

To walk in my own way and be alone,  
 Free, with an eye to see things as they are,  
 A voice that means manhood—to cock my hat  
 Where I choose—At a word, a Yes, a No,  
 To fight—or write. To travel any road  
 Under the sun, under the stars, nor doubt  
 If fame or fortune lie beyond the bourne—  
 Never to make a line I have not heard  
 In my own heart; yet, with all modesty  
 To say: "My soul, be satisfied with flowers,  
 With fruit, with weeds even; but gather them  
 In the one garden you may call your own."  
 So, when I win some triumph, by some chance,  
 Render no share to Caesar—in a word,  
 I am too proud to be a parasite,  
 And if my nature wants the germ that grows  
 Towering to heaven like the mountain pine,  
 Or like the oak, sheltering multitudes—  
 I stand, not high it may be—but alone!

## Dinner with Friends

BY DONALD MARGULIES

### ACT I, SCENE 3

Tom is leaving Beth after twelve years of marriage (and two children) and doesn't want her to tell their closest friends Gabe and Karen without him being present. Tonight, however, he learned from Beth that she spilled the beans during a dinner party at Gabe and Karen's home (Tom was supposed to be there but decided instead to visit his new girlfriend in Washington—but ended up returning home because his flight was cancelled due to an unexpected snowstorm).

After a raging argument with Beth (culminating in ferocious love making), Tom rushes over to Gabe and Karen's home to explain that he is not a cad and has good reasons for ending his marriage. Karen is unpersuaded and goes to bed, leaving Tom alone with Gabe. Gabe asks him if there have been other women in the past.

To use as a monologue, leave out Gabe's line.

**TOM:** No, Gabe, there were no other women. There were opportunities, though. I mean, when you're out of town as much as I am . . . You're lonely, you're far from home, it doesn't seem like you're living in real time. I'd be in a hotel bar and strike up a con-

versation with a female colleague, or some divorcee with big hair, and I'd make them laugh and they'd look pretty and I'd feel competent again, you know?, and think: Gee, maybe I *am* still clever and attractive after all. There'd be that electricity in the air, that kind of buzz I hadn't felt since college, remember?, when a single move, any move at all, and there'd be sex? But I'd get scared and say good night and go back to my room and call Beth out of guilt, or hope, and get some shit about something I neglected to do or did badly. Well, by the time I met Nancy—she made me feel good from the first time I talked to her on the phone. I hadn't even laid eyes on her yet—she booked all my travel.

GABE: Uh-huh.

TOM: She had this great laugh and this flirty sense of humor, and she said, "We've been talking for weeks, I want to meet you already!" And I began to think, Why the hell not? What am I saving myself for? This hypercritical woman waiting for me back home? Who looks at me with withering disappointment. All the time. This accusatory, How-could-you-be-so-thoughtless look. So, on one hand, there's this *delightful* woman who makes me feel worthwhile and there's this *other* woman, my *wife*, who makes me feel like shit. Who would *you* choose?

# Flyovers

BY JEFFREY SWEET

## SCENE I

Oliver has returned to the small town of his youth for his high school's twenty-fifth-year reunion. He has accepted the invitation of Ted, a former classmate, to have drinks at his home. In high school Oliver was a studious nerd who got picked on and Ted was the meanest of his many tormentors. Now Oliver lives in New York and is a well-known TV film critic who also interviews movie stars. Ted, though, hasn't done so well. He remained in the town and is now unemployed because the plant he worked in closed. The two men are chatting on Ted's patio and Oliver tells him that one of their classmates, Renee Rowley, has become a successful businesswoman in New York as the owner of four strip clubs. Ted expresses bitterness about how much better others have done than he, and then launches into a diatribe against the way movie stars live their lives.

To use as a monologue leave out Oliver's lines and begin with Ted's line—"You like Bruce Willis?"—then skip to the speech that begins "I don't understand him."

TED: Sure. I see that. You like Bruce Willis?

OLIVER: He's done some good work.