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Dramatic Publishing

HOTEL D'AMOUR

A musical farce adapted from
Georges Feydeau's *A Flea in Her Ear*
(*La puce a l'oreille*)

Book and translation by
JACK HELBIG

Music and lyrics by
GREGG OPELKA

Originally conceived and directed by
GARY GRIFFIN



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Book and translation by JACK HELBIG

Music and lyrics by GREGG OPELKA

Adapted from Georges Feydeau's

A Flea in Her Ear (La puce a l'oreille)

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(HOTEL D'AMOUR)

ISBN: 1-58342-198-X

“You’ll adore *Hotel d’Amour*”

Chicago Spotlight

“*Hotel d’Amour* is relentlessly funny...a frantic maze of sex, revenge; debauchery pushes the play above the level of successful comedy into the world of superb farce.”

Hinsdale Doings

“Gregg Opelka and Jack Helbig had the inspired idea to adapt Georges Feydeau’s classic French farce to the musical stage. And inspired it is. Opelka’s music and lyrics have the stamp of a wonderfully original stylist and Helbig’s book is a sprightly, very funny update of the 1907 play that is careful to preserve all its good old-fashioned madcap qualities.”

New City (Chicago)

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IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of HOTEL D’AMOUR *must* give credit to the Author and Composer of the Musical in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Musical and in all instances in which the title of the Musical appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Musical and/or a production. The name of the Author and Composer *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the Author and Composer, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

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All producers of the Musical must include the following acknowledgment on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Musical and on all advertising and promotional materials:

“Original production conceived and directed by Gary Griffin.”

Hotel d'Amour premiered July 23, 1993, in a Buffalo Theater Ensemble production, Chicago, Illinois, directed by Gary Griffin. BTE remounted the show in January of 1996 with the following cast, production staff and orchestra:

CAST

Antoinette	JULIE COHEN
Camille Chandebise	DAN FERRETTI*
Etienne.	NATHAN RANKIN
Victor-Emmanuel Chandebise	PAUL SLADE SMITH*
Raymonde Chandebise.	ANNE MCKERNAN
Lucienne Homenides de Histangua	
	GENEVIEVE VEN JOHNSON
Don Carlos Homenides de Histangua	KEITH IRACE*
Dr. Finache	MARK ANDERSON
Romain Tournel	RUSSELL ROWE*
Ferraillon	JIM BLANCHETTE
Marguerite.	LISA K. WYATT
Poche	PAUL SLADE SMITH
Baptiste.	MARK ANDERSON
Rugby	ELIC RYAN BRAMLETT

**reprised role created in 1993 premiere*

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director	STEVE SCOTT
Musical Director.	LINDA TYBIK
Choreography	SCOTT SANDOE
Costume Design	KATE ELLIS
Orchestrations.	GREGG OPELKA

Percussion Orchestrations ANDY JONES
Scenic Designer JON GANTT
Lighting/Property Designer MICHAEL W. MOON
Stage Manager AMY JO RUPP
Assistant Director ROBERT CHYNOWETH
Assistant Stage Manager ERICA BURGER
Associate Musical Director CLAIRE MILLER

ORCHESTRA

Piano/Conductor LINDA TYBIK
Trumpet BONNIE BROWN
Clarinet/Alto sax KEN MACK
Trombone PAT ZIELINSKI
Synthesizer CLAIRE MILLER
Percussion ANDY JONES

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Act I

Overture

Hotel d'Amour Company
He Needs Education Lucienne, Raymonde
A Fabulous Outlook Victor
Seven-year Itch Victor, Tournel, Finache
Shoot First Carlos
I Can Talk Camille, Victor

Act II

Doors Ferrailon, Marguerite, Baptiste
I've Got Reservations Ferrailon
The Finest Voyeur and Worst Bellboy in Patee
Poche, Tournel, Raymonde
Oh, My God Tournel, Raymonde
Shoot First—reprise Lucienne, Victor, Carlos
A Not So Very Merry Chase Company

Act III

Explain That Etienne, Antoinette
Victor, Goodbye Carlos, Poche
Lo Siento, Lucienne Carlos, Lucienne
He Sells Insurance Raymonde
A Fabulous Outlook—reprise Raymonde, Victor
Doors—reprise (or Hotel d'Amour—reprise) Company*

**In the 1993 production, the company sang a reprise of "Hotel d'Amour" during the bows, while a company reprise of "Doors" was sung during the bows in the 1996 production. The authors decided to leave the choice of what to sing at the end of the show with the producing theater.*

HOTEL D'AMOUR

A Musical in Three Acts
For 9 Men and 4 Women

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Victor-Emmanuel Chandebise a Parisian
insurance man
Raymonde Chandebise his wife
Camille Chandebise his nephew
Antoinette the Chandebises' French maid
Etienne their English butler
Dr. Finache the company doctor
Romain Tournel top agent in Victor's insurance firm
Don Carlo Homenides de Histangua a new client
(from Barcelona)
Lucienne Homenides de Histangua his new wife
Ferraillon & Marguerite husband and wife owners of
the Hotel d'Amour, "where the elite meet to be
indiscreet"
Poche the porter at the hotel
Baptiste Ferraillon's uncle
Rugby a guest at the hotel

TIME: Spring 1912.

PLACE: Paris, France.

Act I – The Chandebise home
Act II – The Hotel d’Amour
Act III – The Chandebise home

(Note: The play may be presented in three acts, as was done in the 1993 premier production, or acts two and three may be combined into one intermissionless act, as was done in the 1996 Chicago remount.)

ACT I

SCENE ONE

(Scene: Nowhere. Best if Act I set is not visible. In blackness, we hear a mysterious repeated bass note in the band. Each cast member is in a fixed position on the stage, except for VICTOR CHANDEBISE, who comes out later in the song. As each cast member starts to sing, the light comes up on him or her. By the LIFE IS SWEET line, all lights are up.)

(SONG: HOTEL D'AMOUR)

FERRAILLON.
IT'S SO EROTIC...

LUCIENNE.
IT'S SO EXPLICIT...

TOURNEL.
IT'S SO EXOTIC AND ILLICIT

ANTOINETTE.
WERE IT LIVING YOU WOULD KISS IT.

CAMILLE.
***QUEL DOMMAGE* IF YOU SHOULD MISS IT.**

ALL.

**IT'S GOT EV'RYTHING YOU'VE EVER WANTED.
LIFE IS SWEET AND INDISCREET
WHEN AT HOTEL D'AMOUR.**

MEN.

**BELLES, COQUETTES AND NO REGRETS
ON EV'RY SINGLE FLOOR.**

ALL.

**WHEN YOU'VE A SECRET TRYST
THAT CAN'T BE MISSED,
YOU NEED AN EXPERT TO ASSIST.
JUST STEP RIGHT THROUGH THAT DOOR.
LET YOUR FANCY SOAR.
COME AND TAKE A TOUR
HOTEL D'AMOUR.**

WOMEN.

**WHEN YOU HUNGER TO FEEL YOUNGER
AND LA VIE BECOMES ENNUI
AND DAYS ARE ALL THE SAME
THERE'S A COZY ROOM
WHERE LOVE'S IN BLOOM.
A QUIET PLACE
THEY KNOW YOUR FACE
BUT NOT YOUR NAME.**

ALL.

**CONFIDE IT,
WE'LL HIDE IT.
ISN'T IT TIME YOU TRIED IT?
BOY MEETS GIRL
OR BOY MEETS BOY—**

**AS LONG AS GIRL AND BOY ENJOY,
THEN EV'RYTHING'S ALL RIGHT.
MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT.
WHET YOUR APPETITE.
HOTEL D'AMOUR.**

*(VICTOR CHANDEBISE walks from UC through the
throng and speaks directly to the audience.)*

CHANDEBISE.

BIENVENUS, MES AMIS!
**I'M SO VERY GLAD TO SEE YOU IN PAREE.
IF OF LATE YOUR LIFE IS A BORE,
NO AFFAIRS, NO LOVERS, NO RENDEZVOUS,
THEN I JUST COULDN'T ENVY YOU MORE!
I WAS DRAB, I WAS GRAY.
FOR EXCITEMENT I PUT CREAM IN MY *AU*
LAIT.
I ADORED MY WIFE AND MY WORK—
JUST YOUR AVERAGE, BORING INSURANCE
MAN,
TILL MY LIFE AND MY WIFE...WENT BERSERK.
LIFE WAS PLAIN, BUT, OH, SO SANE
UNTIL HOTEL D'AMOUR.
I'D NEVER HAD A FRIEND GO MAD
AND SHOOT AT ME BEFORE.
I TOOK LIFE ALL IN STRIDE
WITH POISE AND PRIDE
TILL LOVE TURNED INTO HOMICIDE.
THE CLUES ARE SELDOM SPARSE,
AND ANY FOOL CAN PARSE:
IT'S JUST AN OLD FRENCH FARCE,
HOTEL D'AMOUR.**

(CHANDEBISE exits.)

MEN.

**WHEN YOUR FLIRTING'S NOT CONVERTING
AND YOUR PASSION HAS TURNED ASHEN
AND YOUR HEART'S BLASE,
THERE'S A PRIVATE SUITE
WHERE TWO CAN MEET
AND DO THE DANCE THEY DO IN FRANCE
THAT'S NOT BALLET!**

ALL.

**EXCITING! INVITING,
AND NO ONE'S NAME IN WRITING.
LIFE IS LOVE
AND LOVE IS WAR
BUT LOVE IS WHAT WE'RE ALL HERE FOR.
SO WHY BE FULL OF GLOOM?
SPLASH ON LOVE'S PERFUME.
COME AND BOOK A ROOM.
HOTEL D'AMOUR!**

SCENE TWO

(The library of the Chandebise house. CAMILLE, Victor's young nephew who's interning at his uncle's company, leans over the open drawer of a filing cabinet flipping through the files. He pulls out a file, lays it on top of the cabinet, opens it up, and tries to write, but his pen won't write. Meanwhile, the door behind CAMILLE opens slowly and ANTOINETTE, the Chandebise's comely maid, slyly slides her head in. She sees that

CAMILLE is totally absorbed in his work, smiles, and then tiptoes over to him. She grabs him and gives him a quick, hard kiss.)

CAMILLE *(has a cleft palate, has trouble with hard consonants, and so is hard to understand)*. What are you doing?

ANTOINETTE. Don't worry. Everyone's out.

CAMILLE. Really?

ANTOINETTE. Really. Etienne's out on some stupid errand and Mr. Chandebise said he wouldn't be home until four.

CAMILLE. That's great.

ANTOINETTE. Well? *(They kiss long and hard, during which the clock strikes four times. A moment later, we hear two male voices behind the door.)*

ETIENNE. This way, Doctor.

(The door starts to open. CAMILLE and ANTOINETTE break their kiss in a panic.)

ANTOINETTE. *Merde!* It's my husband!

(CAMILLE and ANTOINETTE separate, and look busy. A moment later, ETIENNE, the butler of the house, enters, followed by DR. FINACHE.)

ETIENNE. Monsieur Chandebise is expected home soon.
Camille? Antoinette?

CAMILLE. Hi.

ANTOINETTE *(wryly)*. Hello, Etienne.

ETIENNE. Why aren't you in the kitchen, my little cabbage? Can't stand the heat?

ANTOINETTE. No, my tiny cucumber. Just giving Camille a taste of dessert. Wasn't that good?

CAMILLE. Mmmmm.

ETIENNE. May I try?

ANTOINETTE. I'm sorry, my eentsy-weensy zucchini, I don't have any left for you. *(Starts to leave. Stops.)*

Camille. Come. I'm working on a new appetizer.

CAMILLE. Okay. *(CAMILLE and ANTOINETTE exit.)*

DR. FINACHE. I think I know who wears the pants in your family.

ETIENNE. I'm sorry, what was that?

DR. FINACHE. Oh, nothing, nothing. *(DR. FINACHE takes a seat. ETIENNE takes a seat next to him. Opens Chandebise's humidor.)*

ETIENNE. Cigar?

DR. FINACHE. Thank you. *(FINACHE takes one, so does ETIENNE. ETIENNE picks up lighter, tries to light lighter. But it won't light.)*

ETIENNE. Damn!

DR. FINACHE. When do you expect M. Chandebise—
(Doorbell rings.)

ETIENNE. Excuse me, Doctor.

(ETIENNE puts cigar in his pocket. Exits to answer door. DR. FINACHE tries to light his cigar. Lighter won't light. ANTOINETTE enters.)

ANTOINETTE *(flirtatiously)*. Well, hello, Doctor.

DR. FINACHE. Oh, hello, Antoinette.

ANTOINETTE. Long time, no see, you naughty man.

DR. FINACHE. I've been very busy.

ANTOINETTE. *Zut!* I know how you keep yourself busy, Doctor.

DR. FINACHE. You know me too well.

ANTOINETTE. No, but I'd like to.

DR. FINACHE. I think that can be arranged.

ANTOINETTE. What are you doing right now?

DR. FINACHE. Actually, I have to deliver this report to M. Chandebise.

ANTOINETTE. Oh, you're no fun.

DR. FINACHE. Sorry.

ANTOINETTE. So what is this report? Some big secret?

DR. FINACHE. Just someone who wants insurance. Checking for pre-existing conditions, and all that.

ANTOINETTE. What's his name? Maybe I know him. (*Very sexy.*) I am an expert on pre-existing conditions.

DR. FINACHE. Don Carlos Homenides de Histangua.

ANTOINETTE. You examined Don Carlos Homenides de Histangua?

DR. FINACHE. You've heard of Don Carlos Homenides de Histangua?

ANTOINETTE. Sure, he's the big (*makes quote marks in the air*) businessman from Barcelona. Taking a six-million-dollar policy out on his wife, right?

DR. FINACHE. No, on himself.

ANTOINETTE. That's funny, I'm sure I overheard—

DR. FINACHE. Well, you heard wrong. If he wanted to insure his wife, I would have examined her.

ANTOINETTE. Oh, he wouldn't have liked that. He's very jealous.

DR. FINACHE. But I'm a doctor.

ANTOINETTE. Doesn't matter. Last summer he shot a priest for looking at his wife funny.

DR. FINACHE. Jesus!

ANTOINETTE. That's what the father said.

(ETIENNE re-enters.)

ETIENNE. Excuse me, Doctor. Antoinette!

ANTOINETTE. Hello, Etienne.

ETIENNE. Are you bothering Dr. Finache?

ANTOINETTE. Not yet. *A bientôt.* *(ANTOINETTE exits.)*

ETIENNE. I'm sorry, Dr. Finache, I hope my wife didn't talk your ear off. Talk talk talk. No wonder she never gets anything done.

DR. FINACHE *(takes his watch out, looks at it)*. Does M. Chandebise have a phone? I need to place a call.

ETIENNE. This way, Doctor.

(LUCIENNE peers in from the next room. FINACHE is charmed at the first sight of her.)

LUCIENNE. Excuse me.

ETIENNE. Madame?

LUCIENNE. You said Madame Chandebise would be right back?

ETIENNE. Yes, madame.

DR. FINACHE. There is nothing in the world worse than waiting.

LUCIENNE. Sir?

ETIENNE. Forgive me. Madame Homenides de Histangua, this is Dr. Finache, chief medical— *(LUCIENNE extends her hand.)*

DR. FINACHE. You're Madame Homenides de Histangua?

Your husband is a, is a, is a—

LUCIENNE. Don Carlos Homenides de Histangua.

DR. FINACHE. Of course. I examined your husband today.

LUCIENNE. Really?

DR. FINACHE. Yes, he has the most amazing constitution. Strong as a horse.

LUCIENNE. Tell me about it. It's exhausting. *(Slyly.)* If you know what I mean.

DR. FINACHE *(laughs lustily)*. Yes. *(DR. FINACHE begins to kiss LUCIENNE's hand. Pauses a moment.)* Is your husband here?

LUCIENNE. He'll be here any minute. *(DR. FINACHE gives her an awkward handshake.)*

DR. FINACHE. Well then, nice to meet you.

LUCIENNE *(puzzled)*. Nice to meet you.

DR. FINACHE. The phone? *(DR. FINACHE and ETIENNE exit. At that moment the quarter hour strikes.)*

LUCIENNE. Quarter past, what can be keeping Raymond?

(LUCIENNE sits. Flips through a magazine. CAMILLE enters.)

CAMILLE. Oh, pardon me. Just passing through.

LUCIENNE. Sorry?

CAMILLE. Just passing through.

LUCIENNE. I'm sorry?

CAMILLE. Just. Passing. Through. Oh, forget it!

(CAMILLE exits in a hurry. ETIENNE passes him on the way in.)

ETIENNE. Madame Chandebise is not here yet?

LUCIENNE. No.

ETIENNE. That's odd. *(Takes out pocket watch.)* She was expected home at four.

LUCIENNE. Tell me, who was that rude man who was just in here?

ETIENNE. That was Camille. Victor's nephew. He's an intern with Victor's company for the summer.

LUCIENNE. It's a shame about his *(gestures around her mouth, hesitant to say the word "speech impediment")*, isn't it? My husband's sister's brother-in-law's neighbor has a boy with a cleft palate. Just the sweetest thing, plays the piano, too. Not very well, really, but he tries.

ETIENNE. If there's nothing else, I'll be going.