

*Lost in 3 Pines* (4F, 2M)

(sample)

by Maxim Vinogradov

(If interested in reading the full script, please go to the CONTACT section of the website and request a free copy.)

CAST (in order of appearance)

LYUBA (F) & LOVE

MISHA (M) & MIKEY & YOUNGER MAN

BABA (F) & OLDER WOMAN

VOLKOV (M) & LUPO & OLDER MAN

MOURKA (F) & CAT & YOUNGER

WOMAN

ZHENYA (F, but disguised as M) & FAIRY

& STUDENT

All alterations to gender or age are not only permitted but celebrated.

Stage directions are to be entirely ignored. Shred them. Cook them. Eat them with marinara. For crying out loud, one of them is “*Slowly purple.*” Lines should be tailored to suit actors. Improvisations and ad-libs are encouraged. If the lights, set, props, etc., written here are not to your liking, happily explore. This play now belongs to you.

If you produce this play with at least half a cast of non-male actors, at least half a cast of actors of color, and have a seat occupancy of 50 or less, please inquire about having your rights’ fees waived by the playwright.

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## ACT I

*There isn't a set. Six spots light up, resembling the inside of a kitchen oven, revealing LYUBA standing in one of the lights. She exhaustedly smiles into the black abyss. MISHA enters in another light, fixing his bowtie as if there's a mirror.*

MISHA. Have you made up your mind? *(beat)* Could you at least entertain it? I've never heard of Volkov inviting a single person to dinner—ever.

LYUBA. You must be a very special man, Misha.

MISHA. There's no need for all that. Tak. How do I do this...? I am sure there's a bunny involved...

LYUBA. Don't tighten that.

MISHA. Doesn't that look right? I didn't know whether I should double knot it. Tak, Lyuba, I don't see what the big problem would be. Do you not like Mr. Volkov?

LYUBA. I like him very much.

MISHA. Do you not like me having a job?

LYUBA. I loathe it entirely.

MISHA. Do you like me?

*LYUBA reaches forward and pantomimes tying the tie from a distance.*

LYUBA. More than Mr. Volkov.

MISHA. Oh, that's a pretty girl. We'll be leaving at quarter to six, then.

LYUBA. What shall I wear?

MISHA. That's fine. Oh, right! And, Lyuba? If my mother stops by, please be sure to find her medicine. She called about it and I think something's quite off.

LYUBA. Oh?

MISHA. *(exiting into the darkness)* The lights aren't on the attic.

LYUBA. I couldn't possibly imagine what that's like.

BABA. *(entering in her own light)* Misha! Mishugina, are you there? Oh, Lyuba! Have you seen Misha?

LYUBA. Misha, my husband?

BABA. Yes.

LYUBA. I haven't. Have you checked the oven?

BABA. The oven?

LYUBA. Yes, Baba Visapurika. The oven. I think he went to the back of it. Could you be a dear and check?

BABA. Are you all right, dearie?

LYUBA. No.

BABA. I needed something from him.

LYUBA. What was it?

BABA. Oh, I can't remember what. But I remember it was urgent.

LYUBA. Oh?

BABA. Yes. Very much so.

LYUBA. (*beat*) Was it medicine, Baba Visapurika?

BABA. Oy! Yes! Yes, it was! Do you know where he put it?

LYUBA. Back of the oven.

BABA. Really?

LYUBA. No.

BABA. Well, where is—?

LYUBA. Cabinet near the icebox.

BABA. (*pantomiming searching in front of herself*)

It's not in this one.

LYUBA. So, not that one.

BABA. Yes, but which one?

LYUBA. There are two cabinets.

BABA. Which one?

LYUBA. Not that one.

BABA. Oy! (*procuring a real pill bottle*) Here it is!

It was in the other cabinet!

LYUBA. Yes. What an adventure.

BABA. (*exiting*) Ha! Oh, no, dear! I am past my point for adventures!

LYUBA. Yes...

MISHA. (*entering*) Lyuba! Was that mother?

LYUBA. Your mother, Baba Visapurika?

MISHA. Yes.

LYUBA. Yes.

MISHA. Where did she go?

LYUBA. The oven.

MISHA. Really?

LYUBA. No.

MISHA. Good. Are you ready to go?

LYUBA. To the oven?

MISHA. No, to the Volkov's.

LYUBA. Misha, to be frank, I'm feeling a bit—

VOLKOV. (*entering in his own light*) Misha Sharik! Misha Sharik, tell me about the copy.

MISHA. Well, I had my copy editor do that.

VOLKOV. Oh! Then, tell me about the color scheme!

MISHA. Red.

VOLKOV. Brilliant! A spectacle of a color! Tell me about our model.

MISHA. She's young.

VOLKOV. You, my friend, will do great things. Now, now, this is your wife!

MISHA. Yes. This is Lyuba.

VOLKOV. How do you do?

LYUBA. I don't.

MISHA. You have a lovely home, Mr. Volkov.

VOLKOV. Splendid! The Mrs. shall be down shortly. Lyuba, are you a fan of duck?

MISHA. She adores it.

VOLKOV. Splendid! Mourka, could you come down here a moment?

MOURKA. (*entering in her own light*) Yes, dear?

VOLKOV. How soon until the duck is ready?

MOURKA. Presently.

VOLKOV. Splendid! Lyuba, perhaps you could lend my wife a hand while I chewed your husband's ear.

MISHA. (*exiting with VOLKOV*) Lead the way.

MOURKA. Where do you summer?

LYUBA. A very dry place.

MOURKA. It sounds lovely.

LYUBA. Oh, no it's dreadful. It's full of hot air and sometimes light.

MOURKA. It sounds like an oven!

LYUBA. Mourka, may I ask you something?

MOURKA. If you wish.

LYUBA. Do you ever feel like... like you're in an oven?

MOURKA. Like where you summer?

LYUBA. Mourka, I don't summer in an oven now answer the question.

MOURKA. Well, perhaps if you were to elaborate.

LYUBA. It's a metaphor, Mourka. When I was eighteen I was sent to an oven and the

door shut behind me. I am suffocating in that oven. I don't like it here. It's stuffy and small and dry.

MOURKA. But, you are in my home.

LYUBA. Yes.

MOURKA. My home is not an oven.

LYUBA. You're right. This was my mistake.

MOURKA. Oh, do not fret. I could understand how the mistake was made. For you see, they are both square.

LYUBA. Mourka, do you think you're in control of your life?

MOURKA. But, of course not! My life is in the hands of our Lord!

LYUBA. Besides that.

MOURKA. Oh, then sure.

LYUBA. What are you in control of?

MOURKA. I decide the side dishes.

LYUBA. Come again?

MOURKA. When my husband decided that tonight we would have duck, I was in control of deciding our side dish. *(beat)* We're having green beans.

VOLKOV. (*entering*) But, of course! You can't have an ad without its font!

MISHA. (*entering*) Very acute, sir! I'll have to write that down!

VOLKOV. Very good—be sure to credit it! Mourka, has the duck been prepared?

MOURKA. Presently.

VOLKOV. Splendid!

LYUBA. Misha...

MISHA. Yes?

LYUBA. I don't think I can partake in tonight's festivities.

MISHA. But, of course you will!

LYUBA. My stomach isn't in the right place. I think I'd better go home.

MISHA. I'm no botanist, but I don't think that's possible.

LYUBA. Yes, but—I'm sorry, what?

MISHA. We're having duck!

VOLKOV. You adore duck!

ZHENYA. (*entering in her own light*) Are we having duck tonight?

VOLKOV. Yes, we are!

MOURKA. With green beans!

LYUBA. Wait... (*re: ZHENYA*) Mr. Volkov, I apologize, who is this?

VOLKOV. This is Zhenya Evgenievich Onegin. He's been living with us for a while. He's a student! Studying—

ZHENYA. History. I'm working on a thesis at the moment on the disappearance of the Grand Duchess Anastasia—and the cultural significance of the fact that we search for her. Duck sounds delightful!

VOLKOV. Well, the more for us! Lyuba here has misplaced her stomach!

LYUBA. No, no, it's back. Hi!

ZHENYA. How do you do?

LYUBA. Dandy! I'm Lyuba!

MISHA. I'm Misha Ivanovich Sharikov.

MOURKA. Mourka.

ZHENYA. Misha, what do you do?

MISHA. Advertising!

ZHENYA. Fascinating. And you, Lyuba?

LYUBA. Pardon?

ZHENYA. What do you do?

LYUBA. What do I...? I'm sorry; I don't understand the question.

ZHENYA. I mean... No, I meant what I said. What do you do?

LYUBA. Oh! Yes! I... cook things.

ZHENYA. Ah, you're in gastronomy!

LYUBA. Gas...? No, I mean for our children I cook things. Well, I mean I will when we have children. If we have children. I cook things for my husband. And me. I also eat.

ZHENYA. Yes, I wasn't referring to that.

LYUBA. Um... I, uh... Well, I clean?

ZHENYA. No, dear! You're confused! I meant what do you do for a living? But—

LYUBA. For a...?

MISHA. Is this some type of academic game?

VOLKOV. Yes, because this is pretty batty to me right now!

ZHENYA. No, I was making small talk about professions! For example, I am a student.

VOLKOV. I am in advertising.

MISHA. I, too, am in advertising.

MOURKA. (*beat*) Mourka.

ZHENYA. And you, Lyuba: I asked your profession, but—

VOLKOV. Why, what an academic idea that is!

ZHENYA. There isn't a drop of schooling in this! I'm sorry. I forget sometimes the crowd I'm in. Forget the question.

VOLKOV. What a fascinating idea.

MISHA. Do you see an ad, sir?

VOLKOV. Perhaps... Mourka, the men shall retreat for a moment to discuss what kind of ad for which I might use this fascinating idea.

MOURKA. (*exiting*) I'll go touch the duck!

VOLKOV. Splendid! Come, Misha Sharik!

ZHENYA. It actually is fascinating! Might I say, starting with historical uses of—

VOLKOV. Ha! What a clever boy he is! The student assisting in the advertisement! Comedy!

ZHENYA. I—yes—I'm being funny—but also, I'm top in my class in historical uses of—

VOLKOV. (*exiting with MISHA*) Come, Misha Sharik! Before the idea has fled!

ZHENYA. Yes, but, don't you want...?! But...!

LYUBA. If you don't mind, Mr. Zhenya, can we discuss this idea a bit further?

ZHENYA. What? Look, what are you people rambling about? I only asked what you did for a living!

LYUBA. Yes, that idea! Mr. Zhenya, where are you from?

ZHENYA. Further than I thought!

LYUBA. Yes, but where?

ZHENYA. Tak, I only asked about your profession—I didn't mean to inspire another revolution!

LYUBA. Yes, but I want to answer the question! You see, I don't ever get asked interesting questions and I'm disappointed in being unable to answer your question and now my tongue is kind of swelling when I'm speaking to you so it's difficult to speak and it's also significantly warmer than it was a few—

ZHENYA. Tak! My question was invalid for you. I didn't mean to ask what you did.

LYUBA. Well... But I do things! I make people. Little ones. But, they grow. Well,

truthfully I haven't made any yet. But, I'm pretty sure I can—

ZHENYA. Most women can make babies! A good handful! Most women can cook and can clean—not all people can study history. Not all people—believe it or not—can advertise! What do you do that most people cannot? That most people DO not. That earns you your living. I asked this question without fully understanding my crowd. I see now that you are not supposed to be in control of things the way that someone such as myself is.

VOLKOV. (*entering with MISHA*) The ad shall have yellow!

MISHA. Decadent, sir!

VOLKOV. Thank you, kindly! (*beat*) Well, I'm famished. (*exiting with MISHA*) Let's discuss this further over duck!

ZHENYA. Yes! Let's... (*to LYUBA*) I must go to the duck. Please don't stretch your head with such a wide concept; I can try to teach someone like you all about what it's like to have a glorious life of someone like me.

*(exiting)* It was supposed to be a casual question.

*LYUBA pauses, now alone.*

LYUBA. What a life-shattering question. What do I do that others don't...? Well... that's a ridiculous question! I am named Lyuba! Most people don't do that! I am married to Misha! Nobody else is married to him! I would birth his children! That is something only I would do; academia is comedy! *(beat)* What on Earth do I do? I don't actually control nothing, do I? *(beat)* I will knock over a framed picture. This is in my jurisdiction. *(searching; there's still nothing)* I will do something else. I will... *(searching; quitting)* I don't control a single thing.

MISHA. *(off)* Lyuba!

LYUBA. Yeah?

MISHA. *(off)* My mother may come later. Find her medicine for her!

LYUBA. Groovy. One—Two—

BABA. *(off)* Mishugina!

LYUBA. Spin again!

BABA. (*entering*) Lyuba! Have you seen Misha?

LYUBA. What's he look like?

BABA. Misha?

LYUBA. Yeah.

BABA. Your husband?

LYUBA. Oh, that Misha. He's upstairs.

BABA. I was supposed to get something from him...

LYUBA. He's upstairs.

BABA. But, I can't remember what.

LYUBA. Well, I guess you'll have to ask him upstairs.

BABA. Oh, but that's so embarrassing. Did he mention anything to you?

LYUBA. He... (*realizing*) Cabinet. Hold on a moment... Hold on a moment...

BABA. I was doing that.

LYUBA. Cabinet. I just had kind of an interesting revelation.

BABA. I don't have those anymore.

LYUBA. I can't remember what... it...

BABA. I can't remember if I have a dog or not, but something keeps coming into my house and I think it's only wise to pet it.

LYUBA. You've been to the icebox.

BABA. Ah?

LYUBA. You went to get it from the cabinet by the icebox...

BABA. Get what?

LYUBA. Your medicine. We do this a lot.

BABA. Oy! Yes! Yes! That's right! The medicine!

LYUBA. Hold on, I can't remember the icebox, either.

BABA. Oh, let me go see. (*searching*) Yes, there's a cabinet!

LYUBA. Why can't I remember what that cabinet looks like...?

BABA. Yes. It isn't here, dearie.

LYUBA. Then that's the wrong cabinet.

BABA. Well, then why direct me here?

LYUBA. There are two. You're at the wrong one. What does that make the other one?

BABA. My medicine isn't here, dearie.

LYUBA. It's in the other one.

BABA. Which other one?

LYUBA. There are two cabinets—The other cabinet—It's over there.

BABA. I'm looking in the cabinet!

LYUBA. The other one!

BABA. I don't understand.

LYUBA. It's—right—there!

BABA. Oy! (*procuring the pill bottle*) I found it.

LYUBA. What is...? (*re: pill bottle*) Are you...  
Are you sure you didn't come in with that?

BABA. (*exiting*) Yes!

LYUBA. All right... All right...

MISHA. (*off*) Lyuba! (*beat*) Lyuba...! (*entering*)  
Lyuba! Did you not hear me?

LYUBA. Uh... Misha... Have you seen our  
cabinet?

MISHA. Was there a break in?! Did they take  
the cabinet?

LYUBA. No—Hold on, what?! Why would  
they—When did we buy that cabinet?

MISHA. Don't frighten me like that! Is that  
student getting to your head?

LYUBA. A bit—Actually! Misha, what do I  
do?

MISHA. Pardon?

LYUBA. What do I do? I'm always here.  
That's what I do. I'm here. I'm only here.

MISHA. Look, Lyuba, the Volkovs are coming for dinner.

LYUBA. Okay.

MISHA. You'll need to prepare dinner.

LYUBA. Right.

MISHA. For five. They're bringing that student

LYUBA. What? Really? They are?

MISHA. Yes.

LYUBA. What shall we make? Duck?

MISHA. Duck! Well, perhaps not. You wouldn't want to offend Mourka...

LYUBA. How so?

MISHA. You're a wonderful cook, and she... well... I'm still scraping orange peel off my molars.

LYUBA. Yes, of course, dear. I'll make something else.

MISHA. That's a pretty girl.

LYUBA. (*thinking*) Misha...

MISHA. Yes?

LYUBA. (*feeling teeth*) Nothing...

VOLKOV. (*entering with MOURKA and ZHENYA*) Misha Sharik! Ah, what a beautiful home! And this is your wife!

LYUBA. This is Lyuba!

ZHENYA. Hello, Lyuba!

VOLKOV. Lyuba, this is Zhenya Evgenievich Onegin!

LYUBA. Hello, Zhenya!

MOURKA. (*beat*) Mourka.

ZHENYA. What are we having tonight?

LYUBA. Uh...

ZHENYA. (*beat*) Mmm! My favorite!

LYUBA. Hold on... We're having...

MISHA. Lyuba... Tell them what you made for them.

LYUBA. Uh... right... right. We're having...

VOLKOV. (*beat*) Ah! I get it! It's a surprise! Chef's inspiration! I do love a good surprise! Well played, Lyuba!

MISHA. Oh, but, of course!

VOLKOV. Yes! Mourka, will you go help Lyuba with her surprise? Meanwhile, the men shall discuss a new ad Misha Sharik has been working on! (*contemplating*) Come, Zhenya...

*(exiting with MISHA and an excited ZHENYA)*

We could... use an academic head in this!

MOURKA. Now, Lyuba, what have you crafted?

LYUBA. Uh... well... my husband said no duck... so I didn't cook a duck.

MOURKA. It smells delightful!

LYUBA. Does it? Really? What? What does it smell like?

MOURKA. Oh, I can't tell what meat, but I do smell some garlic to it!

LYUBA. Yeah, okay... garlic! Mourka, I'm losing my mind.

MOURKA. Is this akin to that stomach incident from yesterday?

LYUBA. What?

MOURKA. Now, I'm no botanist, but I don't think one can misplace these things.

LYUBA. I don't mean I literally—What—? Does a botanist not study plants?

MOURKA. Have you prepared the side dish?

LYUBA. No, look, hold on—

MOURKA. You haven't prepared the side dish!?

LYUBA. No, I did—I don't know! Look, I think I'm losing my mind!

MOURKA. I think you are mistaken, for it is impossible to lose these—

LYUBA. Do you have orange peel in your teeth?

MOURKA. What is that supposed to mean?

LYUBA. (*feeling teeth*) 'Cause I... don't.

MOURKA. If you have something to say about my duck you should let it out.

LYUBA. I can't.

MOURKA. Don't be modest; it will only make me a better cook.

LYUBA. I really can't!

MOURKA. Please—

LYUBA. I actually can't because I don't have any orange peel in my teeth!

MOURKA. So, you thought it was tasty?

LYUBA. What!? I can't comment because I don't remember eating anything last night! I don't remember making whatever I made that apparently smells awesome! I don't even smell it! I just remember being in your house, then I was here... and this is our house... I am a

million percent positive that there is furniture in my house but where is it!?

MOURKA. My duck was not tasty?

LYUBA. Are you kidding me? Do these all not sound like problems!?

MOURKA. But, of course it sounds like a problem!

LYUBA. What do I do?

MOURKA. Don't use orange peel!

LYUBA. NOT THE DUCK! I am not talking about the duck right now!

MOURKA. Well, I'm aware! Your husband advised something else!

LYUBA. MOURKA! (*beat*) Can you do me a favor?

MOURKA. Certainly!

LYUBA. Can you go in the kitchen and look in the oven and... just tell me what you see? Is it chicken? Kotleti? Stroganoff? I definitely would make stroganoff.

MOURKA. I don't understand.

LYUBA. The surprise. I'm surprising you. With food. Go look at it.

MOURKA. (*searching; finding*) Oh! How lovely!

LYUBA. Yes?

MOURKA. Well, I haven't had any in ages!

LYUBA. You haven't had... stroganoff?

MOURKA. Yes! Stroganoff!

LYUBA. Stroganoff? Right! It is stroganoff!  
Beef stroganoff. Tasty. You're right.

MOURKA. Oh, I can't remember the last time I had stroganoff!

LYUBA. Cool, so I made—Y'know what?  
Now that I think about it, neither can—

VOLKOV. (*entering*) And what about the title?

MISHA. (*entering with ZHENYA*) Well, we were thinking of putting it in black.

VOLKOV. Black on red! Scandalous!

ZHENYA. Yes, I think black on red is quite the—!

VOLKOV. Yes, that's good. Ah, ladies! What are we having?

LYUBA. We are having beef strrrr—(*stopping herself*)

VOLKOV. (*beat*) Beef stroganoff? Is that the surprise?

LYUBA. I'm just a bit boggled. Mr. Volkov, would you like to take part in a game?

VOLKOV. I would adore it!

LYUBA. Here's how it goes: you go in the kitchen and see what's in the oven. Then you tell me what it is.

MISHA. Lyuba, that's dumb—

VOLKOV. It sounds delightful! I shall do so!

MOURKA. I saw beef stroganoff!

LYUBA. She said that saw that I made beef stroganoff. And you see...

VOLKOV. (*searching; finding*) Beef stroganoff!

LYUBA. No kidding...

VOLKOV. Ha! You know what? That WAS kind of dumb!

MISHA. I'm sorry, sir. How about we go enjoy the stroganoff?

VOLKOV. Why, but of course! (*exiting with MISHA and MOURKA*) Mourka, please lead the way!

LYUBA. I don't know what's happening.

ZHENYA. Pardon?

LYUBA. I think I'm losing it. Like, really losing it. I don't know what's happening. I don't remember making that.

ZHENYA. Yes, that's quite interesting...

LYUBA. Zhenya, I need a favor.

ZHENYA. I might do it.

LYUBA. In that room there's a cabinet by the icebox. There's medicine in that cabinet. I need you to bring it to me, please.

ZHENYA. (*searching*) There's nothing in this—

LYUBA. Other cabinet.

ZHENYA. Other cabinet. (*procuring pill bottle*)  
What is it?

LYUBA. My mother-in-law's. They're to help her memory. Do you remember when we first met? Because I remember it like it was...

ZHENYA. ... yesterday...? It was!

LYUBA. Like it was... ten minutes ago, give or take.

*LYUBA opens the pill bottle and examines a pill. She puts it in her mouth.*

ZHENYA. Do you remember making the stroganoff now? If it helps, I think you used garlic, but I'm no—

*LYUBA confusedly takes another pill.*

ZHENYA. Lyuba! Careful! Not that I...!  
But... careful!

LYUBA. What in the world...?

VOLKOV. (*off*) Zhenya! We're waiting for you at the table!

ZHENYA. I must go. I'm sorry I couldn't help.

LYUBA. Zhenya, let's pretend I'm at a fragile moment right now.

ZHENYA. (*slowly exiting*) Lyuba, I have to go!

LYUBA. (*stopping her*) No! Your question yesterday! What did you mean!?

ZHENYA. (*still trying to exit; concerned*) Lyuba! Stop that! I need to go!

VOLKOV. (*off*) Zhenya! I'm losing my patience!

LYUBA. Zhenya, please!

ZHENYA. Lyuba, let go of me! Please!

VOLKOV. (*off*) Zhenya Evgenievich!

ZHENYA. I have to go! Lyuba, you must—!

LYUBA. *What do I do!?*

### *Christmas lights.*

LYUBA. (*shocked*) What... just... happened?