

THE GLASSES

a comedy

by

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CHARACTERS (5M, 2W)

Tom Daly, a man in his 30s. Type A personality who values work over friends. But means well.

Ginny DePietro, a woman in her 30s. Optimist who is still trying to find her place in the world.

Howard Barnes, a man in his 40s. He tries hard.

Doris Bender, a woman in her 40s. Her best friend is her dog.

Brooks Floyd, a man in his late 30s. Grouchy, cranky, and doesn't give a shit.

Michelle Angstrom, a woman in her 40s although she's frequently confused for being a man. Should be played by a male actor.

Paul, a man in his 20s.

Game Show Host, a man.

Doubling:

Paul/Game Show Host should be played by the same actor.

These ages are, of course, flexible.

LOCATION

A real-estate office. A couple cubicles and any needed office supplies. And a white board.

TIME

Now.

NOTE

The transition to the fantasy state and back again will be, in the script, indicated by LIGHTS CHANGE. Any other appropriate effects are also okay.

THE GLASSES

ACT ONE

ONE

Morning. A real-estate office. There are several cubicles and any other desired office essentials. There's a board with the names of the employees and their sales totals.

TOM DALY, 30s, sits at his desk. Tom's one of the nicest guys in the world, but he is compulsively shy and awkward around people. He's on the phone, desperately trying to make a sale.

TOM

... I'm telling you, Mr. Morgan, I know it's a little more than you want to spend, but it won't be on the market long.

(pause)

I know I said that the last time, but it's true this time.

(pause)

Okay, I know I said that last time too, but it's really true this time.

(pause)

It is?

(looks at watch)

I don't think seven thirty is too early in the morning to talk about real estate. Especially if you love it! Hello?

Tom hangs up.

HOWARD BARNES, 40s, a co-worker who is short, balding and out-of-shape, comes in and walks over.

HOWARD

You wouldn't believe my evening. I'm at the bar last night talking to this gorgeous woman and she says "I'm married." And I say "But you're not wearing a ring." And she says "That's because he's in prison, but I don't mind if you don't." And while I'm trying to find out what exactly he's in for, she leaves with someone else.

TOM

(looking around)

Are you talking to me?

HOWARD

Yeah. Have you been here all night?

TOM
No. Just most of it.

HOWARD
I know you're new here but why?

Tom points to THE BIG BOARD which has all their last names and their current sales for the year. TOM'S NAME IS AT THE BOTTOM, below Howard's. Brooks Floyd's name is at the top. Ginny DePietro's name is in the middle. There are a few other names of agents we'll never see.

TOM
I'm at the bottom of the board.

HOWARD
You need some help? I'll help you.

TOM
You're right above me on the board.

HOWARD
Hey, you want my help or not? Try to sell me.

TOM
No, no, face to face, I, I, get a, get, uh, little ...

HOWARD
What? Come on!

TOM
Well ... Mr. Barnes, what are you looking for?

HOWARD
Anything.

Tom shows him a couple house set-ups.

TOM
We have some fine properties you might interested in.

Howard looks at them and nods.

HOWARD
I hate them.

TOM
You can't hate them. You haven't even seen all of them yet.

HOWARD
Fine, show me the others.

Tom does. Howard nods.

HOWARD

Hate them too.

TOM

(getting nervous)

What's wrong with them?

HOWARD

Not what I'm looking for.

TOM

You said you were looking for anything!

HOWARD

That's called a conundrum.

TOM

(mumbling)

Welth, whatht m I subbosed todo?

HOWARD

What?

TOM

Oh, crapth.

HOWARD

Okay, stop right there.

TOM

Whatth?

HOWARD

Is there a problem?

TOM

Notb ath ald.

HOWARD

With your mouth?

TOM

Noeth.

HOWARD

I think there is --

TOM

I haveth someding sthuckk.

HOWARD

Look, new guy --

Tomth. TOM

Tom? HOWARD

TOM
(nodding)
Yes, Tomth. Thoorry. I tenb tude mumdle whenth I'mth
nerbous.

HOWARD
What the hell are you saying?

TOM
Ith tenb do mumdle -

HOWARD
To --?

TOM
Mumdle. Mumdle!

HOWARD
Look, I know you haven't been here that long but if you want
to sell houses, you can't do that.

TOM
(casually nodding)
I geb nerdous.

HOWARD
The mumbling thing has got to go.

Tom nods. He takes out a brown paper
bag and breathes into it.

HOWARD
I'm not sure that's the answer.

TOM
I'ba . . .
(breathes)
. . . feebing . . .
(breathes)
. . . better.

HOWARD
That's good.

TOM
(putting the bag away)
Sorry . . . I get nervous around people. Social phobia.

HOWARD
Are you sure you want to sell real estate?

TOM
Well, it's not my dream job but --

HOWARD
Whatever! You still have to interact with clients.

TOM
Oh, I'm not sure I can do that.

HOWARD
Why not?

TOM
They kind of scare me.

DORIS BENDER, who is in her 40s, enters
and crosses to her receptionist desk.
All over her desk, there are PICTURES.

HOWARD
Morning, Doris!

DORIS
(uninterested)
Hey, Howard.

HOWARD
Okay, great!

Disappointed, Howard crosses away.

DORIS
Tom, right?

TOM
Yeah.

DORIS
Look at this.

TOM
(shyly)
Well, I'm kind of busy --

DORIS
Look!

He crosses to her desk.

DORIS
I have new pictures of Sparky.

She thumps a heavy box down on her desk.

TOM

(noticing pictures on wall)

Wow, you're quite an animal lover. There must be 200 pictures here already.

(looking closely)

Is it a rat?

DORIS

It's my dog. Sparky. I'm teaching him to talk. Like they did with that gorilla.

TOM

You're teaching a dog sign language?

DORIS

No, Sparky's smarter than that. "Ruff, ruff, grr" means change the channel. "Grr, ruff" is "I have to go outside." And . . .

(whining)

. . . "Mmm, mmmmm roah" . . .

(She puts her hands up like a dog on its back)

. . . means "I love you."

TOM

I'll try to remember that.

Tom heads to his desk and sits. HE RUBS HIS EYES, WHICH ARE BOTHERING HIM. Howard crosses to him.

HOWARD

Hey, a bunch of us are getting together for lunch. Want to go?

TOM

That's really nice of you, but --

HOWARD

I could introduce you to a couple cuties. One just lost 75 pounds.

TOM

I can't.

BROOKS FLOYD, late 30s, a grouchy, paranoid salesman, who might start drinking a little too early in the day, enters.

BROOKS
Another day in the shithole.

HOWARD
Morning, Brooks.

BROOKS
Screw you, Howard.

HOWARD
Have you met Tom yet?

BROOKS
Who cares.

TOM
(friendly)
Nice to meet you too!

BROOKS
Oh yeah? My wife is pregnant. Makes you just want to stand on top of a mountain and scream, "It's great to be alive." Say it with me, "It's great to be alive!" Jesus, I just want to kill myself.

Brooks goes to his desk. Tom looks at Howard.

TOM
That's the company's sales leader?

HOWARD
Yeah, he's pretty upbeat this morning.

Their boss, MICHELLE ANGSTROM, 40s, enters. As much as she tries, no matter what she tries, Michelle looks and sounds like a man and should be played by a male actor.

ANGSTROM
Listen, you losers, sales are down for a third month in a row and if you don't want your asses fired, you'd better get to work. I don't like what I'm seeing on the Big Board here.

She points to the Big Board.

ANGSTROM
And do I look fat in this dress?

Tom and Howard shake their heads.

ANGSTROM

Good because I'd rather be spending my time on the golf course meeting rich men. So get selling!

She smiles and ducks into her office.

TOM

Howard, I've been wondering, does Angstrom seem a little ... masculine to you?

HOWARD

I've never noticed.

TOM

Did she start this company? During my interview, she was getting a pedicure.

HOWARD

It was tragic. Family stuff.

TOM

Oh, her father died?

HOWARD

No, she won the divorce settlement. Traded her kids in for this place.

TOM

I better get to work.

PAUL, a good-looking guy in his 20s, comes in. He's listening to something loud on a headset and so he tends to speak loudly. He's carrying several large envelopes.

PAUL

Hey, Doris!

DORIS

Hi, Paul!

PAUL

Got a delivery for Ms. Angstrom!

DORIS

Be safe!

Paul crosses past Tom.

PAUL

Hey!

Hi. TOM

What?! PAUL

I said, Hi! TOM

Are you the new guy?! PAUL

Uh yeah. TOM
 (off Paul's confused look)

Uh yeah! PAUL

Rocking! PAUL

Paul looks at a set-up on Tom's desk.

Cool house! PAUL

Thanks! You want it?! TOM

Maybe someday when I can afford it! PAUL

Paul fist bumps an unsuspecting Tom and goes into Angstrom's office. Tom turns toward Howard.

Who was that? TOM

Paul, our company messenger. Takes care of all the deliveries. HOWARD

Tom picks up a bunch of listings in his hand and walks across the office. Brooks is standing at the copy machine.

Going to be long? TOM

Listen, new guy, don't come in here and start barking orders! BROOKS

I'm not barking orders . . . have you been drinking? TOM

BROOKS

Yeah, why?
 (offering a flask)
 Want a snort?

TOM

I usually wait until after breakfast.

BROOKS

That's dumb. You're diluting the effect of the alcohol.

GINNY DEPIETRO, a cute woman in her
 30s, comes in. She is one of the most
 optimistic people you'll ever meet.

GINNY

Morning, everyone. "Today is the first day of the rest of
 our lives."

She sits at her desk.

TOM

Wow.

BROOKS

Yeah, I don't know what that drivel means either. Her name's
 Ginny. She started a few weeks ago. She makes an optimist
 look suicidal.

TOM

She's beautiful.

BROOKS

I wouldn't know. I'm happily married. Or that's what my
 wife tells me to say.
 (re Ginny)
 You should talk to her.

TOM

(instantly nervous and
 mumbling)

I, uh, I have dhings to bo.

Brooks gives him a look as Tom quickly
 crosses to his desk past Howard.

HOWARD

Ginny's pretty cute, huh?

TOM

I . . . I bon't know.

HOWARD

Yeah, I'd ask her out, but I'd only end up breaking her heart.

Tom sits at his desk. He RUBS HIS EYES AGAIN.

HOWARD

Ah, eye strain. From working too hard. You should come out with me and karaoke. I love 70s music. We could be a duo! Like "ABBA"!

TOM

"ABBA" was four people. And I don't like to sing.

At Angstrom's office, Paul tries to leave but her hand is wrapped around one of his arms, trying to drag him back in. Paul struggles to get away.

PAUL

I'm sorry, Ms. Angstrom, my bicycle's double parked.

Paul breaks free.

DORIS

I tried to warn you.

As he passes Tom's desk --

PAUL

I forgot to give this to you.

Paul hands a package to Tom, looks back to see if Angstrom's on his trail and get out of there.

As Tom opens the package --

HOWARD

What's that, some kind of case? Are those yours? Is that a note? Why aren't you answering my questions?

TOM

Because they're annoying.

Tom opens the case and removes BLACK-FRAMED GLASSES

TOM

This is really weird. Why did he send me these?

HOWARD

What?

TOM

These glasses are from my dad. They're his old reading glasses.

HOWARD

At least yours gives you gifts. Mine just keeps asking me if I'm sterile because he doesn't have grandkids yet.

TOM

No, my dad died months ago.

HOWARD

How did he know you'd be here?

TOM

I don't know. I must have mentioned it. I promised him I'd go into real estate.

HOWARD

You don't sound very happy about it.

TOM

(pauses)

No, it's fine.

HOWARD

What's the note say?

TOM

(reading)

"Use these. They will help you. Dad."

HOWARD

Well, you said your eyes were bothering you and you needed reading glasses.

TOM

Yeah, but how did he know?

HOWARD

Maybe it runs in the family. Try them.

But before Tom can, Angstrom enters from her office. She carries an unseen poster.

ANGSTROM

May I have your attention? I have some very serious office business to discuss.

(giddy)

I got nominated for the MLS's "Sexiest Real Estate Agent of the Month." And I want to thank Brooks for helping me with my poster..

Angstrom reveals a large poster of her in "cheesecake" shot (or her head Photoshopped on a hot body). There's a stunned silence.

TOM
(disturbed)

Oh, wow.

ANGSTROM
(taking that as a compliment)

Thank you.

She places the poster in a prominent place, starts to go but remembers --

ANGSTROM
Oh yeah, Daly? Your last offer just fell through. Either get something sold or look for a new job! In fact, I'm pulling Henry Morgan from you.

TOM
Okay, Mr. Angstrom.

ANGSTROM
What?!

TOM
I mean, Ms. Angstrom.

ANGSTROM
(to staff)
What are you waiting for? Go to the MLS site and vote for me!

DORIS
I'm sure you'll win.

Angstrom looks at Doris, who smiles beatifically. Angstrom exits. Tom looks heavenward.

TOM
Crap. Can I just get one break here?

Brooks walks by.

BROOKS
Does this look like a charity ward, you lo-

His phone rings. Brooks turns into the nicest guy on the planet.

BROOKS

Danny, how are you today? I was just at church, serving breakfast for the orphans. Of course I said a prayer for you. You still ready to see the place? See you there.

Brooks hangs up and is back to his old self.

BROOKS

(re phone)

What an idiot!

(to staff)

Going out to unload the old Simpson homestead so I don't end up on the bottom. Wish me luck!

He waits. Nobody does.

BROOKS

Bastards.

He exits.

Ginny, at her desk, is trying to write something. She looks over at Tom.

GINNY

Excuse me --

TOM

(surprised/terrified)

Huh?

GINNY

I'm just working on this copy and not having much luck. Could you give me some help?

TOM

(stammering)

You want help?

GINNY

"The way to be nothing is to do nothing."

Howard gives Tom a double "thumbs up." Tom shakes his head as Ginny, with her copy, crosses over and sits.

TOM

Othay . . .

(takes a deep breath.

Then . . .)

I mean, okay.

GINNY

It's not right. Maybe you can make some recommendations.

He scans the copy.

TOM

Hmm, well, starting out with "A smile always brightens one's day" is not the best beginning for selling a house.

GINNY

But it's true! "A smile confuses an approaching frown."

TOM

Wow. Okay. Maybe "it has four bedrooms" is better.

GINNY

All right, but it's not as happy.

She writes that down.

Tom TAKES OUT HIS DAD'S BLACK-FRAMED GLASSES and puts them on.

THE LIGHTS CHANGE (indicating that we're on a different plane of reality.)

GINNY

Those are nice.

TOM

(looking at the copy)

They're my dad's old reading glasses. And they seem to fit my vision perfectly.

GINNY

Interesting looking.

TOM

Thanks. Okay, I think we could be more descriptive with this text.

Tom looks at Ginny.

GINNY

I'm lonely.

TOM

Excuse me?

GINNY

I need love.

Tom TAKES OFF HIS GLASSES, trying to figure all this out.