

# How To Nail A Client

By Pete Malicki

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This play was collaboratively written in a creative writing class.

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# **How To Nail A Client**

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Cast: Richard – husband, domineering, ego-centric, but intelligent and confident.  
Head of Sales

Margot – Richard’s wife, attractive but callous, trophy wife

Patrick – Richard’s gay boss. Reasonable and demure. Angry and hurt but driven to get the sale. Power over the others

Rodney – Patrick’s partner. Woman in the relationship. In love with Margot. Out of his depth. Emotionally lost. Personal trainer

Genevieve – prospective new client, elegant

Setting: An upper class dinner party at Patrick’s home. Patrick is the Creative Director of an advertising company, who has just hired Richard as Head of Sales. They are trying to impress a new client, Genevieve, who runs a chain of gyms.

## **Scene**

*The lights come up midway through a dinner party. Food is about to be served but some big news has just broken.*

Richard: (to Margot) You slept with *him*? (referring to Rodney)

Patrick: (to Rodney) You slept with *her*?

Richard: I knew he was your personal trainer but I didn’t realise just how damned personal his service was!

Patrick: You cheated on me with a *woman*? But you’re gay. *We’re* gay!

Margot: It just happened.

Rodney: It was an accident.

Patrick: I suppose you just fell on top of her and it released some latent sexual desire for women. Do you expect me to believe that, you buffoon?

Margot: It meant nothing.

Rodney: (*hesitant*) Less than nothing.

Richard: I always knew you were having an affair, Margot, but I didn’t think you’d go for a bloody poof!

Patrick: Do you have something against poofs, Richard? Because *this* poof just gave you a job!

Richard: Nothing against the homosexuals, Patrick, but I don't take kindly to them when they sleep with my wife.

Patrick: Nor do I, now you mention it. *(to Rodney)* How could you do it with a woman? I thought you were attracted to men.

Rodney: I am. I didn't mean it to happen. We just kind of, well, one day we were doing ab crunches and we made eye contact and before I knew it...

Richard: I think I'm going to be sick. *(to Margot)* What's your excuse?

Margot: Well he's very good looking. And he's fit as a sailor.

Richard: Oh, great analogy.

Patrick: Why did we spend fifty thousand dollars flying to Canada to get married if you've decided to turn straight two months after you get back?

Rodney: I'm so sorry, honey. I love you, you know that. It had been so long since we, you know, and she has the body of a twenty year old surfer boy.

Richard: Great. The gay guy who just shagged my wife thinks she looks like a bloke. I hope that makes you happy, Margot! Maybe we should ask these two to leave.

Patrick: No way. We have to give the impression of warmth and togetherness. Besides, I don't particularly want to leave them alone right now. Do You?

*The doorbell rings and everyone freezes.*

Patrick: Well, that's her. Let's put a lid on it for now and deal with it when we're done.

Richard: Don't be absurd. We can't do this now. Send her home.

Patrick: No way. This is the most important pitch Promo Plus has done all year and we have to nail this client. Suck it up and deal with it later.

*Patrick gets up to let Genevieve in.*

Rodney: *(to Margot)* Did it really mean nothing?

Margot: Why? Did it mean something to *you*?

*Genevieve enters with Patrick.*

Patrick: Everyone, this is Genevieve.

*She shakes hands with everyone and exchanges hellos.*

Richard: Pleased to meet you, Genevieve. I'm the new Head of Sales at Promo Plus.

Gen: Genevieve Dubois, Business Manager of Guns and Buns, the fastest growing fitness centre in New South Wales and the country's third largest gym chain.

Margot: Were we expecting you to have company today, Genevieve? We've catered for six.

Gen: Oh, the husband was supposed to be coming until I read his credit card statement; a week in a hotel downtown when he was supposed to be in China.

Richard: Who would cheat on a beautiful woman like yourself? I'd (*pointedly*) kick him out of the house if I were you.

Gen: It's nothing. And I'd rather not air my dirty laundry right now, if you don't mind. Let's do business.

Patrick: Genevieve, did I ever mention that Rodney is a personal trainer at Fitness First.

Gen: I'll bet I could convince you to work for us, Rodney. Five minutes and I could turn you.

Richard: I bet you could do it in two.

Patrick: We're all busy people. I'm going to let Richard to go straight ahead and give you his pitch.

Gen: Straight down to business, I like it. What have you got for me Richard?

Richard: Okay. Guns And Buns needs some serious marketing ammunition. There are lots of gyms around and you need a point of difference. Find a new demographic. Do something none of the others are doing. Promo Plus has designed a series of programs which will break serious ground into the alpha male market as well as the Gen Y trendies. We have created Guns at Dawn boot camp, Hot Cross Buns Pilates classes, Longer Legs step and stretch class. It's all about enhancing the brand you've already based your model on. Look at my wife here: she's loves a good workout.

Patrick: Oh yes, Margot *loves* working out, doesn't she Rodney?

Margot: I do. And your partner is very good, Patrick. You should be proud of how *hard* he works me.

Patrick: I'm sorry, that sounds a little bit like you're trying to say something without quite saying it. Do you want to clarify?

Richard: Okay, actually, Margot isn't the subject of this discussion. Promo Plus has some preliminary ideas for a brand overhaul. Improved logo, high-profile awareness-raising campaigns called Celebrity Buns and Celebrity Guns, better-targeted print advertising. Have a look at this folder.

*Richard passes Genevieve a folder, which she flicks through.*

Rodney: Margot, that thing we were talking about before Genevieve got here, I thought it was, um, quite nice, actually.

Margot: Oh yes, it was lovely.

Rodney: No, I mean... nice.

Patrick: Hun, excuse me, but you're distracting Genevieve. Why don't you guys talk about that movie you watched after she's left?

Gen: Oh, don't mind me. Multitasking queen. I do my best work on the treadmill.

Rodney: So do I!

Richard: Really, Rodney? You did it on the *treadmill*?

Rodney: I meant, that's how I get the clients fittest.

Richard: You mean the *fittest clients*?

Rodney: Look, I didn't mean to develop feelings for her. I'm sorry!

Richard: }Feelings!

Margot: }Feelings?

Patrick: (*to Gen*) He's talking about Celine Dion. Longest it's ever taken a gay man to fall in love with Celine.

Rodney: I'm not going to hide my feelings, Patrick. I was talking about Margot.

Richard: Holy bloody cow.

Gen: Alright! Look, your pitch is good, but I'm walking. I just discovered my husband is having an affair but I'm not letting that get in the way of my professionalism. If you can't keep it together during a business meeting I have no faith in your ability to deliver the professional level of services my gym needs to flourish in this market. Thanks for your time but no thanks.

Margot: Oh wonderful. There goes the bonus you promised us, Richard.

Richard: You're not sharing my commissions ever again. I'm kicking your boyish arse out of my house for good.

Gen: I'll see myself out.

*Genevieve starts walking off.*

Patrick: No, Genevieve. Wait.

Margot: (*to Richard*) You can't kick me out, Richard. I'm pregnant.

*Genevieve freezes.*

Richard: }You're *what*?

Rodney: }You're *what*?

Patrick: }You're *what*?

Gen: Maybe I'll just finish my wine.

*Genevieve returns to the table, sucked in by the situation.*

Richard: Exactly how pregnant are you? We haven't had sex in months.

Margot: Well, *you* haven't.

Patrick: Rodney, is this some sick way of finding that surrogate we wanted?

Rodney: Give me a little credit. You can't get pregnant the way we did it.

Richard: I think I'm going to be sick.

Margot: Oh, stop being a priss, Richard. This overblown gay meathead isn't the father.

Patrick: Dare I ask who is?

Margot: I don't even remember his name. I met him in a bar. We spent a romantic weekend together in the Travelodge in May.

Gen: Sorry, the where?

Margot: The Travelodge on City Rd.

Gen: In May, you say? Was his name Bill?

Margot: I'm not sure. Bill...? Bill...? It could have been Bill.

Gen: Tall, dark hair?

Margot: Yeah.

Gen: Did he have...

*Genevieve leans in and whispers in Margot's ear.*

Margot: Oh yes! That's definitely him.

Gen: That's my husband!

Richard: Ooh boy.

Patrick: Ooh boy indeed. Your wife has screwed not only my partner but my business.

Richard: Oh, so you're blaming me now? You're the one whose *gay* lover seduced my wife.

Gen: Gentlemen! Stop. This is perfect. The bastard's violated the terms of his pre-nup by getting her pregnant. I'm getting everything. Margot, will you get a DNA test?

Margot: I don't know. What do I get out of it?

Gen: *(to Richard and Patrick)* I'll give Promo Plus my business.

Patrick: Deal.

Margot: What do I get out of it?

Gen: How about a lifetime membership to Guns And Buns?

Margot: Deal.

*Margot, Patrick and Genevieve all shake hands.*

Rodney: What about me?

Richard: Yeah. What about us?

Patrick: Well, Rodney, you can sleep on the couch for the next month but as much as you deserve it I won't divorce you. Richard, you've done some good work here today so I'll let you borrow the company Lexus for client meetings.

Richard: Score.

Rodney: I guess I deserve that.

Gen: Excellent, well, pleasure doing business with you. I'd better get off and start the paperwork. Margot, I'll see you soon at the gym, okay?

*Genevieve moves to shake Margot's hand. Margot embraces her, enthusiastically. They both pull back, then slowly lean in and kiss. Richard's jaw drops.*

Patrick: Okay, well, on that note, the party's over. See you all later.

*Patrick ushers Genevieve and Margot offstage. He starts escorting Richard off too, who protests.*

Richard: Hey, but what am I supposed to do with my pregnant wife?

Patrick: Not sure mate. Good luck with that.

*Richard, Genevieve and Margot all leave.*

Rodney: That worked out pretty well, didn't it honey?

Patrick: No thanks to you! I should divorce you.

Rodney: But you got the client.

Patrick: I did.

Rodney: Can you ever forgive me?

Patrick: *(sighs)* Only if you leave Fitness First and bring all your clients to Guns and Buns. We need this campaign to be a success.

*They start walking off stage.*

Rodney: Okay, I can do that. But should I bring Margot across too?

Patrick: Only if you sign her up for six months.

Rodney: I think she'll want to stay with me for at least twelve after that.

Patrick: The things we do for business eh?

Rodney: The things we do for business.

*They exit.*