

Clover

By C J Nolan

(Two men wearing tuxedos – Derek and Bobby – are making their way slowly through some woods.)

DEREK

(Offstage) Are we there yet?

BOBBY

Come on. Don't start.

DEREK

Hey! Careful!

BOBBY

What?

DEREK

You snapped me.

BOBBY

What?

DEREK

When you pushed that branch away, it snapped back at me.

BOBBY

(Stops. Stares at him) Derek, are you bleeding?

DEREK

No. But it hurt.

BOBBY

(Insincere) Gosh, I'm sorry. NOW – can we just get this thing over with?!

DEREK

I just don't want to mess up my tux. I told you I didn't want to do this if I was going to mess up my tux. See, already my shoes have dirt on them.

BOBBY

Look, she said to find the field of clover just beyond these trees. We are almost there so stop whining and let's just get there!

DEREK

Fine. So where the hell is this field already? *(Suddenly, they walk into a beautiful, green, wide open, sunlit field of clovers.)* Wow. *(Pause)* I'd say this was it.

BOBBY

(Staring) I'd say you were right. *(Pause)* Huh. Very nice. That is a lot of clover, Derek.

DEREK

Yeah.

BOBBY

Beautiful country up here.

DEREK

Yeah. *(Pause)* So let me get this straight. We are supposed to look through this entire field, right?

BOBBY

Right.

DEREK

And find a four-leaf clover and bring it back to the house.

BOBBY

Yep.

DEREK

To bring the bride and groom "good luck".

BOBBY

That's what she said.

DEREK

(Pause) No fucking way.

BOBBY

Of course no fucking way! We are going to hang out here for twenty minutes, take in the fresh air, then go back and say we couldn't find one. *(sits on the ground)* I mean, I have had a full day of this new age crap. I came up here for a wedding – not an induction into the ways of Yanni! The crystals, the bells, the incantations. Not to mention that wigged-out, hippy, guru priestess! I am done. It's Miller Time.

DEREK

(Pause) How can you do that?

BOBBY

How can I do what?

DEREK

How can you sit like that? On the ground? In a tux?

BOBBY

What do I care? It's a rental.

DEREK

You have no respect for clothes, man.

BOBBY

I wear good clothes.

DEREK

No, you don't. You do not wear clothes. You may have clothes on, but you are not wearing them. They are sort of attached to your body in a confused and desperate way.

BOBBY

So sue me.

DEREK

As long as I have known you – even dressed up! – you look frumpy. I doubt you have a single shirt or pair of pants that actually fit.

BOBBY

Stop! You're starting to sound like my wife.

DEREK

I'm just saying. Take some time and do it right. You could look great in clothes.

BOBBY

Leave me alone!

DEREK

I'm not surprised. Really. Look at the way you treat your body.

BOBBY

What ARE you talking about? I shoot hoops twice a week! I am in great shape!

DEREK

Dude, you think buffalo wings are a food group!

BOBBY

Do not.

DEREK

Do to.

BOBBY

Do Not!

DEREK

Do To!

BOBBY

Do not BUT... The buffalo wing meal covers all bases. You've got your poultry. The celery is a vegetable. Blue cheese – your dairy.

DEREK

And the beer?

BOBBY

Wheat and grains. There – I know my food groups.

DEREK

You're going to look like a potato by the time you're fifty.

BOBBY

Look. I know where this thing is going. But I told you, D – I'm already married.

DEREK

And I pity her, dude. *(Pause)* So – do you think we'll be jumped by wood sprites out here?

BOBBY

Do NOT bring up the fucking wood sprites!!

DEREK

I'm just asking. I'm not as intimate with them as you are.

BOBBY

One of the most embarrassing moments of my life. And just where were you when we were "gathering the wood sprites"?

DEREK

In the bathroom.

BOBBY

Asshole.

DEREK

Got some great pictures, though!

BOBBY

Blow me, okay? How did I not see any of this shit coming when he asked me to be his Best Man? I mean, how did I not envision that by standing up for my best friend at his wedding – my leather-jacketed, rock and roll, beer guzzling best friend – that I would end up mincing around in a field of wild flowers in the back woods of Maine, with the bride’s freaky relatives - led by some hippy witch! – to gather the spirits of the woods to join us in reciting crappy new age poetry around some big fucking CRYSTAL?! How did I not see that coming?

DEREK

To each his own, I say.

BOBBY

I knew I never liked the girlfriend.

DEREK

Bobby, how long has he known her?

BOBBY

It’s not even a year they’ve been together.

DEREK

Yeah... but that’s a long time for him.

BOBBY

I swear I don’t get it. Of all the girls he slept with. All those adorable, funny, warm, voluptuous . . .

DEREK

Sometimes VERY voluptuous.

BOBBY

All those amazing, miraculous girls he hooked up with! Why some thin, blond ice-princess?

DEREK

(Pause) Dunno.

BOBBY

Me neither.

DEREK

She likes you, though.

BOBBY

Does she?

DEREK

Yep. Likes you – hates me.

BOBBY

Sounds right.

DEREK

Hey! Be nice or I won't share. *(Pulls a joint out of his pocket)*

BOBBY

Ah! Bless you, my son.

(The joint is lit and is passed back and forth for the rest of the play.)

BOBBY

It really is beautiful up here.

DEREK

So. Have you found a four-leaf clover yet?

BOBBY

Do you have any idea how rare that is? Have you ever seen a four-leaf clover?

DEREK

(Thinks) On a t-shirt once.

BOBBY

See? Once. You could spend the rest of your life looking for a real one and not find one.

DEREK

Well, it's a pretty big field, Bobby.

BOBBY

So?

DEREK

Better odds.

BOBBY

Okay. So you get down here and help me look.

DEREK

Uh-uh.

BOBBY

Come on. Just bend down. You don't actually have to touch the ground.

DEREK

What, and crease the knees?! Dude, this is Versace!

BOBBY

Just move your hand through the clover – like this – and watch for one to pop out at you. But it's impossible anyway. We'll never find one. *(Pause)* Even if we did, it wouldn't bring them any luck.

DEREK

No?

BOBBY

Come on. Of course not.

DEREK

Okay, dude. Tell me. What is it that you've got a problem with – the wood sprites or marriage?

BOBBY

I don't know. Maybe both.

DEREK

Sharon's a good woman.

BOBBY

I know.

DEREK

You married a good woman.

BOBBY

I know! Christ, that's why I married her.

DEREK

So what's the problem?

BOBBY

Look, I love Sharon. *(Pause)* And we went through the whole wedding ritual, you know? The whole 900 yard Catholic "forever and ever" deal. God and kneeling and guys in funny hats.

DEREK

I was there, remember?

BOBBY

Right! But what good did it do? I love Sharon. But you know, some days I don't even like her. Trying to live together. Being responsible for someone. To someone. It so damned hard. The whole dynamic of a relationship is just... fragile. And WE had all that sacredness and ritual behind us! These two are getting married by Glenda the Good Witch! They'll need a hell of a lot more than some rare weed to give them "good luck".

DEREK

What a pessimist! So their ceremony had crystals and spirits and bad poetry. Your "sacred" ceremony had candles and incense and the Bible... home of some bad poetry itself. It's just a ritual, that's all. Tradition. Handed down from one mother-in-law to the next. You know what's sacred? People. That's what it's all about. Two people agreeing to share what they believe in. Simple.

BOBBY

What I believe in?

DEREK

Yeah. You and Sharon.

BOBBY

What if I don't believe in anything?

DEREK

You do.

I don't.

BOBBY

Yes you do.

DEREK

No, I don't.

BOBBY

Yes. You do!

DEREK

I'm telling you – I don't!

BOBBY

No? You don't believe in anything?

DEREK

No!

BOBBY

(Pause) I don't believe you.

DEREK

All right. What are your beliefs? What do you put your faith in?

BOBBY

Rubber ducks.

DEREK

Rubber ducks?

BOBBY

Yeah – rubber ducks.

DEREK

What – are they some new band or something?

BOBBY

No. Rubber ducks.

DEREK

Who are “rubber ducks”?

BOBBY

Not who! Rubber ducks!

DEREK

BOBBY

What are “rubber ducks”???

DEREK

Rubber ducks! Rubber ducks!!!

BOBBY

What the fuck are rubber ducks?!!

DEREK

(Stares at him – incredulous) Bert! Ernie! “Rubber duckie, you’re the one...!”

BOBBY

(Pause) You mean “rubber duckies”.

DEREK

Same difference.

BOBBY

I am too stoned for this. Why do you believe in rubber duckies?

DEREK

Don’t you read the papers? Ten years ago, a shipment of thousands of rubber ducks -

BOBBY

Rubber duckies.

DEREK

Whatever – were lost at sea enroute from China to Seattle. These ducks floated on the currents, making their way across the Pacific Ocean, all the way up to Alaska. Then they traveled along the coast until the Bering Straits. Now, some decided to stay and make their home in Alaska – which is very beautiful I hear. But the rest of the ducks pressed on, riding the currents. Forging their way across the icy tundra. Evading ferocious polar bears and briefly dallying with some penguins, until they reached Iceland. But for many the journey continued. South they went – like ducks do – into the North Atlantic. There, great storms batted them back and forth like... well, toys. But now, many years later, a small group of these unique travelers a currently bobbing in Boston Harbor... waiting patiently to get a table at Anthony’s Pier Four.

BOBBY

Okay. And these ducks figure into your personal belief system because... ?

DEREK

Think about it. Gods. Devils. Ouija boards. UFO's. The Loch Ness Monster. Even wood sprites! *(Pause)* Why not? Stranger things have happened.

BOBBY

(Looks at Derek, thinks and then drops to his hands and knees and starts looking through the clover.) Help me look. Come on! Help me look.

DEREK

(Still standing) I am. I haven't seen anything yet.

BOBBY

Get down here and help.

DEREK

No! I told you.

BOBBY

Come on! Get down here!

DEREK

No way!

BOBBY

I said get down here now! *(Grabs Derek's leg and pulls him into the clover.)*

DEREK

SHIT! Oh, you did NOT just do that! *(Struggles to get back up)* Are you insane?!

BOBBY

Help! Look!

DEREK

(Gets up and brushes himself off) I can't believe you fucking did that! Do you have any idea? Any clue what....? *(Pulls a clover off his pants)* Hey. Bobby? Look at this.

BOBBY

(Gets up and comes over) One. Two. Three.

DEREK

Four. *(They look at each other)* Cool.

BOBBY

Very cool. *(They stare at the clover for a moment)*

DEREK

I think our work here is done.

BOBBY

Be careful with it. Here – wrap it in this handkerchief

DEREK

I bet you believe in something now.

BOBBY

Maybe. Maybe there's enough good luck to go all the way around. Let's go. I need a beer.

DEREK

It is really beautiful country up here.

BOBBY

Yeah.

DEREK

(As the two leave the stage) But you are paying to clean my tux.

BOBBY

I know. I know!

DEREK

Do you have any idea what it's like to get grass stains out?!

BOBBY

I'll pay! I'll pay!

Exit.

The End