

Checking Out

An original two-person short scene based on Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*.

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Humbert manages to fool people into thinking that he is an overly protective father.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

HUMBERT, a literature professor who is guardian to Dolores Haze (Lolita).

CUSTODIAN, a curious lady working in a hotel.

SCENE

One morning at The Enchanted Hunters, Humbert rushes back to his room to find a janitor picking up Lolita's underclothes. Lolita is waiting at the lobby for Humbert to return.

HUMBERT

Good morning, ma'am.

CUSTODIAN

Good morning, sir. I was tidying up your room, and could not help noticing these *ado-rable* girl clothes. Sir— if I may ask, do you have a child with you?

HUMBERT

Why yes of *course*, I am traveling with my daughter.

CUSTODIAN

Some of these clothes look, oh— a little racy, if you know what I mean, sir.

HUMBERT, *chuckling*

Well, she is going through her rebellious stage, and will only wear clothes she buys herself. It drives me *mad*.

CUSTODIAN

Oh, all teenagers do. Where is she?

HUMBERT

She is in the lobby, waiting for me to finish packing.

CUSTODIAN

May I see her? I have a young boy too, but you know, he's off to the navy. Haven't seen him in *years*! How I miss him!

HUMBERT

Ah, the navy— a brave boy you have, indeed. Well, uh, my daughter is rather shy in front of strangers, and she doesn't like being stared at.

CUSTODIAN

Ow, that's so very unfortunate. You know, sir, I haven't seen a young fellow in this god-awful place for so long. Most parents nowadays take their children to the city. Dreadful! God! I should've never said yes to my son. Leaving me like *that*!

HUMBERT

I understand, ma'am. I, too, fear that one day Lo— my daughter will escape— I mean, leave me behind. An old man with nothing to treasure!

CUSTODIAN

Oh, sir. I just wish these kids never grow up.

HUMBERT

I absolutely agree! Only if she can stay forever young and sweet, so I— (*pauses*)

CUSTODIAN

Sir?

HUMBERT, *smiling politely*

Never mind, ma'am. Thank you for your work, ma'am, here— (*handing the custodian some bills*) I'm afraid I must go now. Can't keep her waiting!