

# UNIFORM LOVE

by

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UNIFORM LOVE

1 women/ 2 men ( multiple roles)/ 1 act/ 40 minutes

## SYNOPSIS:

Can a series of men in uniform interrupt JULIA'S memories long enough to bring her happiness and love in a world often too difficult to bear.

## CHARACTERS

JULIA

MAILMAN/ SOLDIER/POLICEMAN \*

PRIEST/ LEO\*

(Note: \*multiple casting of two men)

## SET

Julia's apartment is one large room which serves all of her needs for eating, sleeping, observing and always – fantasizing. Everything should be larger than life.

## TIME

Present

SCENE 1

JULIA's one room apartment. She is dressed in a white lab coat and looks into her telescope while taking copious notes. NOTE: All hand props appear as if waiting to be used.)

JULIA

The stars keep moving in their orbits the force of attraction still keeping them apart. Look! There's M22. Definitely closer to us than any other globular in the Northern Sky. But we are like cannibals, no closer to one another than - Leo?!

(LEO appears behind her briefly, then disappears back into the walls.)

Damn it! I could have sworn it was you. I heard you, felt your breath on the back of my neck. Right here. Ah, it was you, wasn't it? I swoon. Later.

(Starts to swoon, then continues lecturing.)

ETA Sagitarii is 2 1/2 degrees from the bright star Epsilon computed at a distance of about 90 light years. Actual luminosity is 40 times that of our sun. Actual luminosity is whatever reflects it.

(JULIA looks around again, then continues in a grand balletic style, a la Martha Graham, dancing across the room.)

We are bound to earth rooted like trees spread green with leaves. Only in the fall when the sugar moves down the stems do we see their true colors - and then --

(She shoots an imaginary gun into the air. )

POW! POW! POW! They're gone.

(JULIA runs over and rings a little bell)

Brrrrrr-----innnn---g!

(JULIA rings the bell again and closes her eyes as she stands repeating her mantra.)

In with the bad, out with the good. In with the baaaad....out with the goooood. In with the bad. Out with the...

(Struck with an idea, she moves her blackboard, to the middle of the room, writes and lectures.)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA (cont'd)

N-A-T-U-R-E. Nature. What is our nature? If God knows what is going to happen to us before it does, then nothing is a surprise. If God doesn't know, then all of it is. Personally, (Pause) I hate surprises.

(Returning to her blackboard.)

N-U-R-T-U-R-E. Nurture. Don't you just hate it. God may or may not be responsible for our Nature, but we all know who is responsible for our nurture. (singing) M-O-T-H-E-R. Mother. Mutter. Madre. (Insert other languages) Maaaaaaa. Ah-men.

(Writing in her notebook)

Winter comes and pricks our skin...da-da da-da da-da...agin.... Damn stupid idea rhyming - man's work.

(JULIA rearranges her breasts.)

Marketing is everything. Close your eyes in an elevator and you hear music. Maybe Chopin. Now when a woman like me hears Chopin playing, she thinks of her great lost love. She actually sees George Sand spread across the piano, her heart beating with her lover's in perfect harmony. Their lust barely contained beneath the fabric of her dress -- or suit depending on her mood. Who the hell knows. I mean who the hell really knows what went on there.

(She pulls out a long set of painted piano keys and spreads them on the kitchen table and plays emotionally singing along.)

Now, on the other hand, a man will not close his eyes. Not when he's making love or driving a car. He will not think of two hearts beating as one. He will not even wonder why Frederick was kissing George. He will remember the events of the day, think of how his dinner is digesting and hope against hope that the woman in front of him will drop her top and expose her musical abilities to him. What is our nature? If you want to see into it, see into it directly, if you begin to think about it, it's altogether lost.

(Doorbell rings.)

Mail call!

(Running to the door, JULIA takes off her lab coat revealing a house dress and fluffy apron.)

Do you really know anyone who doesn't love the mailman?

(MAILMAN stands exhausted in his blue uniform.)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA (cont'd)

Darling! You look perfectly exhausted.

MAILMAN

(He drags himself in while handing her mail.)

Your male.

JULIA

(Singing)

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

(JULIA throws the MAILMAN onto the couch.)

This is definitely my favorite part of the day.

(Tossing mail into the air.)

Junk. Junk. Junk. Sweepstakes. Insurance. Telephone disconnect. Gas disconnect. Water disconnect. Electricity disconnect. Letter from Leo.

MAILMAN

Disconnect?

JULIA

Letter from Leo.

MAILMAN

Leo!

JULIA

You know him?

MAILMAN

No.

JULIA

You do. You've just forgotten. It happens all the time.

MAILMAN

I can't remember him at all.

JULIA

He cares for endangered water in the desert.

MAILMAN

He does?

JULIA

Someone has to. You don't. I don't. He does.

MAILMAN

I feel terrible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

He feeds baby seals in the arctic. A most remarkable young man, even at fifty-five. You'd love him. No thought of self. No self at all.

MAILMAN

Now I feel worse than terrible.

JULIA

(Stroking his big leather pouch)

Beautiful leather pouch you have. Soft like a baby's behind. Coffee or whiskey?

MAILMAN

I'm on duty.

JULIA

Then whiskey it is!

MAILMAN

(To audience) I love my job.

JULIA

And well you should.

(She pours his drink, hold it out of his reach so he follows her around the room as she talks.)

My dependable Mercury --

MAILMAN

Yes.

JULIA

Son of Zeus,

MAILMAN

Actually, it's Harold.

JULIA

God's own messenger.

MAILMAN

Just one more step.

(MAILMAN falls over the couch. JULIA takes him his drink and feeds it to him with grapes.)

JULIA

Neither rain nor sleet nor nuclear war shall keep you from your appointed rounds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAILMAN

Exactly. No one knows the pressure we have day after day.

JULIA

Guardian of our inside world turned out.

MAILMAN

Rates going up and everyone's always moving.

JULIA

Mail forwarded at no extra cost.

MAILMAN

(Toasts her and the audience.)

Here's looking up your old address.

JULIA

Another rotten day, huh?

MAILMAN

Beaten, stamped, spindled, folded and mutilated. No one cares about the mailman anymore.

JULIA

I used to bring our mailman iced tea in the summer.

MAILMAN

Now children squirt me with hoses. No respect for my uniform.

JULIA

And I just love those little shorts you wear.

MAILMAN

Disgusting - like a little boy.

JULIA

Knee socks and starched shirts.

MAILMAN

Dogs always nipping at my heels, biting me here and here.

JULIA

And hot cocoa in the winter.

MAILMAN

Snowballs knock my hat off.

JULIA

A regular army of joy!

MAILMAN

NO!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

I just love them!

JULIA

I hate my job.

MAILMAN

You hate your job? But it can't be as bad as all that?

JULIA

It's worse.

MAILMAN

Worse? Oh, no.

JULIA

I hate to complain.

MAILMAN

Oh, do. Please. I love it.

JULIA

I couldn't.

MAILMAN

I insist.

JULIA

Really?

MAILMAN

Tell me.

JULIA

(Falling a la George Sand.)

Tell me everything, please.

All right if you really want to hear it.

MAILMAN

Of course I want to hear it. I love the truth.

JULIA

The truth?

MAILMAN

Absolutely.

JULIA

All of it?

MAILMAN

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

JULIA

Every single word.

MAILMAN

Twenty-two women got divorce papers today.  
Forty-four families received no remains of their sons at all.  
Thirty-three widows lost their pensions.

JULIA

No.

MAILMAN

There's more.

JULIA

Go on.

MAILMAN

Sixty-four workers lost their jobs when the plant closed and  
moved overseas to make cheap rubber baby buggy bumpers - and  
everyone got greetings from the President!

JULIA

Stop!

MAILMAN

Same signature. Machine stitched.

JULIA

That is cruel.

MAILMAN

They hate me.

JULIA

Nobody blames you. It's enough that you care.

MAILMAN

And the worse part is this!

(MAILMAN dumps his bag and little boxes fall out.  
JULIA jumps back.)

JULIA

Explosives?

MAILMAN

Worse. Non-biodegradable soap samples. Pollutants! Killer  
goo! Hundreds of 'em. Nobody likes 'em of course, but  
everyone uses them because they're free. Free! It's all on my  
back and my back is killing me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA  
(Rubbing his back.)  
Now, now, nobody blames you.

MAILMAN  
No?

JULIA  
Everyone loves the mailman.

MAILMAN  
That only makes it worse. To be so loved.

JULIA  
So trusted.

MAILMAN  
So weak.

JULIA  
No.

MAILMAN  
Yes.

JULIA  
No!

(Pushing him to the floor and dancing joyfully to  
the table)

MAILMAN  
No?

JULIA  
We shall not be defeated.

MAILMAN  
We shall not.

JULIA  
We will turn this sow's ear into a silk purse.

MAILMAN  
We will?

JULIA  
Absolutely.

MAILMAN  
How?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

Simple! We shall dump these little soap samples and fill their boxes with songs of love and resistance.

MAILMAN

Like little Chinese fortune cookies?

JULIA

Exactly.

MAILMAN

I like it already.

JULIA

I told you. Here. Sit beside me.

MAILMAN

This is better than horoscopes.

JULIA

Much.

MAILMAN

Actually I'm a Leo.

JULIA

Leo! Did you say you were a Leo!

MAILMAN

Are you one too?

JULIA

I'm a woman. Anyone with eyes can see that, can't you?

MAILMAN

The minute you opened that door I knew you were a woman.

JULIA

Not just any woman.

MAILMAN

I could see that too.

JULIA

(She writes in the air and he follows her.)

Julia. J-U-L-I-A.

MAILMAN

Julia. J-U-L-

JULIA

(Interrupting.)

Now sit here and we'll get started.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAILMAN  
With what?

JULIA  
I'll write.

MAILMAN  
What?

JULIA  
You fold.

MAILMAN  
Perfect.

JULIA  
We'll leave nothing to chance. We'll work all day and night.

MAILMAN  
I'm actually not legally off duty until about four -- did you say into the night?

JULIA  
We'll throw caution to the wind.

MAILMAN  
You're right. What was I thinking. I'll tell them I was attacked by a rabid dog, taken to the hospital where I had shots, stitches and -- who cares. I'm here.

JULIA  
We'll work 'til we drop and blood runs from our eyes.

MAILMAN  
This is so exciting.

JULIA  
(She writes continuously.)  
Here's one for the little men who work on the docks, stiff pudgy fingers frozen to the ropes. These are for the orphans on Chestnut and Main with no one to stroke their dear faces again. Sweet dreams in small packages. Isn't this wonderful?

MAILMAN  
My back feels better already.

JULIA  
Here's some for the widows on Sansom Street and more for the rich who live alone on the hill.

MAILMAN  
I love this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

We'll move their hearts and change their lives. Lonely young men and women with no one to love...

MAILMAN

It's so exciting.

JULIA

We'll tell them we're here. We'll tell them we care. In each and every box a labor of love. The promise of spring. Yes! Promises of spring.

(JULIA runs over to the refrigerator and picks up her bridal veil and broccoli "bouquet" as she walks like a bride down the aisle. MAILMAN has not seen her until she begins singing)

MAILMAN

And I'll deliver them all.

JULIA

"Oh, promise me that someday you and I."

MAILMAN

Julia? Do we want them all folded this way?

JULIA

Don't interrupt me, damn it! Not before I get to the end. That's the problem today, everyone interrupts before they know how it will end.

"Oh, promise me that someday you and I."

MAILMAN

(joining in a la Nelson Eddy/ Jeanette MacDonald)  
"You and I."

JULIA

(louder)  
"We'll take our love together to some sky."

MAILMAN

"To some sky."

JULIA

(throwing him annoyed looks)  
"Where we can be alone and faith renew."

MAILMAN

"Faith renew."

JULIA

"And find the hollows where those flowers grew."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAILMAN

(enraptured) Just me and you.....

JULIA

(Staring at him)

Are you finished?

MAILMAN

Oh yes.

JULIA

Completely finished?

MAILMAN

Ah.....(flustered) no...yes, I mean....of course.

JULIA

Then why are you staring at me?

MAILMAN

I just thought...you know...(singing timidly) "Me and you.."

JULIA

Me and who?

MAILMAN

Oh, I'm sorry. I guess I've made a mistake.

(MAILMAN starts to gather up his little boxes as  
JULIA ignores him speaking to the audience.)

JULIA

When I was a brain surgeon I made a lot of mistakes. But I was very careful not to damage the sense of smell or taste. Other functions may fail you or fool you but the smell and taste of love always linger the longest.

(JULIA takes off her dress and hands it to him)

Here. Take this dress and when you're lonely, wear it inside out.

MAILMAN

But....I thought.

JULIA

(pushing him over to the window)

And don't forget to drop off these boxes before you go home.

MAILMAN

I promise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

All of them.

MAILMAN

How can I ever thank you?

JULIA

Just remember -

(Writing in the air as if signing a document)

"Always ...Julia!

MAILMAN

I'll never forget you -

(Mimicking her signature)

"Always Julia!"

JULIA

(JULIA grabs MAILMAN and flips him out the window)

Easy to say now, but see how you feel in the morning.

(Wipes her hands then pulls LEO'S letter out)

Ahhhhh, the essence of Leo

"Oh, promise me that someday you and I...."

(LEO appears at the window)

Leo? Damn it! I know I smelled him. His taste is here too - salt water mixed with anchovies. I'm cold. And hungry. Yes.

(In a very small voice)

Leo? Are you hungry, too?

(Very seductively)

Wouldn't you like a little bite to eat before we come to bed??

(Runs over and pulls out the sofa bed)

I could make us some of those little sweet meats you always liked. Or the puffed pastry cakes? You now the one? Filled with sweet sticky fruit and warm meat? Or maybe a glass of fresh plum wine instead. Just one to make you sleepy? Yes, wouldn't that be nice.

(Sips her wine and giggles)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA (cont'd)

Very warm and very sweet.

(Gets into bed combing her hair and brushing her teeth)

I'm ready now dear. I've combed my teeth and brushed my hair. I've put the cat out and settled every little thing. (sensually) I am yours Leo!

(JULIA puts the broccoli bouquet next to her on the mattress and shuts the light. Then she thrashes about in the bed until she begins moaning and then screaming in pleasure )

Oh, Leo. No, Leo...yes...now...no...oh, Leo? Yes, yes, yes.... Leo....ahhhhhhhhhhhLEO...LEO!

SOLDIER

I'm coming.

(A soldier crashes through the window screaming as JULIA runs to hide from him. The soldier jabs the bed wildly, stabbing the broccoli over and over. Finally his fevered attack stops and he looks down and sees the mangled broccoli)

Dear sweet Jesus, Mother Mary of God. I've turned her into a vegetable. Oh, no, not again.

JULIA

(Flipping on the light)

You dumb shit!

SOLDIER

You're all right! (Drops to his knees) Praise God!

JULIA

No thanks to you. What do they teach you in this man's army?

SOLDIER

Just to maim and kill and keep the peace, ma'am.

(Holds out the crushed broccoli in peace gesture)

Peace?

JULIA

Just kiss and make-up? Is that what you think? Well the answer is NO.

SOLDIER

I thought I saw a man in the bed.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

JULIA

You come in here and stab my best broccoli and I'm suppose to just turn the other cheek?

SOLDIER

I thought --

JULIA

---well, that may be easy for you but I have my pride. I have my needs. I had a perfectly good broccoli!

SOLDIER

I heard a scream, ma'am.

JULIA

A scream of pleasure!

SOLDIER

It was just a scream to me.

JULIA

Now you've frightened him away.

SOLDIER

Who?

JULIA

Leo.

SOLDIER

Sounds foreign.

(Jumps around pointed in different directions as if he is on a "Search and Destroy" mission)

JULIA

Always Leo.

(The soldier continues his looking everywhere)

What are you doing? I'm afraid you have the wrong house. It's been awfully nice but I'm afraid you'll just have to go now.

SOLDIER

No real good bad guys. No real bad good guys. No good wars. No good lies...no good...

(LEO pops out of the wall. He is seen only by JULIA who screams)

JULIA

LEO!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER

Drop to the floor, damn it and I'll shoot the sons-of -  
bitch's eyes out!

(LEO disappears into the wall)

JULIA

Oh, Leo, don't leave yet!

SOLDIER

Where is he? Where is HE!

JULIA

Too late. Three days too late.

SOLDIER

(searching) There's no one here!

JULIA

Do you do this for a living?

SOLDIER

I'm sorry. I'm just not myself lately.

JULIA

(Going back to straightening the room up)

Who is.

SOLDIER

It's this job. The stress is killing me. You see, I joined up  
to save the world, but lately I can't seem to do anything  
right.

JULIA

(JULIA begins to put the sofa bed back) She holds  
the bed up in mid-air on "save ")

You wanted to "save" me?

SOLDIER

Yes, ma'am. That's my job.

JULIA

(Puts the bed back down and sits on the bed.)

Your parents must have been very proud of you .

SOLDIER

My father was a drunk and wife beater.

JULIA

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER

My mother tried to throw me down the stairs. Said they already had a boy and my Dad wasn't making enough for me too so she just rolled down two flights, out into the street and across the railroad tracks...

JULIA

Please.

SOLDIER

Then I was born breach and almost broke her in two.

JULIA

You're breaking my heart.

SOLDIER

Can't blame her for hating me but I'd have done anything to get out of Arkadelphia

JULIA

Please stop now!

SOLDIER

I never felt like I belonged to anywhere until I put on this uniform.

JULIA

It does fit you well.

(Grabbing cup of coffee in a stylized 1950's position)

Coffee?

SOLDIER

Oh, no, coffee, thank you, ma'am.

JULIA

I grind it myself.

SOLDIER

I can't sleep as it is.

JULIA

You can't?

SOLDIER

Not a wink.

JULIA

Bad dreams?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER  
Only when my eyes are open or closed.

JULIA  
How long?

SOLDIER  
Since I came back from - over there.  
(He motions with his head.)

JULIA  
You were - over there? (mimics him)

SOLDIER  
Uh-huh.

JULIA  
Was it - terrible?

SOLDIER  
Unspeakable.

JULIA  
Then you must tell me.

SOLDIER  
No, I couldn't.

JULIA  
But you must.

SOLDIER  
I couldn't.

JULIA  
You can.

SOLDIER  
I can?

JULIA  
Absolutely.

SOLDIER  
Tell you everything?

JULIA  
Please?

(JULIA moves to the couch and motions for him to sit next to her. He comes into her arms and falls into a pose like Michelangelo's "Pieta" across her lap. After a moment he speaks.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER

I machine gunned the children first.

JULIA

Oh.

SOLDIER

Then the pregnant women and old men.

JULIA

No.

SOLDIER

They were all spies. We had reliable information.

JULIA

Yes.

SOLDIER

Their mothers and fathers had called us to help them. If we didn't come no one would.

JULIA

No one would come.

SOLDIER

We set them free.

JULIA

Of course you did.

SOLDIER

It was a Godless place and worse.

JULIA

War is hell and hell is hell.

SOLDIER

Who will forgive me?

JULIA

No one will blame you.

SOLDIER

But I killed so many.

JULIA

You were only following orders.

SOLDIER

Oh, Julia, dear sweet comforting Julia. Wash me clean, I want to sleep without red eyes. Kiss my eyes dear Julia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

How could I deny you? I, who once kept 22 dogs and cats in my home at the same time when the little children grew tired of playing with them.

SOLDIER

Kiss me while the moon is full.

JULIA

(JULIA has gone to the bed, gets in and pulls back the covers seductively offering herself)  
The moon is always full.

SOLDIER

Help me to keep the peace.  
(He dives into the bed)

JULIA

Where do you keep it?  
(Turns the lights off)

SOLDIER

Why here, of course.

JULIA

Need some starch? (Pause then in a small voice) Leo?  
(There is great shaking and moaning as the bed bounces up and down.)

SOLDIER

Oh, my God, I've died and gone to heaven Oh, Julia, sweet, sensitive, Julia.

(Shaking stops abruptly. JULIA gets out of bed and puts on her robe, dancing dreamily. SOLDIER takes out a cigarette and stretches out)

Well, I can tell you one thing.

JULIA

Yes?

SOLDIER

I feel like a new man .

JULIA

Yes, I can see that .

SOLDIER

You can? Written all over this face!

JULIA

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER

And you did it all.

JULIA

What does it feel like?

SOLDIER

Like the Lord Himself has touched me. Yes, there's no doubt about it...touched me and changed my life... right here in this room...and you did it.

(JULIA glows as he jumps up and starts to dress)

Now I can get back to work!

JULIA

Work?

SOLDIER

Sure honey.

JULIA

What kind of work?

SOLDIER

Soldierin' of course.

JULIA

Oh...that kind of work.

SOLDIER

(Strutting around like a rooster)

Back to the front lines, full of piss and vinegar, vinegar and piss. Leadin' my men. Kickin' ass. Followin' orders. Orderin' followers.

JULIA

Keeping the peace?

SOLDIER

No more sleepless nights. No more nights at all. Just days of mission and work. Work and mission. Search and destroy. Destroy and save. A whole world waitin' for me at the front.

(Unseen, JULIA angrily picks up the gun.)

Not for me alone, of course. me and my men. My men and me. Search and destroy. Destroy and save. Save and maim. Maim and destroy

(Turns seeing JULIA pointing the gun at him)

Julia? Honey! Now, you better put that gun down. That thing's  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER

loaded, you know, 'cause honey, they don't give us men toys to play with... Juliaaaaaaaaaaaaa!

(He starts running and JULIA takes aim at him.)

JULIA

POW! POW! POW! POW! POW!

(Calmly puts the gun down)

Shit!?! Doesn't feel like sex at all.

(Stands stroking the barrel of the gun)

When I was an artist, I only cast figures in bronze. I liked to feel the molten metal grown hard beneath my fingertips. Once, I cast an entire forest in bronze so it would never die.

(Priest dressed in Orthodox robes comes out of the wall and rings his little bells.)

Forgive me, Father, I haven't had a moment to clean all day. Sometimes I just don't know where the time goes.

(JULIA makes the bed the Priest watches)

Now just make yourself comfortable and I'll get this into the trash.

(JULIA throws the gun thru the window and drags the body out. Alone, the PRIEST dances Flamenco style in frenzied exhaustion to his mantra.)

PRIEST

Death is a sanctum, sanctorum...amen, semen, holy, holy, omen, scrotum, vaginum....ohlay!

JULIA

You look exhausted. Long day?

PRIEST

I'm not as young as I use to be.

JULIA

Who is. Now you just sit yourself down and I'll get you a nice hot cup of steaming coffee.

PRIEST

With cream and sugar?

JULIA

And a pinch of brandy, just the way you like it. Here.

(He drinks)

Now isn't that better?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

PRIEST

Ahhhhhh...,Pipe?

(JULIA brings him a pipe and slippers)

JULIA

And slippers too! Let me take these shoes off. Ohhhh, look.

(Taking his feet and massaging them)

It's amazing what settles down between these little toes.

PRIEST

Heavenly.

JULIA

Feel that tension melt away.

PRIEST

A new man.

JULIA

Now you just entertain yourself a minute while I slip into something a little more comfortable.

(JULIA sits at the window and pulls out her curlers, fluffy bedroom slippers that match the Priest's and a frumpy housecoat)

What a day! I can't begin to tell you what's been going on here. But then, I'll bet you've heard it all. You know, on days like this I like to sit in this window and look up into the Eastern Sky. Personally, I think that changing the seasons was a wonderful idea. I can feel it in my bones. Some people would say that isn't scientific, but I think there's a basic comfort, no, power, yes, power in the change.

(While JULIA speaks the PRIEST takes off his robes revealing a black dress and white pearls)

Circadian rhythms reaching back through time and time reaching forward to our very essence. Don't you agree?

PRIEST

Personally, I hate the idea of change.

JULIA

(pulls up a little manicure set)

Lavender Flame?

PRIEST

It suits me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

Soak in this one.

PRIEST

Ah, life seems bearable again.

JULIA

Just close your eyes and relax.

PRIEST

Sometimes I feel like I'm coming apart at the seams Julia. Pressure all the time from higher ups ...friends...everyone. There's just not enough of me to go around.

JULIA

There now, look, your nails are all cracking.

PRIEST

Cracking, splitting, chipping. The whole world's falling apart and all I can do is run around with my little bucket of glue and mending tape. I'll confess to you. I just can't keep it up anymore.

JULIA

You have a good heart.

PRIEST

Thank God. With these nails I need one. Just look at them. Who'd want to kiss these hands? Can you blame them for turning away.

JULIA

Don't be so hard on yourself.

PRIEST

You're different, Julia. You listen and ask for nothing. You -

JULIA

Sometimes I think Leo will never come back. Sometimes I feel surrounded by mountains of flesh... an entire sea of bodies all flat and tied together like constellations that never move.

PRIEST

Hubus Floaterium.

JULIA

Exactly!

PRIEST

Ouch! (sucking painfully on his finger)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA  
Did I draw blood?

PRIEST  
Just a drop.

JULIA  
Let me get a band-aid.

PRIEST  
Everyone wants a little piece of me. (weeping)

POLICEMAN  
Julia!

JULIA  
Don't move.

POLICEMAN  
(pounding at the door) JULIA!

JULIA  
Just a minute.

POLICEMAN  
Open up!

JULIA  
Just a minute.

POLICEMAN  
Now! It's the police!

JULIA  
Damn it! I'm still not finished.

PRIEST  
I gotta get outta here.

POLICEMAN  
Please open this door or I'll have to break it down.

JULIA  
Be right there.

(Helps PRIEST into the wall. He disappears, she  
straightens herself out like a good hostess and  
opens the door)

Yes...may I help you?

POLICEMAN  
I'm looking for Julia?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA

Uh-huh.

POLICEMAN

You are Julia?

JULIA

(Writing her signature in the air)

Always Julia.

POLICEMAN

Well, I'm the Police and you're under arrest.

JULIA

(Picking up the mail)

I'm so tired. Couldn't it wait until tomorrow?

POLICEMAN

I'm afraid there are these charges.

JULIA

(holding up bills)

My accounts are all paid up.

POLICEMAN

There's this matter of a body?

JULIA

Isn't there always.

(JULIA turns with coffee and he drops to the floor with his gun)

POLICEMAN

No trouble please!

JULIA

No trouble at all. I always have a fresh cup ready.

POLICEMAN

Well thank you, Ma'am.

(tips his hat and sits down nonchalantly)

They say -

JULIA

They always do, don't they. Now don't burn your lips. It's hot. I grind my own.

POLICEMAN

That's very nice kind And it smells just wonderful.  
Columbian?

JULIA

(sensuously) Espresso Gold.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICEMAN

Mellow. (taking out his notebook) Now about this body.

JULIA

The one in the trash?

POLICEMAN

No....

JULIA

Oh.

POLICEMAN

Was there a body in the trash?

JULIA

The pile's so high you must have missed it.(pause) A soldier.

POLICEMAN

A soldier? Oh! No, Ma'am this is strictly a civilian matter. No, military. We try to stay out of each other's way, if you know what I mean. No, the body I'm looking for is -

JULIA

But there's no BODY here but me.

POLICEMAN

What about the missing one?

JULIA

My son?

POLICEMAN

Your son is missing?

JULIA

It's been years. Harry joined him up one day and they took him while I was out shopping. I never saw him again. The night before he went we had lamb with mint jelly and roast new potatoes. He loved the jelly and left only one potatoe. My innocent boy in that terrible war. POW! POW! POW! Harry sat in this chair and rooted for it all, his eyes glued to the screen, but he never came home.

POLICEMAN

My condolences Ma'am on your terrible loss, but I believe the name of the deceased we are looking for was Lee...Ohh.

JULIA

LEO! (shaking him) You know him?

POLICEMAN

They say you did and they think you killed him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA  
(wandering in anguish)  
LEEEEEEEEEEOOOOOO!

POLICEMAN  
Then you know him?

JULIA  
I keep missing him.

POLICEMAN  
The neighbors say there were cries.

JULIA  
Of joy!

POLICEMAN  
The neighbors swear they heard voices.

JULIA  
I walk in my sleep. I dream in colors. I sleep alone.

POLICEMAN  
They say they heard a shot. They believe you killed him.

JULIA  
Impossible. You see, I loved Leo, but we never kissed. I loved Leo, but I stayed here with my family. The proper thing to do. Time passed and Harry died right in this chair. Then the cat went quietly one Sunday, and the boy, well, I like to think of him sleeping under a rice paddy, peacefully. No one here now. No eyes to follow. No eyes but mine and this!  
(holds up a small vial)  
Leo's breath. I saved it all these years.

POLICEMAN  
How do you plead?

JULIA  
Propriety.

POLICEMAN  
Not good enough.

JULIA  
Discretion.

POLICEMAN  
No, never work.

JULIA  
DENIAL!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICEMAN

Doesn't wash.

JULIA

But I never loved Harry less than myself.

POLICEMAN

NO, no, the man you killed.

JULIA

There were never sins of the flesh.

PRIEST

(chants in silhouette)

Excuse me.

JULIA

Uncommitted sins.

POLICEMAN

We need evidence. What do you remember?

JULIA

I only carried a bouquet of fresh broccoli.

PRIEST

(booming as in Latin)

BIG-A-MIST>

JULIA

My body was pure.

POLICEMAN

Where is his body?

JULIA

Here is his breath.

PRIEST

(Chanted) You must set an EX-AM-PLÉ.

JULIA

I never set anything but examples. Harry died happy and the dog, too. Only the boy died alone and I wasn't the one who sent him away.

PRIEST

(Chanted) A crime of PASS-ION.

JULIA

We never sexed!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICEMAN

Tough lady. You gotta give me something.

JULIA

But there's nothing. Nothing at all. Only me. And I was good!  
You'd have loved me. No thought of self. No self at all.  
You've got to see that.

POLICEMAN turns to sort out his notes  
Musical notes .LEO appears. He  
unshaven. JULIA embraces him He is  
unseen by the POLICEMAN who continues  
taking his notes

JULIA (CONT'D)  
(cont'd)

LEO! Dear sweet Leo, I was faithful to you always.

LEO

Sorry.

(Hands her the robe and begins to walk off)

JULIA

Where are you going now? I waited all this time.

LEO

Too late. Three days too late.

JULIA

Leo?

LEO exits, possibly into the audience  
and JULIA walks over to the mannequin  
and puts LEO's robe on it as the  
POLICEMAN closes his notebook.

POLICEMAN

Well, no case here. No case at all.

JULIA

(speaking to the mannequin)

You look tired.

POLICEMAN

(Looking to audience while answering JULIA)

I am tired. Hot too. Damn hot out there today.

JULIA

And hungry. (runs to refrigerator)

POLICEMAN

Three guys on vacation this week and I got no time to eat.  
Just send me out all day long from one call to the other.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

JULIA

(takes a bouquet of broccoli from the refrigerator and speaks to the mannequin)  
You will stay a little longer, won't you?

POLICEMAN

Well, I could tell them I'm having a little lunch.

JULIA

"Oh, promise me that someday you and I..."

POLICEMAN

(overlapping as in a duet)  
No wonder nobody wants to be a cop on the beat. Everybody wants to be a - detective!

JULIA

"Will take our love together to some sky."

POLICEMAN

No big titles...no big money...not even any fun anymore.

JULIA

"Where we can be alone and faith renew."

POLICEMAN

But damn it! (standing) Somebody's got to take care of them!

JULIA

(Stopping and looking him squarely in the eye)  
Oh, you're still here?

POLICEMAN

Yes, ma'am. I suppose I should be getting back to the station and let you get back to --

JULIA

(interrupting) Coffee or whiskey?

POLICEMAN

Oh, well, they do give me time off for lunch.

JULIA

Then whiskey it is.  
(Gulps it down herself)

POLICEMAN

Julia?

JULIA

Always.  
(Starts to get busy in the kitchen)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julia? POLICEMAN

Yes. JULIA  
(Stops and really looks at him)

Could you. POLICEMAN

Yes. JULIA

Would you? POLICEMAN

Yes! JULIA

Cook the broccoli? POLICEMAN

Of course! JULIA  
(JULIA looks at it, smiles)  
(JULIA tosses the broccoli into the air and they  
both laugh and freeze)

BLACK OUT

END OF PLAY