

From *Summerset*

A musical loosely based on Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull*

Book and Lyrics by Hilan Warshaw

A hotel room in London. ARNOLD, late 40s, is looking in a mirror, dressed in tails and nervously fiddling with his tie. ARIANA, mid-50s, enters in a sleek gown.

ARNOLD

God, I hate tuxedos.

ARIANA

(smiling)

They hate you. You look miserable.

ARNOLD

I am miserable. *(Pause.)* Imagine how I'd be if it weren't for all the supportive words I get at home.

They both smile.

ARIANA

How do I look?

ARNOLD

You're a vision.

He kisses her shoulder.

ARIANA

And the dress?

ARNOLD

Stunning.

ARIANA

I've brought more costume changes to this hotel than Eliza Doolittle.

ARNOLD

Do you have anything in green? You always looked so gorgeous in green.

ARIANA *(quietly)*

You've never seen me in green, Arnold. *(Pause.)* You know I hate green.

ARNOLD

(awkwardly, realizing his mistake)

Oh, yes. Of course.

ARIANA walks to a section of the stage representing the hotel-room bathroom, looking ashen. She begins to cry. ARNOLD gets up and looks at himself in the mirror.

ARNOLD

(loudly, to ARIANA)

Maybe my next play will be about Mark Twain. What do you think about that?

ARIANA

(through her tears, making sure he does not hear the quiver in her voice)

Oh, yes.

ARNOLD

The British want me to do some kind of vintage Americana. Who would have known I was so exotic. *(Pause.)* He must have had some good story in his life, don't you think? Some sort of tragic romance. *(Pause.)* What if he were in love with a British lady? But he could never have her. They were separated by the Atlantic. *(Pause.)* British-American love.

ARIANA has succeeded in quelling her tears. She walks out with a bright smile, as if her emotional interlude had never happened.

ARIANA

Call it "East is east and west is west, and never the Twains shall meet."

ARNOLD

(turning to her)

Now how long did it take you to think of that?

ARIANA

Why do you think I went into the bathroom? *(She locks arms with him.)*
Well, shall we?

Lights down on the two of them.