

(Thunder and lightning. The lights in the room flicker.)

Start

Hello? Hello? Honey? Honey, are you there?

VANDA. (Offstage.)

Knock knock knock!

(Vanda enters, in steep high heels, wearing a soaked coat. She carries an enormous bag, a purse, and a battered black umbrella.)

Am I too late? I'm too late, right? Fuck. *Fuck!*

THOMAS. If you're here for *Venus in Fur*, everybody went home half an hour ago.

VANDA. God, I'm sorry, I'm so, so sorry, I got caught like way uptown and my cell went out. Then my fucking heel gets stuck in one of those sewer-cover-thing-whatevers. Then there's this guy on the train, I don't even want to tell you about him, rubbing up against my ass the whole trip. Then it starts to pour. I get soaked through to the fucking skin. Fuck! Fuck!

(She throws herself into a chair.)

God. Just my luck. Fuck...*FUCK!*

THOMAS. Can I run out and refill any prescriptions for you?

VANDA. I'm okay. Just my usual luck is all. Thank you, God, once again! Hi. I'm sorry. Vanda Jordan.

THOMAS. Vanda...?

VANDA. See what I mean? I've even got her name! How many girls in this town are named *Vanda*? Actually I'm Wanda but my parents called me *Vanda*. Anyway, I'm like perfect for the part and the fucking train gets stuck in a tunnel while this guy's trying to penetrate me. Talk about fate. And you are?

THOMAS. Thomas Novachek.

VANDA. Hi. Hey, wait a minute. Thomas Novachek? You wrote this!

THOMAS. Yes, I did. Well, I adapted it.

VANDA. And you're directing it, too, right?

THOMAS. Within an inch of its life.

VANDA. God, I love your plays! I mean, the ones I know. *Anatomy of Shadows*? Like, wow. *Anatomy of Shadows* was *amazing!* I saw it twice!

THOMAS. I didn't write *Anatomy of Shadows*.

VANDA. Right, right. I mean, you know, the other one. God, this is embarrassing. Anyway, *this* play is sure amazing. I mean, the parts of it I read. Pretty wild stuff.

(She takes off the coat, revealing a studded patent-leather top, a short black leather skirt, and a silver-studded dog collar.)

Really sexy, huh. Or like, erotic, if you're into humiliation. Oh, by the way, I don't usually walk around in leather lingerie and a dog collar. Usually I'm really demure and shit. Just thought I'd kinda get into the part. I mean it's basically S&M right? The play?

THOMAS. Not exactly. And it does take place in 1870.

VANDA. Mm. I guess this isn't too 1870, huh.

THOMAS. No.

VANDA. Who knows, maybe S&M-ers dressed just like this back then.

(She digs a battered, crushed photo out of her purse.)

Anyway, here's my headshot. I know the résumé's kinda skimpy. But I'm good. I'm like made for this part, I swear to God. I was amazing as Hedda Gabler.

THOMAS. *(Looking over her résumé.)*

The Urinal Theatre. I somehow missed their season... You had an appointment?

VANDA. Yeah, two-fifteen. It's like hours ago, right? Well, better late than whatever.

THOMAS. *(Checks the day's appointment sheets.)*

Vanda...?

VANDA. ...Jordan. People always say is that *real*? "Vanda Jordan"?

THOMAS. I don't see your name.

VANDA. Really? My agent said they set it up and everything. I'm not down there? Two-fifteen. Shit. Thank you, God, once again! Anyway...

(She strips off her top, revealing an amazing bra.)

Geronimo.

THOMAS. Wait wait wait. What are you doing?

VANDA. (*Stripping off her leather skirt, revealing black panties and garters.*)

I brought some costume stuff.

THOMAS. No—Vanda...

VANDA. It'll just take me a sec, I swear. I found this great dress. Real period shit.

THOMAS. No. Really. Don't bother...

VANDA. What. You mean don't read?

THOMAS. I mean don't read.

VANDA. Yeah, but. Long as I'm here, I might as well like give it a go, right?

THOMAS. There's nobody to give it a go with. The reader's gone home.

VANDA. I'll read with you. It's always an honor to read with the actual author.

THOMAS. Adapter.

VANDA. Getting the play straight from the horse's mouth is always so cool. Come on, what've you got to lose? I'm already—

THOMAS. Stop. *Stop.* To tell you the truth, Miss, um...

VANDA. Vanda.

THOMAS. We're looking for somebody a little different.

VANDA. Yeah? What are you looking for?

THOMAS. Well, somebody with a little more, how should I put this...

VANDA. Somebody who's not *me*. I'm too young. I'm too old. I'm too big, I'm too small. My résumé's not long enough. Okay.

(She bows her head and starts to cry.)

Okay. God, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. It's been like really stressful today. Anyway, how do *you* know who I am or what I can do? Fuck... Fuck...!

THOMAS. We're going to be scheduling more auditions sometime soon...

VANDA. Yeah, but I'm here. Right? Couldn't you try me out, save yourself the time tomorrow or whatever? And save me the time getting here from the middle of nowhere?

THOMAS. Look, Vanda, it's been a very long day. I'm exhausted. I'm

Stop