

FLORENCE
Have a nice game. If you’re hungry, Olive’ll get you a plate of linguini. Don’t forget to duck...Goodbye everyone.