

A FULL-LENGTH PLAY

*A Relatively*  
**UNEVENTFUL  
EVENING**

Written by George Arthur-Amohau

SAMPLE

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**GEORGE ARTHUR-AMOHOU THEATRE**  
**geowillart.co.nz/theatre**  
**george@geowillart.co.nz**

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(A RELATIVELY UNEVENTFUL EVENING)

**A Relatively  
UNEVENTFUL EVENING**

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A full-length play  
For 10 Actors

Approximate Length: 2 hours

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# Characters

Role	M/F	Role Size	Lines & Cues	Description
Eleanor	F	Major	TBC	In her late 40s. Unhappy in her marriage to Victor. An English teacher turned writer who has just published her first book. Intelligent and independent.
Addison	F	Major	TBC	“Barely 50”. A designer. Good friends with Eleanor. In a long-term relationship with Geoffrey. Brutally honest and a bit posh.
Paula	F	Major	TBC	In her 40s. An old colleague of Eleanor, and very jealous of her success. Currently dating Sinclair.
Geoffrey	M	Major	TBC	In his late 50s. A therapist. Good natured, kind albeit a little offbeat. A good balance for Addison’s personality.
Sinclair	M	Supporting	TBC	In his early 40s. The handsome outsider. Charming but non-committal.
Victor	M	Supporting	TBC	In his 50s. A wealthy businessman, nobody is totally sure what he does - but he’s very good at it.
Amanda	F	Supporting	TBC	Mutual friend of the group, but doesn’t know Sinclair.
Robert	M	Supporting	TBC	Mutual friend of the group, but doesn’t know Sinclair.

## Setting

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This story takes in the living rooms of an upper middle-class home on a very warm summer evening. The setting is deliberately ambiguous, so that it could be anywhere. Small additions to the script to place the story in the local setting of the performers is acceptable.

## Other Resources

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The following resources can be found at the back of this script:

- A chart of stage positions.
- A list of properties.
- A list of costumes.
- A set diagram.

# ACT 1

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## SCENE 1: CONGRATULATIONS

*Approximate Scene Length: 10 minutes.*

The HOUSE LIGHTS fade down then the STAGE LIGHTS fade up.

The living rooms of an upper middle-class home are decorated a little too tastefully. Beige features prominently. A wall separates the front two-thirds of the stage from the back and in front of it a living room arrangement occupies the stage-right and dining room arrangement occupies the stage-left. Behind the living room is an archway through the door to an entrance area. To the left of the entrance way is the front door, and to the right is a door to the rest of the house. Between them is a window through which clipped greenery can be seen. Behind the dining table are French doors to the kitchen. Each of the spaces is furnished and decorated in a style that is tasteful, but a little bland. Stage props may include neatly arranged magazines, flowers, books, and colour coordinated homewares.

### Extract from Scene 1

*ADDISON enters her living room (from the house). She is on her mobile phone.*

**ADDISON:** No, mother, he hasn't proposed yet.

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** We're perfectly happy with the way things are, and I don't need a certificate in order to-

*ADDISON perches on the arm of a chair DC. She listens, rolling her eyes.*

**ADDISON:** I know it would make you happy-

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** Yes, I'm sure.

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** *(getting frustrated)* Yes, I'm quite sure I'm not a lesbian.

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** *(loudly)* I said, “not a lesbian”. *(slower and clearer)* Seriously, mother, what is the point of having a hearing aid if you’re not going to use it?

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** *(firmly)* Then it’s not working.

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** *(louder and increasingly more frustrated)* So, switch it on!

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** *(standing up)* We can buy you new batteries, mother. That’s the point!

*ADDISON, noticing something, walks nearer the window to take a look outside.*

**ADDISON:** I’m sorry. I’m going to have to go. Eleanor’s here.

*ADDISON opens the front door, holding the phone with her shoulder. ELEANOR is standing outside holding a pile of identical, freshly printed books.*

**ADDISON:** *(exasperated, holding the phone out from her face and shouting into it)*  
Eleanor!

*ELEANOR, a little startled by the greeting, enters. ADDISON closes the door behind her.*

**ADDISON:** Yes, the writer.

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** *(to the phone)* And the wealthy husband.

*ELEANOR rolls her eyes.*

**ADDISON:** Mother, I have to go!

*Pause.*

**ADDISON:** I’ll tell her. Bye, mum.

*ADDISON ends the call.*

**ADDISON:** *(aware she’ll get a bite)* Mother hopes your “little story” is going well.

**ELEANOR:** (*waving one of the new books*) I can only hope that now I've been published, your mother will stop referring to my life's work as my "little story".

**ADDISON:** (*taking one of the books and flicking through the pages*) So, it's finally done... (*looking inside the cover*) Terrible picture of you.

**ELEANOR:** (*unimpressed*) You took that picture!

**ADDISON:** (*surprised, taking a closer look*) Did I? Hmm. Never-mind.

*ELEANOR rolls her eyes.*

**ADDISON:** (*hugging ELEANOR*) But seriously, congratulations. I'm so proud of you. My friend, the published author!

**ELEANOR:** (*sitting down on the sofa*) Oh, well, thank you. (*worried*) But, just because it's been published, doesn't mean-

**ADDISON:** (*interrupting*) Eleanor, darling, you have been agonising over this process for years... (*sitting beside her*) Surely, now, this is the moment that you can finally accept your accomplishment, and we can all move on.

**ELEANOR:** (*a little excitement creeping in*) Okay... Yes. I suppose it is an accomplishment.

**ADDISON:** Thank you.

**ELEANOR:** But I don't want a big fuss. Not until after the launch.

**ADDISON:** You deserve a celebration.

**ELEANOR:** One *can* celebrate too soon, you know.

**ADDISON:** (*standing*) All I'm suggesting is a little party here at-

**ELEANOR:** (*firmly*) No! No party.

**ADDISON:** (*sitting again, a little disappointed*) What is it that you reclusive writer types have against parties?

*GEOFFREY enters the kitchen from offstage-left. Through the French doors, he can be seen milling about and making a cup of tea.*

**ELEANOR:** You know that's not it. I've told you already, I'm not celebrating until people have actually read it.

**ADDISON:** Surely if a publisher has decided to run with your book-

**ELEANOR:** Oh, what do they *really* know?

**ADDISON:** Well, I think they're required to know at least something about selling books, aren't they?

**ELEANOR:** (*turning to look firmly at ADDISON and pointing at her accusingly*) I'll be having no party.

**ADDISON:** Well then, it's not a party for you... (*a little under her breath, turning away to look towards the kitchen.*) it's a going away party for Geoffrey. And if we happen to simultaneously celebrate the publication of your book-

**ELEANOR:** Where is he going?

**ADDISON:** Who?

**ELEANOR:** *Geoffrey.*

**ADDISON:** I'm divorcing him.

**ELEANOR:** You're not married.

**ADDISON:** I'm leaving him, then.

**ELEANOR:** *(with a knowing smile)* So nothing's changed there.

**ADDISON:** Each time I mean it more than the last. *(calling)* Don't I, Geoffrey?

**GEOFFREY:** *(calling from the kitchen)* What's that, dear?

*GEOFFREY enters from the kitchen.*

**ADDISON:** *(turning to GEOFFREY)* I'm leaving you.

**GEOFFREY:** I missed you too, dear.

**ADDISON:** *(appalled)* Missed me? You were only in the other room.

**GEOFFREY:** And every moment away from you feels like a lifetime.

**ADDISON:** Oh, do shut up, Geoffrey.

*GEOFFREY chuckles, mostly to himself. They kiss. ELEANOR watches them, amused.*

**ADDISON:** *(checking her watch)* I thought you weren't finished with clients until five?

**GEOFFREY:** *(returning to the kitchen)* Just making a cup of tea.

*ELEANOR and ADDISON watch GEOFFREY shuffle back into the kitchen, humming to himself cheerfully.*

**ELEANOR:** *(a little dismayed)* I think the two of you might be the happiest couple I know.

**ADDISON:** Sickening, isn't it?

*There is a moment's silence while they both look into the distance and take a deep breath.*

**ADDISON:** How is Victor?

**ELEANOR:** Oh, the same.

**ADDISON:** *(fed up)* Really, Eleanor. I know you married him for the money, but you'd think he could-

**ELEANOR:** I did *not* marry him for the money.

*ADDISON looks at ELEANOR, eyebrows raised.*

**ADDISON:** You *stayed* with him for the money.

**ELEANOR:** *(slowly, not conceding)* It *was* helpful having a steady income while I've been writing.

**ADDISON:** *(mocking)* Oh, a "steady income", how romantic.

**ELEANOR:** He is romantic.

*ADDISON gives Eleanor a look that says she doesn't believe her.*

**ELEANOR:** He *was* romantic.

**ADDISON:** Hmm.

**ELEANOR:** It was better at the beginning...

**ADDISON:** I don't know why you stayed with him.

**ELEANOR:** Because we're married and that's what you do.

**ADDISON:** *Especially* after that ordeal with his secretary.

**ELEANOR:** (*disgusted*) Lisa.

**ADDISON:** I thought her name was Carol? (*trying hard to remember*) I'm sure I wrote that threatening letter to Carol...

**ELEANOR:** What threatening letter?

**ADDISON:** (*changing the subject*) So, you'll come for dinner?

**ELEANOR:** (*a little hopeful*) Victor may be planning something special.

**ADDISON:** If there's one thing I'm certain of, it's that Victor should not be in charge of planning anything "special". And, anyway, I've already spoken to him and he has *officially* handed over all congratulatory activities to me.

**ELEANOR:** When did you talk to Victor?

**ADDISON:** This afternoon. When I called for you.

**ELEANOR:** (*turning away, dismissively*) I was out.

**ADDISON:** So it's sorted.

**ELEANOR:** (*looking back*) What?

**ADDISON:** The dinner party.

**ELEANOR:** (*a little exasperated*) I don't want a party.

**ADDISON:** (*not deterred*) A social gathering! Close friends only.

**ELEANOR:** Paula?

**ADDISON:** (*suddenly irritated*) Oh, for goodness sake. Why do you insist on getting about with that sour-faced-

**ELEANOR:** I'll come to the party if Paula's invited.

*ADDISON glares for a moment.*

**ADDISON:** Alright, I'll invite your personality-lacking friend. (*to herself*) She can bring one of her hideous vegan dishes. (*pointing at ELEANOR, warningly*) But *you* had better be there. I'm not going to be abandoned here with (*as though it is not actually her name*) "Paula". (*a little smug*) And, I thought it wasn't a "party" ...

**ELEANOR:** I just don't want to make a big deal.

**ADDISON:** It will be an event of conservative proportions.

**ELEANOR:** No fuss.

**ADDISON:** I promise it will be a relatively uneventful evening.

*ELEANOR ponders this for a moment.*

**ELEANOR:** Oh, go on then.

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**VARIOUS SCENES OMITTED FROM THIS SAMPLE**

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## Extract from Scene 4

*ELEANOR stands at the table DL, facing across the stage and begins mindlessly and furiously carving the meat, cutting it into haphazard chunks. PAULA, still in the living room, leans on the back of an armchair DR, glaring across the stage at ELEANOR.*

**PAULA:** *(furious)* Because taking everything else I wanted wasn't enough! You had to take Sinclair too!

**ELEANOR:** Oh, I didn't take anything!

*ADDISON, feeling her phone vibrate, takes it out of her pocket.*

**ADDISON:** *(comparatively calm)* Hello?

**PAULA:** *(loosing all composure)* Why couldn't you just let me have this one thing!

**ELEANOR:** *(still holding the knife and using it to point angrily at PAULA)* You want him? YOU CAN HAVE HIM!

*At that moment, SINCLAIR, still clutching his throat, stumbles through the kitchen doors in front of ELEANOR. EVERYONE, stunned, stares as he takes a final gasp and drops, front-first, to the floor DC.*

*EVERYONE remains standing motionless and silent, staring at SINCLAIR. After a moment, ELEANOR, open mouthed, drops the knife to the table with a bang.*

**ADDISON:** I'm sorry, mother; I can't talk right now. Eleanor's killed someone.

**ELEANOR:** What?

**ADDISON:** *(yelling into the phone)* KILLED SOMEONE!

**ELEANOR:** *(grabbing ADDISON's mobile)* Oh for goodness sake!

*ELEANOR ends the call with more determination than is required and thrusts it back to Addison with an exasperated look.*

**ELEANOR:** *(as though it's obvious)* He's not dead.

**GEOFFREY:** *(heading for SINCLAIR)* I'll take a look at him. I am a doctor after all.

*GEOFFREY chuckles to himself.*

**ADDISON:** You're a therapist!

**GEOFFREY:** *(getting down to inspect SINCLAIR)* I have patients.

**ADDISON:** Conscious ones...

*GEOFFREY goes about investigating SINCLAIR's wellbeing. This should be at least a little bit questionable, but will depending on the actor and director's preferences and should give the distinct impression that SINCLAIR doesn't really know what he's doing. He may try some sort of obviously ineffective, alternative healing method quietly while the others continue.*

**PAULA:** *(walking aggressively towards ELEANOR, stepping straight over SINCLAIR in the process)* What did you do?

*ADDISON, trying to intervene, steps between them.*

**ELEANOR:** *(flabbergasted, turning to PAULA)* Me? I wasn't the one that put nuts in the salad.

*PAULA gasps and clasps her hand to her mouth. VICTOR is confused.*

**ADDISON:** *(turning threateningly to PAULA)* What?

**ELEANOR:** *(grabbing SINCLAIR's coat and rummaging through the pockets)* Maybe he has one of those pens...

**PAULA:** *(snatching the coat from ELEANOR and checking all the pockets)* Yes!

*VICTOR, still confused, has walked into the living room and is straining to see into the kitchen.*

**PAULA:** *(not able to find an epipen)* No...

**VICTOR:** How did you see me put them in the salad from in here?

*Immediately, the three women turn to VICTOR. VICTOR takes a nervous step backwards.*

**ELEANOR:** *(threateningly)* Put what in the salad?

**VICTOR:** *(realising)* Oh, you didn't see me put them in the salad.

**ELEANOR:** *(to PAULA)* I thought you put them in the salad.

**PAULA:** *(a little panicky)* I did put them in the salad.

*VICTOR, over-acting, gasps.*

**VICTOR:** How could you!

**ADDISON:** *(to VICTOR, with disbelief)* Seriously?

*GEOFFREY, only just now realising that this may be prudent, checks SINCLAIR's pulse, becoming increasingly more uncomfortable as he does.*

**PAULA:** I didn't want him to eat them!

**ADDISON:** *(unconvinced)* Hence, putting them in the salad...

**PAULA:** *(desperately trying to explain)* Well I did... But, then we talked, and I changed my mind. That's why I put the salad back in the kitchen!

**ADDISON:** Because, *obviously*, nobody would eat something in a kitchen.

**ELEANOR:** *(looking to SINCLAIR)* Maybe we should take him to the hospital?

*GEOFFREY stops checking SINCLAIR's pulse and looks up, teeth clenched.*

**GEOFFREY:** That may not be necessary.

**PAULA:** *(desperately)* He's okay?

**GEOFFREY:** *(standing up, uncomfortably)* Unfortunately, I believe he may be dead.

**ADDISON:** *(turning sharply and walking over to inspect SINCLAIR)* WHAT?

**PAULA:** *(melodramatically, collapsing into a chair and beginning to sob)* Oh, no!

**ELEANOR:** *(screwing up her face and rubbing her temples)* Oh, that's just... brilliant.  
*(snapping at ADDISON)* This is why I didn't want a party!

**ADDISON:** *(raising her eyebrows and holding an open palm towards SINCLAIR)* This, specifically, is why you didn't want a party?

**ELEANOR:** *(snapping at VICTOR)* What the hell were you thinking?

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HAS BEEN OMITTED FROM THE SAMPLE HERE.**

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*ADDISON is still looking at SINCLAIR, more concerned. She reaches down and begins inspecting the area under his crotch.*

**ELEANOR:** *(noticing ADDISON)* What in god's name are you doing?

**ADDISON:** *(standing up, innocently)* I was just checking his, um...

*ADDISON points in the direction of SINCLAIR's crotch.*

**PAULA:** *(looking down her nose at ADDISON, disapprovingly)* Disgusting.

**ADDISON:** *(a little embarrassed)* I was checking he hasn't wet himself.

**ELEANOR:** Wet himself?

**ADDISON:** Sometimes bodies can, um... *(struggling to find the words)* leak a little.

**GEOFFREY:** That's true. When we had Burlington put down, there were some issues with leakage.

**VICTOR:** I think that will be the least of his concerns...

**ADDISON:** I'm not worried about his concerns. We've just replaced the carpet.

*EVERYONE looks at SINCLAIR, a little disturbed.*

**ELEANOR:** *(still looking at SINCLAIR)* So what do we do now? Should we tell someone?

**ADDISON:** (*shaking her head, matter-of-factly*) Eleanor, as you know, I make it my mission not to judge others-

**PAULA:** (*amused*) HA!

**ADDISON:** (*glaring at PAULA*) I'll ignore that. (*continuing*) But, I think that may be the *worst* idea you have *ever* had.

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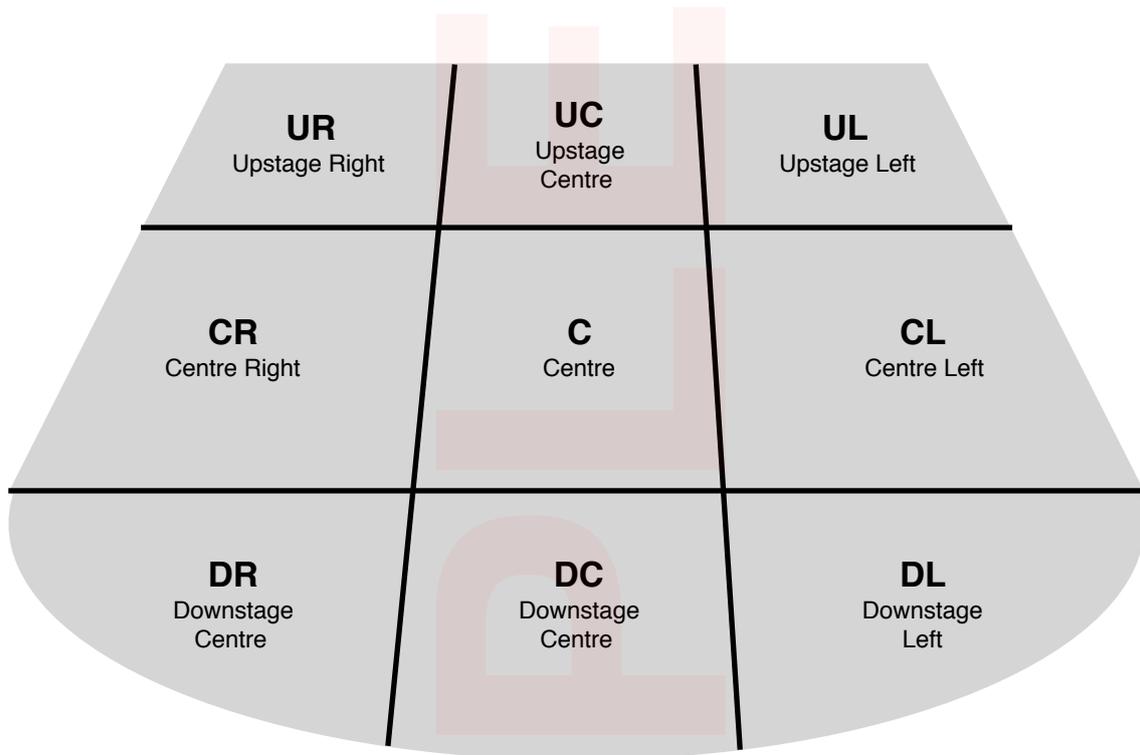
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# Chart of Stage Positions

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# Set

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