Scene – i

*Trevor is carefully cleaning his barbershop when Milan enters*

TREVOR  Good morning, sir!

MILAN  Morning.

TREVOR  Yes sir, I do believe we’re in for a spell as they used to say in the music halls. Not too hot, but not too mild neither..

MILAN  Mmm.

TREVOR  Re: the weekend just past, might I enquire as to whether sir was in receipt of an enjoyableness, or did events prove themselves to be of an otherwise nature?

MILAN  Very pleasant thank you.

TREVOR  “Very pleasant thank you.” Thank you sir! Then might I take it sir that for that period you were not within the boundaries of Lincolnshire, where I understand it rained like a bitch.

MILAN  No, I was nowhere near Lincolnshire.

TREVOR  Sir, I am uplifted to hear such news.

MILAN  My wife and I spent the weekend in Hull.

*Milan sits on the barber chair*

TREVOR  Sir is married?

MILAN  Yes.

TREVOR  I had literally no idea.

MILAN  Well never mind ...

TREVOR  Sir, my remissness in failing to felicitate sir upon the joyousness and good tidings is something I fear I shall have to live with for the rest of my life.

TREVOR  Now to business. Being one of the shrewdest sirs who has ever swum into my purview, may I take it that sir is keen to exploit the social and financial advantages inherent in having a hair cut?

MILAN  A haircut, that’s right.

TREVOR  Of course. A hair cut is a hair enhanced! If sir will entirely fail to slash my throatlet for being so old. Now sir, the hair in question is … ?

MILAN  What?

TREVOR  The hair presently under advisement belongs to … ?

MILAN  What do you mean?
TREVOR  What do I mean?
MILAN  It’s my hair. I want you to cut my hair.
TREVOR  So your own hair is the hair upon which this entire transaction is to be founded?
MILAN  Well of course! Why would I come in here to get you to cut someone else’s hair?
TREVOR  Sir. Please set fire to my legs if I am trying to make haircutting sound more romantic and glamorous that it really is, but believe me when I tell you that in my position you cannot be too careful.
MILAN  Really?

Trevor carefully wraps a white sheet around Milan’s neck.

TREVOR  Yes indeed sir. Once and only once, have I had to cut the hair of a a gentleman against his will. And believe me when I tell you it was both difficult and impossible.
MILAN  No, well it’s my hair.
TREVOR  Now, sir, we proceed to that most important of stages: Which one?

Trevor continues adding additional sheets while speaking.

MILAN  Which one what?
TREVOR  Which of the manifold hairs upon sir’s crisp and twinkling heady would sir like to place in my professional care for the purposes of securing an encutment.
MILAN  All of them!
TREVOR  All of them?
MILAN  Yes!
TREVOR  Sir is absolutely sure?
MILAN  Of course I’m sure. What’s the matter with you?
TREVOR  I seek not to question the drasticity of sir’s decision, only to express the profoundness of my humblings at the prospect of such a magnificent task.
MILAN  Well, all of them.
TREVOR  All of them. My word.
MILAN  Is that a problem?
TREVOR  No indeed sir! No indeed sir! Not a problem sir. I merely hope that sir can take time off from what I know is a very hectic schedule to appreciate that for me to cut all the hairs on sir’s head represents the snow-capped summit of a barber’s career.
MILAN Well you’ve done it before, haven’t you?

Trevor laughs heartily

TREVOR Oh, yes indeed sir! Yes, I once cut all the hairs on a gentleman’s head in Cairo, shortly after the War, when the world was in uproar and to a young man everything seemed possible.

MILAN Once?

TREVOR It would be bootless to deny that I was a younger and better-looking barber then, but let’s hope that the magic has not entirely disappeared up its own rabbit hole. We shall see. We shall see!

MILAN Wait a minute here! Wait one cotton-picking minute here!

TREVOR Sir?

MILAN You’ve cut someone’s hair, all of it that is, once since the war?

TREVOR Sir would prefer that in the sphere of total hair cuttation, I was to him a virgin?

MILAN I beg your pardon?

TREVOR Yes, that I can respect.

MILAN What?

TREVOR The desire that we should both embark upon this journey together as innocents, as wide-eyed travellers to a foreign land, unknowing of our fate, careless of our destination — to emerge some day, somewhere — bruised, sad, a little wiser perhaps, but ultimately and joyously alive.

MILAN Goodbye

Trevor snaps his scissors together near Milan’s head. Milan stands to leave

TREVOR Sir is leaving?

Trevor and Milan look directly at each other and break character.

MILAN I don’t believe you have the faintest idea as to how you’re going to end this.

TREVOR Sir could not be more wrong if he tried.

MILAN Oh really

TREVOR Yes!

MILAN Well go on then.

MILAN Now you see, you’re completely stuck.

TREVOR No, no, I can convincingly end this sketch in forty-five seconds.

MILAN Forty-five seconds?
TREVOR  Forty five seconds.

MILAN  All right then: off you go!

  Returning to character.

TREVOR  Um, um. If sir would care to resume the seatedness of his posture?

MILAN  Okie doke

  Milan sits back down

TREVOR  May I assume that sir is close to the maximum level of comfort?

MILAN  Forty seconds

TREVOR  Very good. I shall just go and fetch the necessary tools.

  Trevor leaves via the eastern stairwell. He does not return. Milan
  peers at the doorway.

MILAN  Haha. It’s going to be a chainsaw or ...

  Long pause. Milan realises he has been left holding the baby.
  Resignedly, he delivers his final line straight to the audience:

MILAN  Fuck.