

Armchair Confidential

ACT I, Scene 1

(NEWSCASTER appears lit by a spotlight.)

NEWSCASTER

The following program contains scenes of graphic violence. Viewer discretion is advised.

(Spotlight dims to black. A beat, then...<BLAM!> - a jarring musical shot sounds as three figures appear, lit by a flashbulb *FLASH* of light. The figures (played by MALCOLM, PASCAL and DONNA) are frozen in a macabre tableau: one figure slicing the throat of another with one figure already dead on the floor. Darkness, a beat, then, <BLAM!/*FLASH*> two figures (HARLEY and MAYOR) appear in a second tableau: an attacker swinging an axe at a screaming victim. Darkness, a beat, then, <BLAM!/*FLASH*> a figure (TEUTA) appears carrying a garbage can with human limbs poking out from under the lid. Darkness, a beat, then, <BLAM!> all three tableaux are illuminated. This time, the figures break character and look directly into the audience with puzzlement.

1a. Why the Hell Are You All Still Here?)

CHORUS

WHY THE HELL ARE YOU ALL STILL HERE?
DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T WARN YOU
WHEN THE STORY MAKES YOU SICK

TEUTA

THE FELLA CLEARLY SAID

MALCOLM

THERE'D BE GRISLY SCENES AHEAD

CHORUS

YOU FIGGER THAT A TRIGGER WARNING
OUGHT TO DO THE TRICK

WHO CAN TELL WHY YOU'RE ALL STILL HERE?

PASCAL

NEED SOME DRAMA TO DISTRACT YOU FROM THE
BLEAK AND BLACK ABYSS?

HARLEY

D'JA COME TO RECONNOITER?

DONNA

GET ROPEDED IN BY A FRIEND?

CHORUS

COMPELLED BY SCHADENFREUDE?
LORDY, HELP ME COMPREHEND
WHO'D DELIBERATELY SUBJECT THEMSELVES TO THIS?

(As if in answer, <BLAM!>, LUCY appears in a fourth pool
of light revealing...)

SETTING:

Lucy's Living Room.

(LUCY is planted in front of the TV. She wears flannel
pyjamas and outdated glasses. She's using a tablecloth
for a blanket. Four shadowy figures appear around her.
THEY direct their lines to Lucy, who ignores them.

1b) You're Probably Dying.)

FIGURE #1
STOMACH KNOTS AGAIN

FIGURE #2
YOU'RE PROB'LY DYING

FIGURE #3
SHOULDA BOUGHT ROLAIDS
SHOULDA GONE TRAVELLING

FIGURE #4
DING! ANOTHER TEXT FROM WORK

FIGURE #1
RESTLESS THOUGHTS AGAIN

FIGURE #2
DOGS BARKIN'

FIGURE #4
DING!

FIGURE #2
PROB'LY A BURGLAR

FIGURE #4
DING!

FIGURE #2
PROB'LY A KILLER

FIGURE #4
DING!

FIGURE #3
SHOULDA CALLED BILL
TO FIX THE LOCK

FIGURE #1
THERE'S ICE CREAM IN THE FREEZER

FIGURE #3
SHOULDA BOUGHT GROCERIES!

FIGURE #1
OR MAKE YOURSELF A CAESAR

ALL FIGURES
CLAMATO COUNTS AS A
VEGETABLE!

FIGURE #2
PROBABLY DYING

FIGURE #1
JUST A LITTLE ICE CREAM

FIGURE #3
SHOULDA LEARNED SPANISH

FIGURE #4
DING!

(LUCY turns on the TV. The shadowy figures recede into the darkness.)

NEWSCASTER

The killing spree continues in Barnabus Bay. A third body was discovered this morning - dismembered and reconstructed into a set of grotesque novelty lamps: two fishnet stocking leg lamps, a pair of less conventional fishnet arm lamps, and a fifth creation which, based on crime scene photos, is an affront to both human decency and home decor. Police are at the scene.

SETTING: The scene of the crime.

(Chief of Police, Mae SHEPHERD strides past the police tape. Officer CAL Sutter tails mousily behind. One look at the gory scene and he immediately turns to leave.)

CAL

Nope!

SHEPHERD

I don't have time for this. Let's see a little backbone, Sutter.

CAL

I think I see one by the radiator.

SHEPHERD

You were trained for this.

CAL

I got my certificate through correspondence. I work at a pet store three days a week.

(SHEPHERD examines the leg lamp shade.)

SHEPHERD

Hold on--

CAL (panicking)

I've given out four speeding tickets.

SHEPHERD

Get over here.

CAL

Last winter, I reupholstered the chairs at the station.

SHEPHERD

It's another cipher. Get me some light in here.

(CAL pulls the cord on the leg lamp. It lights up. SHEPHERD stares at CAL. CAL realizes the impropriety of what he's done and slowly, without breaking SHEPHERD's withering gaze, yanks the cord again.)

NEWSCASTER

With no solid leads, the police are completely in the dark.

(The light is extinguished. They vanish in sync with "...in the dark". The CHORUS appear wearing police hats, their faces eerily lit by their flashlights. **(1c. Stay Calm As You Can.)**)

CHORUS

STAY CALM AS YOU CAN, AND YET
 THINK OF EVERY LIVIN' STRANGER
 AS A LIKELY MORTAL THREAT
 BUT MOST OF ALL BE VERY
 EXCEPTIONALLY WARY
 WHEN ANSWERING THE DOOR!

(Lights up on Lucy's condo. There is a loud knock at
 Lucy's door.)

ALDO

Lucy Treyer!

LUCY

Aah!

ALDO

This is the police! Come out with your hands up!

(LUCY races to the door and unlocks it. It's ALDO,
 wearing his baby in a carrier. LUCY peers down the hall
 and ushers Aldo in before any nosy neighbours appear.)

LUCY

I'm gonna kill you!

ALDO

Oh. My. God. The glasses!

LUCY

Yeah yeah, I broke my --

ALDO

-- you had those back in Miss B's class!

LUCY

It's on the list.

ALDO

Is that a tablecloth?

LUCY

What? My blankets were far away. *(beat)* Are you gonna introduce us?

ALDO

Lucy, meet Isabella. Izzy, this is Daddy's dearest, *oldest* friend.

LUCY

Not *that* old.

(ALDO sniffs the air.)

ALDO

I think she had a blow-out. Where should I...?

LUCY

Whatever. Clear a spot.

(ALDO shifts a pile of LUCY's accounting files from the counter and checks the diaper. LUCY sits back down in front of the TV.)

ALDO

It's just me and the kid til Friday. Hella's in Sweden for a conference.

LUCY *(already not paying attention)*

Mmm.

ALDO

You been out lately?

(ALDO finds that the diaper was clean. Confused, HE tries to identify the smell. HE picks a bowl off the counter and tries to identify the stinking contents.)

LUCY

They found a third body.

ALDO

Canned salmon and...ketchup?

LUCY

(caught up with the television)

A 36 year old elementary school teacher. Geez! *(Registering Aldo)*. What? It's breakfast.

ALDO

It's one pm.

LUCY

Who asked you?

ALDO *(still looking for the source of the smell)*
When's the last time you changed the kitty litter?

LUCY

Captain Whiskers died two months ago.

ALDO

No! I'm sorry. *(beat)* So why is the litter box full?

LUCY

It's on the list!

(ALDO picks up one of Lucy's many "To-Do Lists".)

ALDO

I see that. *(reading)* "Buy glasses; clean litter; do last three years of taxes - LUCY, you of all people...!"

LUCY

I'll get to it.

ALDO *(continues reading)*

"Email Bill about rusty water" - *Still!?!?*

LUCY

Enh.

ALDO *(continues reading)*

"See shrink; quit job; get better job; get in shape; find a partner; buy milk..."

LUCY

I bought milk! Scratch that off the list.

ALDO

(beat) Look. I know we left things in a crap place --

LUCY

You figure the killer's local?

ALDO

I'm worried about ya, Luce.

LUCY

Something about it's bothering me.

ALDO

A schoolteacher was made into a set of lamps.

LUCY

I keep going over the numbers.

ALDO

We haven't talked since March. You mind turning this off?

(LUCY flips through her notebook, ignoring Aldo completely. Spotlight on Lucy. Vibraphone underscoring and lighting effects represent her complex thought process and superhuman computational powers. ALDO slowly vanishes into the darkness.)

LUCY

The first body was found on June 21st...sixth month,
twenty-first day...

ALDO

This isn't healthy.

LUCY

...the second victim was July 5th...*(mumbling)*
5th of the 7th...then again on the thirtieth...

ALDO

(Fading into the periphery)
You need to get out of the house.

LUCY

Six...twenty-one...seven, five, seven, thirty...

(Lights back up.)

ALDO

Did you hear a word I just said?

LUCY

I'm so close. I can feel it!

ALDO

Wake up and smell the ketchup and canned salmon! You gotta shake off the cobwebs. Take a class. Get a haircut. Meet someone.

LUCY

Oh My GOD! Enough already! How'ja like if I barged into *your* house? Put *your* shit under the microscope?

ALDO

I don't need a microscope! Your shit can be easily observed by the naked eye!

LUCY

Yeah? Well keep your nose out of it!

ALDO

Not to be a broken record but my cousin Harmony is *still* single and I can tell you she's --

(Lucy retreats under the table cloth.)

LUCY

Aarrrgghh!

(2. What Are the Chances?)

ALDO
 WHAT ARE THE CHANCES
 YOU'LL SPARK A FLAME--

LUCY
 C'mon!

WITH NO FLINT IN THE GAME?

LUCY
 Really?

ALDO
 IT GETS OLD
 RUBBING A STICK IN THE COLD
 AND WISHIN'

LUCY
 Eww.

ALDO
 YOU NEED SOME TINDER
 WHAT ARE THE CHANCES
 YOU'LL LAND A BITE?

LUCY
 I just--

ALDO
 SWIPING LEFT

LUCY
 Can I--

ALDO
 OUT OF SIGHT?

LUCY
 Listen --

ALDO
 IT TAKES CHARM AND ALLURE

TO ASSURE A GOOD FISHIN' TRIP
 BUT IF YOU'RE SCARED OF TAKING CHANCES
 THE ODDS YOU'LL FIND ROMANCE IS ZIP!

(LUCY snaps. SHE snatches the garbage bag out of Aldo's hands and dumps the contents onto the floor.)

LUCY

AAAAAAAAAAAAARGH!!!

YOU'RE REALLY DRY-HUMPIN'
 MY LAST NERVE
 WITH YOUR BULLCRAP HALLMARK
 PATRONIZING
 CHICKEN FRIGGIN SOUP FOR THE
 SOOOOOOUL PLATITUDES!

FUNNY - I NEVER THOUGHT TO
 "JERSEY UP AND JOIN THE GAME"
 SO THOUGHTFUL!
 SO NICE!
 THIS UNSOLICITED ADVICE
 FROM THE POMPOUS ASS WHO THINKS MY
 ATTITUDE'S TO BLAME!

YOU GOT SOME BALLS, ALDO,
 TO WALTZ IN SPOUTING
 "EVERY DAY'S AN EMPTY PAGE"
 I WROTE THE BOOK ON EMPTINESS BUT
 WHAT DO I KNOW?
 SO, HUSH UP,
 CUT THE CHATTER,
 THE MARRIED MAN'S GOT THOUGHTS ON THE
 MATTER!
 TEACH ME HOW TO QUIT THE STATUS QUO!

DON'T YOU KNOW EVERY DAY
 YOU LEAVE YOUR HOME
 YOU THROW OPEN
 THE DOOR TO DANGERS?
 TO SWEATY PALMS,
 HUMILIATION,
 AND AWKWARD TALK WITH STRANGERS
 THE BODY SHAME AND ASPARTAME
 THAT WEAR A PERSON THIN
 YOU BRAVE AN EFFIN' TIDAL WAVE
 WHEN YOU LET THE OUTSIDE IN

DON'T YOU KNOW EVERY TIME YOU
 OPEN YOUR HEART
 YOU DELIBERATELY
 DROP YOUR DEFENCES?

A DAILY DOSE OF FAIRY TALES
 CAN DISTRACT YOU
 FROM LOVE'S EXPENSES
 AND WHO CAN BANK ON COMMON SENSE
 WHEN LONELY HEARTS
 COMMINGLE?

READ THE STATISTICS, ALDO
 YOU'LL BE SHOCKED TO DISCOVER
 THE CHANCES ARE 3 OUT OF 5
 IF I'M KILLED,
 I'LL BE DONE IN BY A LOVER
 SO THE ONLY SENSIBLE CHOICE
 TO KEEP MY POTENTIAL ASSAILANTS
 AT BAY
 IS TO STAY
 PERPETUALLY SINGLE!

(Spent, LUCY collapses in front of the TV.)

ALDO

Don't you think that's a bit...dramatic?

LUCY

Shush. They're bringing out the body!

ALDO

I don't want --

LUCY

Shhhh!

(LUCY finds the remote and unmutes the news.)

NEWSCASTER

...neighbours watch from behind the tape as paramedics exit
 1276 Ralston Boulevard.

LUCY

1276...

ALDO

Lucy-

(Lights dim on Aldo as LUCY concentrates - represented by
 vibraphone ostinato and lighting effects as before.)

LUCY

The first murder was at 801 Erikson!

ALDO

This doesn't matter!

LUCY

Then...1824 McKercher.

ALDO (in the distance)

I'm your pal. Listen to me!

LUCY

1276...801...1824...

(Lights up suddenly.)

LUCY

Aldo, I've got it! The pattern - I - I'm a genius!

ALDO

Lucy --

LUCY

Pack your bags!

ALDO

What?

LUCY

You said Hella's gone for a few days?

ALDO

Yeah, she's been pumping breast milk so much her nipples are like -

LUCY

Ergh!!! No! Okay! You wanna get me out of the house? Let's do this! Let's go to Barnabus Bay! You and me! And fine, the baby can tag along.

ALDO

Whoawhoawhoa that is NOT what I --

LUCY

I can't believe we're gonna solve a murder!

ALDO

I refuse to --

LUCY

You want me to take a chance? Flip a coin. Heads: I sign up for some stupid ...whatever...speed dating thing. Tails: you drive me to Barnabus Bay and I get two days to solve an honest to god mystery. It would be so much FUN! When's the last time you had fun?

ALDO

I have fun! My life is fun!

LUCY

I bet. Tracking baby bowel movements. Comparing car seat brands.

ALDO

That's not fair, I--

LUCY

Come on! What's the worst thing that could happen?

(LUCY accidentally turns on the TV again.)

NEWSCASTER

- grotesque, dismembered victims, discovered with severed --

LUCY

Heads?...

(LUCY quickly turns the TV off.)

...or Tails?

(5. What are the Chances - Outro)

LUCY

WHAT ARE THE CHANCES WE'LL CRACK THE CASE?

ALDO

YOU'RE REALLY DRY HUMPIN' MY LAST NERVE, LUCY!

LUCY

LIVIN' LARGE!

GIVIN' CHASE!

ALDO

I CAN'T

UP AND LEAVE LIKE THAT

LUCY

THANKS FRIEND, FOR THE ENDLESS INSPIRATION

ALDO

I NEVER SAID "LET'S PLAN A VIGILANTE VACATION!"

LUCY

SO HERE'S TO TAKIN' CHANCES

ALDO

WHEN I SAID "RISK" I WAS THINKING MAYBE
SENSUAL ADVANCES

LUCY

JUST PACK ENOUGH DIAPERS FOR YOU AND THE BABY

ALDO

LUCY,

LUCY

ALDO, BUCKLE UP!

ALDO

YOU'RE AN ASSHOLE!

LUCY

Call it!

(ALDO flips the coin. Lights out on the musical button.)

ACT I, Scene 2

Over darkness, we hear overlapping conversations and bossa nova played from a cheap speaker system. Lights up on a modest community centre. There is a bulletin board filled with notices for dog walkers, an audition sheet for a community theatre production, a poster advertising the foul supper to raise funds for the new church roof, and so on. There are Rice Krispies squares on a table and a mint green coffee urn from the 70s beside the paper cups, sugar cubes, and Creamo. Men and women mingle. An EMCEE takes the mic. LUCY stands off to the side.

EMCEE

Welcome! I see a lot of familiar faces out there - hey Frank. You all know the drill. Four minutes per conversation, and we're gonna be real strict there. The quilters booked the room for 4:30 and *They Are Punctual*. All right! Have fun, lovebirds!

(6a. The Game's Afoot!)

LUCY

ANOTHER TABLE IN ANOTHER DIVE
 A LOUSY HAND, A BRAIN IN OVERDRIVE
 A CONVERSATION OFF THE CUFF
 ANOTHER SHARK WHO CALLS YOUR BLUFF
 ANOTHER VICTIM OF THE GAME

(Bell rings. The song becomes a tango.)

LUCY (Cont'd)

A LITTLE JOKE, A FLIRTY FURTIVE LOOK
 THE MASTERSTROKE AS PAWN DEFEATS THE ROOK
 ANOTHER CHECK, ANOTHER MATE,
 ANOTHER FALLING OUT WITH FATE
 ANOTHER VICTIM OF THE GAME

BACHELOR 1

You know how much a polar bear weighs? Me neither - but it breaks the ice.

BACHELOR 2 (CAL)

I'm a part-time police officer, part-time pet store clerk. So far, the only thing I've put behind bars are hamsters, rabbits, chinchillas-

BACHELOR 3

-Are you divorced? You look divorced.

BACHELOR 4

I'm really sorry. It's not you. I laugh when I'm nervous.
(laughs) It's obnoxious, I know. *(laughs harder)* Ironically, I'm really a very sad person. *(laughs very hard)*

EMCEE

Okaaay! Bold and beautiful Barnabus Bay bachelors and bachelorettes, you heard the bell!

(The bachelors rotate again revealing ALDO!)

LUCY

Hey Sailor.

ALDO

I'm not at all comfortable with this.

LUCY

We flipped a coin, fair and square. We *both* won, so *I* do your stupid speed dating thing, and *you* help me solve the murder.

ALDO

If you emptied your dead cat's litter box, the coin wouldn't have landed perfectly on its edge.

LUCY

If you knew how to flip a coin like any normal human, it wouldn't have gone flying across the room.

ALDO

I'm married! I can't be here.

LUCY

If your wife wouldn't understand you driving a couple hours north to go speed dating for the sake of a murder investigation, you two have serious problems.

ALDO

Lucy!

LUCY

85% of serial killers are single men. If we're lucky (*hushed*) the murderer could be here right now.

ALDO

You've refused to make a Grumbler profile because it's too "sketchy".

LUCY

Soak up what you can. When we get back to the hotel, I'll make a huge murder wall with notes and pictures of victims and suspects and we'll connect it with yarn and --- Aaaa! This is so much fun!!!

ALDO (unenthused)

Wheeee.

LUCY

Our time's almost up.

ALDO

Did we match?

(Bell rings.)

LUCY

All right! Think of the baby as a prop. If they think you're a nice guy, these women will open up about anything!

ALDO

I *am* a nice guy!

LUCY

Focus, Watson! The game's afoot!

(Dance break. LUCY tangoes with zeal.)

(6b. The Game's Afoot! Outro)

LUCY (With a hint of a French accent)
 Good evening! The name is...Eloise.

(Lucy switches partners and sashays across the stage.)
 A member of city council you say? Ooooh! Tell me more!

NEWSCASTER

There's been a development in Barnabus Bay.

(ALDO awkwardly dances by with his own partner)

ALDO

So, uh what were you up to last Tuesday between six and eight pm?

(LUCY tangoes past.)

LUCY

Smooth.

NEWSCASTER

This brings the death toll up to four.

LUCY

ANOTHER MURDER AND ANOTHER TWIST
 ANOTHER SUSPECT ADDED TO THE LIST
 EXPOSING WHAT, AND WHERE, AND WHOM
 WAS IT PLUM WITH THE PIPE
 IN THE BILLIARD ROOM?

NEWSCASTER

Details are coming in now.

LUCY

ANOTHER VICTIM!, BUT -
 THE GAAAAAAAAME'S AFOOT!
 THE GAME'S AFOOT!
 THE GAME'S AFOOT!
 THE GAME'S...

NEWSCASTER

A foot was discovered on the beach this morning.

ACT I, Scene 3

SETTING:

Barnabus Bay City Hall. A quaint and clean office, though woefully out of date. In contrast to the usually sleepy proceedings, the chamber is in pandemonium. City councilors jabber over each other in a confused and aggravated jumble. MAYOR calls them to order.

MAYOR

Thank you for coming! Is everyone here?

HARLEY

Jack's held up at the station but he said go ahead.

MAYOR

All right then. (*bangs gavel*). Council's in session. First order of business is... (*consults notes*)

TEUTA

Are you flippin' kidding me?

MAYOR

There's a procedure.

TEUTA

There's a man's foot! Sawed off at the ankle!

MALCOLM

It was just a few steps from my front door. Ten feet!

DONNA

No!!! Ten? I thought it was just the one foot!

MAYOR

Please! There is Only. One. Foot!

HARLEY

Wendy-Jo Parson's poodle found it. Dropped it in front of Wendy-Jo like it was a tennis ball.

MAYOR

It's all very shocking, but --

MALCOLM

This is unacceptable! I demand to know what the police are doing about it!

HARLEY

Whose foot was it?

TEUTA

Look out for the poor schmuck with a limp.

PASCAL

Can we stop talking about this? I have a thing about feet!

MAYOR

We're all very upset about our friends and neighbours who've passed on --

MALCOLM

Passed on? There's a serial killer on the loose!

MAYOR

Let's not jump to conclusions.

HARLEY

They found Judge Atkins with scissors and a handful of pencils stickin' out of his back. Like a goshdarn porcupine! They showed it on the news!

MAYOR

Accidental death has not been completely ruled out-

PASCAL

Dotty DuTemple was force-fed a mop!

MAYOR

Dotty was a very unhappy woman. Isn't it possible that maybe--

ALL but MAYOR (*ad lib, speaking over each other*)
 Wait! What are you trying to say that Dotty did this to herself? This is ridiculous! There's a killer out there!...

MAYOR

Fine! Yes! We've got a bit of a murderer issue! But let's keep some perspective. A psychopathic serial killer is the *least* of our problems!

TEUTA

(*beat*) I beg your pardon?

MAYOR

I've been Mayor for nigh on ten years! I'm a fourth generation Barnabus Bayan. This township relies on tourist dollars. Our restaurants! Our hotels! Our shops! They're the lifeblood of our community.

MALCOLM

He's right! It should be high season, but the hotel's empty as a hen house on wing night.

TEUTA

I had to fire half my staff. Who do you figure's stuck on dish duty? This guy! (*indicating herself*)

MAYOR

If some sensationalist news story scares folks off, I tell you, we are all *dead in the water!*

PASCAL

Any tourist shows up, *that's* where we'll find him.

MAYOR

The police are hard at work. There'll be an arrest any day now. In the meantime, we need to change the headline.

ALL but MAYOR (*ad lib, speaking over each other*)
Change the headline? What in the Sam heck does he mean by that? I've got half a mind to leave town...

MAYOR

Anyone who came to my one-man play last year knows I have a gift for creative writing.

TEUTA

Anyone who read your last budget review knows the same...

MAYOR

I've got a script for a TV spot here. It highlights the charms of Barnabus Bay: a golden beachfront, a vibrant community --

TEUTA (*completing the thought*)

A man's foot. Sawed off at the ankle.

HARLEY

What do you want from us?

MAYOR

Take a script and pass it on.

DONNA

I'm no actor.

MAYOR

Okay! Explore the space, people.

PASCAL

"I work a thankless job."

HARLEY

"My husband Jerry says I'm always tired."

DONNA

"My daughter is glued to her cat. Phone help."

TEUTA

Wait - what???

MAYOR

Wanna try that again, Donna?

DONNA

Sorry, I get flustered. "Help...My daughter, Cat...is glued to her phone." Ohhh! That makes more sense.

MAYOR

Keep going!

MALCOLM

"My ulcer is the size of a Buick."

ALL (*in unison*)

"I wish I could get away from it all."

MAYOR

Star wipe - Star wipe - violins swell! Va-va-va-VUMMM!

MALCOLM

Who plays the violin?

HARLEY

Ronnie Hoffman's boy takes oboe lessons...

TEUTA

Oboe. Who wakes up and says, "I think I'll play oboe?"

MAYOR

A figure appears. Warm, unassuming. Like your favourite old

moth-eaten sweater, and...take it away!

(beat)

Donna!

DONNA

Wait - *I'm* the old moth-eaten sweater?

MAYOR

You're the old moth-eaten sweater. And - Action!

DONNA

This is just a read-though, right?

MAYOR

Action!!!

(7. In Barnabus Bay)

DONNA

A STONE'S THROW NORTH
FROM THE SMOG AND THE BUSTLE
A COZY OASIS AWAITS YOU

MAYOR

Crossfade!

PASCAL

AWAY FROM THE HASSLE
THE FUSS AND THE HUSTLE

ALL

WE HAPPILY OPEN OUR
HEAVENLY GATES TO YOU

MAYOR

THAT'S LUANNE HINKLE'S SHOP
THEY'RE AN ANTIQUE RESTORER
ESTABLISHED BY HER GREAT, GREAT, GREAT
GRANDPA BEFORE 'ER

HARLEY

UP THERE'S THE FIVE AND DIME
DO YOU GET THE FEELIN'
YOU'RE BACK IN TIME?

MAYOR and DONNA

THAT'S LIFE
IN BARNABUS BAY

DONNA

OUR DOWNTOWN'S A DREAM
AND THE FOLKS ARE DISARMING

MAYOR

NAW, NIX THAT WORD,
WE'LL FIX THAT WORD
THE UNDERTONE'S ALARMING
OUR BRAND IS "QUAINT VACATION"

"DISARMING" MAKES YA THINK: "MUTILATION"
 NOT WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO CONVEY
 TAKE TWO: "IN BARNABUS BAY"

WOMEN
 STROLL AND GET LOST IN
 THE UNBROKEN GREENERY
 STRAIGHT FROM A FROSTIAN VERSE

PASCAL
 I'm not much for poetry...

MEN
 DOLE OUT THE TRAIL MIX AND
 SOAK UP THE SCENERY

TEUTA
 BEFORE YOU GET TOSSED
 IN THE TRUNK OF A HEARSE

MAYOR
 Stick to the script, Teuta!

DONNA
 READ OUR FIVE STAR REVIEWS
 WE'RE A HOME RUN ON EACH FRONT
 OUR LOCAL SHOPS
 ARE MOM AND POPS'
 NO STARBUCKS MAR THE BEACHFRONT

PASCAL
 YOU'LL WIND ALONG THE PIER

TEUTA (*indicating her foot*)
 AND MAYBE FIND A FUN SOUVENIR

DONNA, PASCAL & TEUTA
 MADE HERE IN BARNABUS BAY

SOPS/ALTOS
 EACH BRICK TELLS THE TALE
 OF THE GLACIER IT CAME FROM
 SO TOO, OUR HISTORY IS GRAND

MALCOLM
 I skipped that class.

TENORS/BASSES
 BUT CLEAR AS THE WATER
 THE TOWN TOOK ITS NAME FROM

ALL
 THIS WHOLE SEVERED LIMB THING
 IS GETTIN' OUT OF HAND!

MALCOLM
 YOU'LL LOVE OUR HOTEL
 DING THE BELL, I'LL BE BECKONED

TEUTA
 I HOPE BY HECK
 YOU BOTH DON'T CHECK OUT
 SOONER THAN YOU RECKONED

MALCOLM
 THE GUEST BOOK HELPS US
 GET TO KNOW YA

PASCAL
 PLUS NOW THE CORONER
 WON'T "JOHN DOE" YA

ALL
 AREN'T YOU TEMPTED TO STAY?

MAYOR
 HELP US SPREAD THE WORD

TEUTA
 HOPE YOU'RE WELL INSURED

HARLEY
ARTS AND CULTURE'S HERE

MALCOLM
FEED THE VULTURES HERE

MAYOR
WE'LL BE WELCOMING,
OTHER CITIES WON'T
YOU GOT TIME TO KILL

TEUTA
PRAY THE KILLER DON'T

ALL
PACK A PICNIC
AND A CAN OF PEPPER SPRAY
AND STAY A WHILE IN BARNABUS BAY!

(An elfish figure wearing irritatingly extravagant high fashion emerges from the shadows, applauding.)

EXTON
Oh my GAWD! Guyeez! I could like literally gobble you right up.

MAYOR
Who are you? This is a private meeting.

EXTON
Oooh! How about some butter with that dryyy toast? I'd be super offended if any of you was younger than, like fifty.

TEUTA
I *beg* your pardon?

EXTON
Exton Furlong: Entrapanoor, Influencer, and you folkses personal Guardian Angel. I couldn't resist coming. I'm a freak for True Crime. I've seen it all: Midnight Stalker, Chasing the Chatsworth Chiseler, My Husband Ate the Neighbours --

MALCOLM

What do you want?

EXTON

What do I want? Look at *you*, ya little smarty pants! You hit the nail right. Into. The head! Nothing fancy. Products from your shops. The bridal suite at your hotel. Meals, drinks, exetera exetera. Who can I text this to?

MAYOR

Gimme one good reason I shouldn't kick your can to the curb?

(8. It's Me!)

EXTON

You are TOOO much! I'll give you one point two *million* reasons! If I plug your little paradise, by this time tomorrow, your streets'll be buzzing like flies on rice!

HARLEY

Um...

EXTON

NOWADAYS - WHO'D WASTE A MINUTE
ON A GETAWAY THAT HADN'T BEEN VETTED?
YA NEED A GUARANTEED 'GRAMMABLE SCENE
SO YOU CAN SNAP A FEW

(Click, Vogue, Duck Face)

ALL THE NOISE ONLINE'S ENOUGH
TO MAKE YOUR HEAD SPIN, IF YOU LET IT
WEEDING OUT THE
"BLAH BLAH, BEEN THERE"
FROM THE TRENDY AND NEW

TOO MUCH CHOICE
MEANS TOO MUCH STRESS
FOLKS GOTTA PICK
WHAT TO BUY
AND HOW TO DRESS
WHICH QUEEN TO QUOTE MORE
WHICH CLOWN TO VOTE FOR
WHO MAKES THEIR MINDS UP?
I'LL GIVE YOU ONE GUESS

IT'S ME!
IT'S ALL ABOUT ME
I'M THE FINAL WORD
WHATEVER THE DEBATE IS
I'M LIKE A ONE-STOP-SHOP
ROTTEN-TOMATUZ
IT'S ME!
PEOPLE LISTEN TO ME
AND I COULD TELL 'EM ALL TO COME HERE

EXTON (Cont'd)

Remember the Prince Harald lavender fields? They were on, like, nobody's radar. I swoop in, have a little lavender moment, and shaBLAM! Overnight hotspot!

TEUTA

Weren't those fields trampled to death by idiots driving in from the city?

EXTON

The point is, nobody knew about them til *I* came along.

MY CONDOLENCES
YOUR BUSTED-UP GHOST TOWN'S
GONE AND LOST ITS SPIRIT
WELL, BIG-UP THE MEDIUM,
YOURS TRULY GETS IT DONE

(Snap, snap)

I'M THE PIED PIPER OF HAMLET,
WHEN I (*whistles*)
THE MASSES HEAR IT
THEY'D DRIVE OFF A BRIDGE
IF I TOLD THEM
IT WAS "LIKE TOTALLY FUN"

THAT'S HOW I EAT FOR FREE
I POST PROPS IN LIEU OF IT
YOUR COFFEE SHOP'S
TRENDING RED HOT
WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH IT
HOW'S YOUR MEAL?
NOT SURE WHATCHA FEEL?
YOUR SOUP'S GETTIN' COLD
WHILE YOU'RE READING
MY REVIEW OF IT

ME!

PEOPLE LISTEN TO ME
I GOT NO CREDENTIALS
BUT I'M HANDSOMELY PAID
WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMMINGS
YOU MAKE LEMMING-ADE
IT'S ME
PEOPLE LISTEN TO ME
AND I COULD GET 'EM ALL TO COME HERE

PASCAL

So...you'll rally your followers in exchange for these gifts?

EXTON

And ten thousand dollars.

MAYOR

I beg your pardon?

EXTON

Oh come on honey! I've been paid more to retweet an off-brand lip plumper. From what I hear, you could use all the good press you can get - you know, with all the ...

(EXTON mimes stabbing.)

DONNA

Ten thousand dollars?

EXTON

TAKE MY ADVICE
I'M A STEAL AT THE PRICE
YOU'LL BE BACK ON THE MAP IN A FLASH
BUT IF, LET'S SAY,
HYPOTHETICALLY SPEAKING,
YOU CHOSE TO HANG ON TO YOUR CASH

THEN MAYBE MY STAY
IN BARNABUS BAY
DOESN'T QUITE MAKE THE GRADE
IN TERMS OF THE PEOPLE,
THE FOOD, THE CULTURE,
AND GENERAL LACK OF BEAUTY
I'M SORRY - BUT I'M AFRAID
IT WOULD BE MY CIVIL DUTY
TO THROW SOME SERIOUS SHADE

TEUTA

This is extortion!

PASCAL

Sure, but who's holding the cards here?

EXTON

Pssst! IT'S ME!
(*ad libs absurd melisma and diva moments*)

ME!
IT'S ME!
ME-E-E-E-E-E-E-E!
ME, ME, ME, ME, ME, ME

(NEWSCASTER speaks with EXTON riffing in the background.)

NEWSCASTER

As police search for the owner of the missing foot, the question on every troubled mind remains: "Who will the next victim be?"

EXTON (*big finish*)

IT'S ME!!!