

'ROUND AND 'ROUND WE GO



A comedy/drama in eight scenes by
ALAN SAFIER

SAMPLE PAGES



Contact:

SUSAN SCHULMAN LITERARY AGENCY LLC

454 WEST 44TH ST., NEW YORK, NY 10036-5205

T: 212 713 1633 C: 917 488 0906 susan@schulmanagency.com

Reg. WGAe I326715

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WHERE: New York City

WHEN: this year

Dramatis Personae

SAM, 60s, Jewish, an acting teacher/coach, witty, caring, paternal, good-looking.

SHANE, mid- to late-20s, any race, acting student of Sam's, a bit of swagger, brash, confident in his talent and in his attractiveness.

VIVECA, mid-30s, any race, Shane's girlfriend, a scientist, smart, professional, attractive, tough, no-nonsense, dark hair.

WINSTON, 40–45, any race, average- to attractive-looking, medium height, maybe a little extra weight, sweet, nerdy, insecure, sexually questioning.

MITCH, 40s, Jewish, gay, tall, muscular, perhaps with a thick mustache, wearing a tank top and shorts that show off his muscularity, highly intelligent, aggressive.

MICHAEL, female, Jewish, Mitch's older sister by a few years, vulnerable, attractive, feminine, blonde or red hair.

LUKE, 45–50, any race, Michael's husband, in great shape for his age, immaculately groomed, very outgoing, gay but married to a woman.

MORGAN, 18, any race, better-than-average looks, shy, innocent and quiet, a little lost, gay.

Note: The pairs of Shane/Morgan, Viveca/Michael, and Winston/Luke (or Sam/Winston) can be played by the same actor, if desired.

'ROUND AND 'ROUND WE GO is a comedy/drama that explores a variety of adult relationships, sexual and non-sexual, between both men and women and men and men. It takes the unusual form of eight two-person scenes. With each scene, a new character is brought in to join the character introduced in the previous scene. The play examines such contemporary themes as platonic love, the feasibility of bisexuality, May–December romance, internet dating, struggling with sexual identity, self-esteem and open marriage.

Scene Breakdown

SCENE 1: "AN ACTOR PREPARES"
SAM & SHANE

SCENE 2: "THE LADIES MAN"
SHANE & VIVECA

SCENE 3: "WINSTON TASTES GOOD"
VIVECA & WINSTON

SCENE 4: "GAY JEWISH FAG PINKO"
WINSTON & MITCH

SCENE 5: "IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR"
MITCH & MICHAEL

SCENE 6: "BOYS' NIGHT OUT"
MICHAEL & LUKE

SCENE 7: "GUTEN MORGAN"
LUKE & MORGAN

SCENE 8: "MY LIFE IN ART"
MORGAN & SAM

SCENE 3: "WINSTON TASTES GOOD"
VIVECA & WINSTON

Two months later, at a Starbucks somewhere in the SoHo area of Manhattan. VIVECA is sitting at a table with a cup of something, looking around, waiting, sighing: she doesn't really want to be there. After a few beats, WINSTON, 40–45, average-looking, medium height, maybe a little extra weight, nerdy, insecure, sexually questioning, comes up to her table.

WINSTON

Hi. You're Viveca, am I right?

VIVECA

You are indeed, and you can call me Viv.

WINSTON

[HE sits.] Hi, Viv. I'm Winston.

VIVECA

Well, I certainly hope so.

WINSTON

[HE gets up again quickly.] Oh. Am I being gauche? Should I not have sat down yet?

VIVECA

No. Please. Sit. If you don't, I'm going to have neck issues for a week.

WINSTON

[HE sits again.] So ... here we are.

VIVECA

Again.

WINSTON

Have we met before? Oh! Haha, yes. "Again." *[An uncomfortable pause.]* Am I ... what I said I was?

VIVECA

Yes, I guess you come as advertised. You're somewhat attractive, like you said. You're in ... *fairly* good shape, like you said.

WINSTON

I work out. Occasionally.

VIVECA

Clear-ish skin.

WINSTON

Got that from mother.

VIVECA

Strong teeth.

WINSTON

Never said anything about that but thank you.

VIVECA

Your eyebrows need a little curating.

WINSTON

They do? Really?

VIVECA

And I wouldn't exactly say you were "tall"...

WINSTON

No?

VIVECA

I mean, there's nothing wrong with you. You're not a gnome or anything. I just wouldn't look at you and say to myself, "My goodness, that is some rangy dude!"

WINSTON

I don't know. Bessie Shimkus once said she thought I was tall.

VIVECA

Bessie Shimkus?

WINSTON

A friend of my grandmother's.

VIVECA

I see. And how tall was Ms. Shimkus?

WINSTON

Four-ten.

VIVECA laughs, then WINSTON joins in.

You know, I've never done this before.

VIVECA

[Joking.] What? You've never been to Starbucks?

WINSTON

No, no, no. I mean ... this ... you know.

VIVECA

I never would have guessed.

WINSTON

You're probably an old hand at it, aren't you?

VIVECA

Yes, Winston, that's me: an old, *old* hand. From the Rio Grande.

WINSTON

Oh, wow! I've never met anyone from Texas before!

VIVECA

I see. Well, there's always a first time.

WINSTON

I have to confess something: I am nervous as anything. I've got sweat pouring out of ... every place sweat can pour out of.

VIVECA

Relax, Winston. You're doing fine and I won't eat you.

WINSTON

Well, that's a relief! I'm glad you like mature men, anyway.

VIVECA

Yes, it's a new day. I've sworn off coltish, studly, toothsome, sinewy, breathtakingly gorgeous guys for a while. I mean, I'm not looking to date someone who's Medicare-eligible or anything, but a few miles on the odometer is perfectly acceptable. And what about you? What kind of women do you prefer?

WINSTON

I don't know. I haven't really thought about it for a long time. I was in a relationship until recently and I haven't been with a woman for maybe 15 years.

VIVECA

You mean you haven't been with *another* woman for 15 years.

WINSTON

No, I mean I haven't been with a woman. Not since I met Peter.

VIVECA

Dear God, please tell me this is not happening.

WINSTON

Oh, I'm not gay. Please don't think *that*. I'm bi.

VIVECA laughs ironically.

What.

VIVECA

You wouldn't happen to have a spare bottle of strychnine on you, would you? Just a few drops'll do.

WINSTON

It's not that bad, is it Viv?

VIVECA

Don't call me that! My name is Viveca.

WINSTON

Okay, okay, I'm sorry. Viveca.

VIVECA

Tell me something ... *Winst*. Is it all right if I call you ... "*Winst*"?

WINSTON

Not really, no ...

VIVECA

Tell me something ... *Winst*: do I have a sign painted on my forehead that says, "Safe Haven for Homos — All Ye Enter"?

WINSTON

I told you, I'm not a homo.

VIVECA

Oh, please. I've seen this movie before. Correction: I've seen this *Jerry Lewis* movie before.

WINSTON

Uch. Can't stand him. Not at all funny.

VIVECA

Well, isn't this cozy. We've finally found some common ground.

WINSTON

I'm thinking this is not going the way you hoped and I hoped it was going to go, is it?

VIVECA

Very astute, *Winst*.

WINSTON

So now what?

VIVECA

Well, in a perfect world, you go off and meet some fabulous, wealthy guy who looks like Channing Tatum and live happily ever after — and I join the Navy Seals.

WINSTON

I'm not sure I want that. The Channing Tatum thing, I mean. I don't know *what* I want anymore.

VIVECA

Oh, Winst, Winst, Winst How did you ever get that god-awful name, anyway? Were your parents admirers of Churchill or something?

WINSTON

No, they named me after their cigarette of choice.

VIVECA

You're fortunate they didn't smoke Virginia Slims.

WINSTON

I'm gonna change it.

VIVECA

Okay, maybe "god-awful" was a tad harsh.

WINSTON

Oh no, I've been wanting to change it for quite some time now.

VIVECA

Why's that?

WINSTON

I need to make a fresh start. Invent a new me. I'm sick of the old one.

VIVECA

I'm sorry. What would you change it to?

WINSTON

Alphonso.

VIVECA

Alphonso. I don't know, Winst. That's pretty out there. You know, I'm trying to picture someone named "Winston" as a cute little infant, drooling formula and peeing all over his onesie. It sounds more like a dirty old man in Central Park handing out Necco Wafers to juveniles.

WINSTON

You're funny, Viveca.

VIVECA

Thanks. Please, call me "Viv."

WINSTON

I'm so confused right now.

VIVECA

I know. I'm sorry. *Mea culpa. Mea maxima culpa.* You're sweet, Alph.

WINSTON

So I've heard. Many times. Usually followed by a "but."

VIVECA

No, no. No "but." *Only ...* I don't see a romantic thing happening here, Alph.

WINSTON

I knew it. I never should have told you I was bi. If it helps, you can call me "Alph" any time you want.

VIVECA

I don't think your name's the issue here. I've been with too many men who are just too much work, and I am plum wore out. I've got to be with someone who doesn't need my help more than I need his.

WINSTON

So this is a no-go.

VIVECA

I think maybe it needs to be.

WINSTON

Story of my life.

VIVECA

Oh, Winston. Don't say that. Please. You make me feel bad.

WINSTON

Hey, what if you're just a friend first? You know, a dinner pal? A theatre buddy?

VIVECA

A fag hag.

WINSTON

I'm not a fag and you're not a hag.

VIVECA

Nice of you to say. No, I just need a little vacay from the gender-confused world, you know?

WINSTON

What's the big deal about us going to dinner or a movie once in a while? Do you *enjoy* eating alone every night?

VIVECA

Of course not.

WINSTON

And it's always nice to have someone to pick apart a movie with when you're walking home after.

VIVECA

Yes. It is.

WINSTON

Hey! Do you like documentaries?

VIVECA

I love documentaries.

WINSTON

Me, too. You know, the Film Forum is walking distance from here ...

VIVECA

I *love* seeing docs in a theater.

WINSTON

Me, too! And they're showing that one, what's it called again, about those three British actors ...

VIVECA

No. Please. Nothing with actors for a while.

WINSTON

Oh. Okay. Well, maybe some other time then.

VIVECA

Some other time. [*Off WINSTON's look.*] No, honest. Some other time.

WINSTON

Great! Send your number to my Tinder and I'll call you. Or I'll send you mine. Or we'll email. No, wait, I don't have your email ...

VIVECA

Winston, why don't you just give me your number now?

WINSTON looks for something to write on, but nothing is available, so he writes the number on the back of his hand, then shows it to HER.

You gonna cut it off and give it to me?

WINSTON

Oh, my God! I told you I was nervous.

He looks around again and finally finds a napkin on the floor. HE writes down his number and hands it to HER.

VIVECA

Much better. Thank you. And I *will* call you. Promise. Not tomorrow, but I will.

WINSTON

I'll be there when you do.

VIVECA

Take care of yourself 'til then, okay Alph?

WINSTON

You bet, Viv. [*HE starts to leave.*]

VIVECA

Oh. Just do one thing between now and then. For me?

WINSTON

Anything.

VIVECA

Curate those eyebrows?

WINSTON

I will. I promise. *[HE turns to leave.]* Just as soon as I figure out what it means.

WINSTON exits. VIVECA sits back down.

Lights out.

Music: "Winston Tastes Good Like a Cigarette Should" TV jingle.

END OF SCENE 3