

THE ADVENTURE

An Epic Comedy

by
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

CLETUS	A young boy who chewed his tongue off. Assistant to Dr. Rictus.
DR. RICTUS	A Self made doctor.
FRANK	The narrator. A cabin boy and friend of Buddy.
BUDDY	The Hero of our story. A young man looking for his destiny.
CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE	Captain of the Yankee Thunder. A man with an eating disorder.
MASH	A French Danger Clown.
BANGERS	Another French Danger Clown.
COWBOY	A man looking for a reward.
SENATOR TWITTY	A survivor of the Revolutionary war. He has some Issues.
ELROD J. PINKERTON	Buddy's father. He is also one of the richest men in the world
FARFALLA PINKERTON	Buddy's long lost mother.
AMAZON WARRIOR	A Puppet and all legs.
WOLF IN SHEEPS CLOTHING	An executioner
FATHER CODIWOMPLE	A frustrated Anglican Priest
GONZO IMBRA	Spiritual leader of the Hootans
BLIND MESSENGER	A blind messenger
SHECKY TUCAS	A stand up comedian. Specializing in entertaining the Troops.
JUANITA	A heartbreaker.
CHIMERA	Buddy's soon-to-be-wife, sort of.

CAST BREAKDOWN

<u>ACTOR 1</u>	<u>ACTOR 2</u>	<u>ACTOR 3</u>
FRANK	DR. RICTUS	CLETUS
MASH	BUDDY	BANGERS
FARFALLA	JUANITA	COWBOY
GONZO IMBRA		SENATOR TWITTY
		ELROD PINKERTON
		WOLF IN SHEEPS CLOTHING
		FATHER CODIWOMPLE
		BLIND MESSENGER
		SHELLY TUCAS

SCENE 1

1

AT RISE:

“*Scotch Strathspey and Reel*” arranged by Percy Grainger plays over the house speakers as the houselights darken. We first see a night sky full of stars and a Georges Méliès type of full moon. Lights up and in the foreground is an old cabin by the sea. There is a long table in the middle of the cabin on it lies a man unconscious in ragged clothes. At a nearby table sits a young man by the name of CLETUS. He is pruning an unusual looking topiary. CLETUS, it should be noted, is minus a tongue and therefore can only communicate through grunts, groans and other guttural sounds. Once the scene is established the music cross-fades to the sounds of waves crashing and an occasional shore bird. After a moment, singing is heard from behind a door to the outside. The door flies open and in bursts DR. RICTUS singing the *Scotch Strathspey and Reel*. He is wearing a very bloody apron over some ragged clothes and is sporting a Greek fisherman’s cap. He is also chewing on a cigar. He is carrying a lantern and he places it on the long table containing a body. Turns up the lamp the room brightens.

(Looking at CLETUS who is snipping away at the topiary.)

DR. RICTUS

Lookin’ good, Cletus. Looks just like the ole gal. This bag of bones waked at all?

CLETUS

“I ain’t seen no life out of him”

DR. RICTUS

You don’t say. Hey, you awake?

(Puts head to the chest of the body to listen to the heart.)

Sound like this little piggy is ‘bout t’ go t’ the market. Holy Daisies look at that sassy necklace about his neck.

(Removes necklace from the body and places around his neck.)

He ain’t got no need fer this now. Hey Cletus, take a looksy at the new addition to my wardrobe.

(A low groan comes from the lifeless body)

What ya say Cletus?

CLETUS

“I didn’t say anything it come from that body”

DR. RICTUS

Well, I’ll be. There might still be some fire in that belly. Well, ain’t no sense to wait and give him the news. I’ll just have a go at it and get ‘er done.

(Pulls out a monstrous saw and douses the blade in whiskey.)

Never put off t’ day what you can do yesterday.

(Takes a long drink of whiskey.)

The dirty bird always catches the worm. Them is words t’ live Cletus ole boy.

(Takes another long swig of whiskey. Then lays the saw blade on the leg and assumes a position to saw off the leg.)

And uh one! And ah Two! And uh--

(The lifeless man on the table suddenly comes to life. He bolts up. His name we will come to find is FRANK and he speaks in a cockney accent.)

FRANK

What in the bloody hell do you think you’re doing!

(DR. RICTUS and CLETUS are startled by this turn of events. DR. RICTUS screams with fright while CLETUS holds out his pruning shears in defense.)

You were gonna cut me leg off weren’t you?

(Looks down at his rotted leg and bursts into tears.)

Oh God me leg! Look at me poor leg!

DR. RICTUS

Holy Turd in hole! The dead done get awake Cletus!

CLETUS

“Yes you are correct but I also think he is suffering from some angina”

FRANK

Where am I?

DR. RICTUS

Lord, I think I popped a vein!

FRANK

Who are you?

DR. RICTUS

That fright 'bout sent me t' the other side.

FRANK

Who - are - you?

DR. RICTUS

Relax, you half-baked ghosty. This here is Cletus and I'm Dr. Rictus. You are?

(Offers up a hand to FRANK who does not respond to the offer.)

FRANK

I'm Frank.

DR. RICTUS

Well, I bet you are.

CLETUS

"You have to tell him that the leg has to come off"

DR. RICTUS

Keep yer paints on Cletus, I'm getting to that. Sweet Jesus in a hay sack, we thought you was about to pack it off t' Peter.

FRANK

I'm here! I'm alive!

DR. RICTUS

Congratulations on that. But here is the skinny, you got a leg gone bad and its got to come off. Now I can take off right now like nobody's bizness. Ain't that right Cletus?

CLETUS

"Yes, you are a good leg chopper-offer."

DR. RICTUS

As Doctor to patient I'm gonna be honest an' say that you been stewin' in yer juices for bit too long. The crazies is probably eatin' at yer brain right now.

FRANK

You ain't touchin' me leg, you hear me!

DR. RICTUS

Loud and clear ya weirdo. But listen t' -

(FRANK produces a tarnished but golden dagger from seemingly nowhere and points it at DR. RICTUS.)

FRANK

Where am I?

DR. RICTUS

Hold on ya crazy-ass lobster I ain't no violent type--

FRANK

Where am I?

DR. RICTUS

You are presently a victim slash patient slash visitor to Rio De Barabbas. An insignificant geological formation two shakes and a wiggle west of Cuba that, at present, nobody gives a rat's ass about.

CLETUS

"You are absolutely correct"

DR. RICTUS

Population of two hundred of the meanest folks in this hemisphere. Not to mention another hundred or so of scoundrel, riff-raff and general up to no-good types.

FRANK

Looks like you an' your friend are up to no good. How'd a doctor, if that's what you are, end up in a dive like this?

DR. RICTUS

Glad y' ask. A sad story, it is. Cletus, the violin if you please.

(CLETUS graps hold of a violin and starts playing it in a dramatic way.)

DR. RICTUS

It was during the war between the states. I used that opportunity in history to lead the medical community in the experimentation of added limb surgery.

Simply adding additional arms and legs a human could run faster and perform a handful of tasks in a short of amount of time. But my genius was scorned upon. The truth be known I had a few unforeseen mishaps that caused consternation amongst my peers not to mention those I experimented on-

(CLETUS suddenly drops his bow turns to pick it up and we see a third arm on his back. He retrieves the bow and continues to play.)

DR. RICTUS

You okay, Cletus?

CLETUS

“I am unharmed”

DR. RICTUS

Thus I was forced to flee the land of the home that’s free of the brave.

FRANK

(Pointing to the topiary)

What’s that? One of your experiments gone bad?

DR. RICTUS

That?

FRANK

Yeah.

DR. RICTUS

A topiary.

FRANK

What’s that?

DR. RICTUS

What’s what?

FRANK

A topiary.

DR. RICTUS

That.

FRANK

Oh.

DR. RICTUS

It's hobby Cletus done took up. Keeps him from chewin' the inside of his cheeks. He done chewed his tongue t' pieces, that's why he can't talk none. He'd chewed off his entire head had I not interested him in this time consuming detail oriented activity. He's currently shapin' this bush t' look like me former wife. A living testament t' the old gal.

FRANK

She dead?

DR. RICTUS

Can't say fer certain. She fell into a really large hole a while back an' we ain't seen her since. Now listen t' me the sooner we get that nasty bugger of a leg off ya the better --

FRANK

How long have I been here?

DR. RICTUS

Cletus say's the sea spit you up about two moons ago. That was about the same time I received a slight head wound from an irate local all too concerned with freedom. The wound obscured all rational thought fer a better bit of a while. So I suspended limb removal fer awhile. But I'm back and better than ever.

(FRANK sees the necklace around the neck of DR. RICTUS.)

FRANK

Where in the bloody hell did you get that!

DR. RICTUS

This is payment fer services which I still gotta render.

FRANK

That belong's to me!

DR. RICTUS

It use t' be yours. But I'm a Doctor an' we get paid fer doctor stuff.

FRANK

You are a charlatan!

DR. RICTUS

What the hell is that?

FRANK

Where is it? Where's me bag?

(FRANK flails about searching for his belongings. Eventually FRANK finds what he is looking for, an old satchel. He opens the satchel and pulls out an old leather bound journal. As he does this an Angelic choir sound is heard)

DR. RICTUS

A book! You carryin' on 'bout a book!

FRANK

This is not a book, It's me journal. Me story.

DR. RICTUS

What?

CLETUS

“What?”

FRANK

This is the story of me an' Buddy.

DR. RICTUS

Buddy? Whose Buddy?

FRANK

Whose Buddy? Buddy was my buddy that's who Buddy was.

(FRANK becomes emotional)

Oh God, Buddy! His life, our lives written down in here. It's all right here. He wanted t' be a God but really he was just half a man. Live by the sword die by the sword! Sometimes people go through there lives an' they just don't get it! Life is absurd! He spent entirely too much time tryin' to figure life out.

(FRANK is in tears and so is DR. RICTUS and CLETUS.)

DR. RICTUS

Good cheese curd in the sky, ya' made me an' Cletus feel a great melancholy.

FRANK

I don't want me leg cut off!

DR. RICTUS

Why the hell do ya' want t'? Your marriage to that dead limb has come to an' end.

FRANK

Could you spare a bit of spit and compassion an' let me hold that necklace about your neck? I'll give it back.

DR. RICTUS

If it will calm you down I'll loan it to ya. But I get it back or I'll knock yer kneecaps into yesterday.

(FRANK is handed the necklace and puts it around his neck.)

FRANK

This come from a Spanish soldier. Probably goes all the back to Cortez and his crew.

DR. RICTUS

I knew a Cortez who run a opium boat down in the south China sea. He had a left hand that look'd like his right foot. Made it difficult fer him t' deal cards.

FRANK

I told you Buddy! We shoul'da got out while the gettin' was good!

DR. RICTUS

Take it easy.

FRANK

I told you this wasn't a good idea! You're not a God!

DR. RICTUS

Come on over Cletus. He's about t' get the crazies!

FRANK

You said we'd make it out alive! That nothin' would happen! Lies! You Lied! Everything happened! You could have lived!

DR. RICTUS

Smack him Cletus before he starts doin' demon stuff!

(CLETUS slaps FRANK in the face. FRANK immediately returns to a less agitated state.)

DR. RICTUS

Listen, you are about t' be baked and sent t' the lord. So I need t' take that leg off ya if you is given any chance of seein' to see the sun rise. Cletus prepare the instrument!

FRANK

You think takin' me leg off will make it all go away! I'm dyin' all over not just from me leg. I can feel it! I'm gonna die a whole person.

DR. RICTUS

Who don't want t' die a whole person. I once had to sew a mans' head to the rest of his body in order for him to say his own last words. But just as I got the sewin' done he hiccupped an' blew his head right off his body. Down right tragic it was. But I learned a lesson from that. Cletus sterilize m' saw!

FRANK

You don't even know me! How can ya take me leg off

DR. RICTUS

What does that have t' do with the price of horse feathers? Is the saw ready Cletus?

FRANK

If you had any humanity in you you'd listen to me! I just can't end up a legless driveling idiot, rotting away in the middle of nowhere! Not after what I been through! How 'bout a bit of dignity.

DR. RICTUS

Dignity? Well, Mr. High-and-mighty why don't you just ask fer Christmas in July.

(Grabs medallion from FRANK.)

I'm takin this as payment. You drink this here whiskey cause I 'm gonna take that leg off come hell-or-high water!

FRANK

How 'bout this -

DR. RICTUS

I don't want t' hear nothin'--

FRANK

Jest let me say-

DR. RICTUS

Cletus, the instrument please.

FRANK

Just listen to me! I don't got long whether you cut me leg or not. I'm done for. I know that! Makes no sense to cut off the leg of someone who's pretty soon gonna floatin' with the angels.

DR. RICTUS

What the hell you talkin' about?

FRANK

Let me tell my story.

(Holds up his journal.)

The story I got here. I need somebody to witness me journey.

DR. RICTUS

You're wantin' t' tell me a story? Like I got time t' listen to your bile. If you want die from rot you need t' slide your crazy ass out the door. Cletus an' I have a busy schedule.

FRANK

Cletus, listen t' me I can't die without lettin' this out. I been t' hell an' back again an' I can't hold it in. Please, listen t' me. I'll give you all anything. I need t' say me story!

(CLETUS is crying.)

DR. RICTUS

You done broke Cletus' brain. It looks like he's got the psychosis.

(CLETUS grabs hold of DR. RICTUS and grunts that he needs to hear FRANK'S story.)

Okay, okay, Cletus calm down and smell the roses. Listen If I hear your story, I get this necklace, right? I get it whether I chop that leg off or not, right?

FRANK

It's yours.

DR. RICTUS

Deal. Why are you so interested in me hearing your story, mister?

FRANK

I got a life between these pages and I need a witness t' it. You can listen, that's all I ask.

DR. RICTUS

All right, already. I just hope I don't fall asleep during your desperate trope.

FRANK

Would you mind if I partake in some of your whiskey as it might ease my recounting the history of histories.

DR. RICTUS

(Hands bottle to FRANK.)

Have at it.

FRANK

I don't have a "once upon a time" is that okay Cletus?

CLETUS

"Sure that's okay by me"

DR. RICTUS

God's Holy Trousers, Cletus ain't gonna engage ya in the fine art of conversation. Get on with it.

FRANK

(FRANK slowly opens his journal as he does so the visual look of the scene pulses and shifts. There is a transition in time. The *Scottish Strathspey and Reel* is reprised and plays in the background.)

It was the best of times and the not so best of times... So goes this tale about a powerful wanderlust and intrigue of mankind. For when in the course of human events two mystic warriors from God's own pallet collide together in time who knows what their task is on this great mother Earth. That's the big question. The answer? Only God knows.

(During the monologue old FRANK changes into young vital FRANK. As well, the scene shifts before our eyes to the hold of an old sailing ship.)

Buddy and I were those mystic warriors and we walked wide-eyed straight into the tide of history. It's been a lifetime, or so it seems, but I remember the moment we met. It was in the fall of the year of our Lord 1866 deep in the cargo hold of the merchant vessel, "Yankee Thunder." That was the embarking point for a journey down a road only previously travelled by mythic beings of the past. We weren't mythic by any stretch. In fact as far as history is concerned we were pretty embarrassing. But that don't matter 'cause destiny holds no prejudice. We were just two days out of the port of Salem sailing toward Hong Kong. I was fourteen years into me life. An' Buddy he was... He was.. 'Ow old were you Buddy?

End Of Scene 1

SCENE 2

2

SETTING: The bottom hold of an old sailing ship

AT RISE: FRANK turns toward a young man in a school uniform lying on the ground who is tossing and turning. It appears as if he is having a nightmare.)

BUDDY

Daddy? Stop! Daddy, I'm your son! Daddy don't make me-

(BUDDY wakes up screaming and knocking over a pitcher of water as well.)

FRANK

You dumped the water out. That ain't good. It's all the water we get on this day till tomorrow. Maybe I can siphon some from the crew, a bunch a drunkin' sods they are, bleedin' whisky is all they want. You okay? Looks like you was lost in a nightmare.

BUDDY

Yeah. I get 'em all the time.

FRANK

Well it's a proper diet you need. That'll stop them nightmares. Or maybe you just have a dark soul that will torment you the rest of your life. Listen to me squawk, I haven't even asked your name. Wait, don't tell me let me guess

BUDDY

Manfred Pinkerton

(FRANK says his name as if he has guessed it.)

FRANK

Manfred Pinkerton! See pretty good, eh?

BUDDY

But you can call me Buddy.

FRANK

But people call you, Buddy! See I guessed that too. I knew that. I have the ability to read minds.

BUDDY

Really?

FRANK

Truly. I ain't lyin.' You see I been struck by lightnin' six times in life. All them times I was struck right in the same place.

BUDDY

Here on the boat?

FRANK

No, here on me derrière.

BUDDY

Oh.

FRANK

Bein' struck by lightin' has given me psychic powers above and beyond mortal men. Here, I'll prove I'll guess your shoe size.

BUDDY

Okay.

(FRANK closes his eyes in concentration while putting both hands on his rear-end.)

FRANK

Uhhhh. Medium!

BUDDY

You're right!

FRANK

'Course I am. Struck six times in me bum and my brain hasn't been the same since. But I think the next one might be fatal. So I'm watchin' that. Listen t' me yackin' without so much as a how-do-you-do. It's shameful that is. My name is Montenegro Fenimore Claudius De Baptista Guiseppi Footjuice.

BUDDY

I didn't get all that -

FRANK

But you can call me Frank. Everybody does.

BUDDY

Okay, Frank.

FRANK

So what brings into the belly of this leaky beast?

BUDDY

Well -

FRANK

(Suddenly very serious and dark.)

Danger lurks here. This ship is run by a crazy man. Captain Pooch Carbuncle is his name and his eggs is scrambled if you know what I mean.

BUDDY

Well, I'm not sure-

FRANK

And if you said that I said that I'll deny every word. Then I'll come lookin' for ya and drop you in the sea for the sharks t' gnaw on you! Did you know that today is the first day of the rest of your life? I just read that somewhere.

BUDDY

Who are you?

FRANK

That's a question that's been plaguing me for years. I mean, really, who are we? So, Buddy what brings aboard this Godless vessel?

BUDDY

Well, I'll tell you-

FRANK

What's your story, boy? What are you here for. Who'd you murder!

BUDDY

Murder? I didn't murder no one!

FRANK

Well you must've done somthin' so unspeakable to packed off on this floating carrion of thieves.

BUDDY

Well, I'm kinda too ashamed to say.

FRANK

Go on with ya! I heard plenty of filth from those sea-dogs up top.

BUDDY

I can't believe I'm tellin' you this.

FRANK

Get on with it! What terrible, no good, God awful, sin baitin' thing did you do?

BUDDY

My daddy shipped me off 'cause I was truant!

(BUDDY breaks down in sobs. There is a beat before FRANK speaks.)

FRANK

Truant! Oh for God sake that is the most disgusting seventh stage of hell thing I've ever heard of... Actually, I don't know what truant is, but it sounds dirty, gross and disgusting all at the same time. What is it?

BUDDY

Skippin' school.

(beat)

FRANK

Skipping school?

BUDDY

Yep.

FRANK

Skipping school.

BUDDY

I know.

FRANK

Your here because you skipped school.

BUDDY

That's right. I just stopped goin'.

FRANK

You mean your on this bobbing sphincter of a boat sailin' towards the rear end of civilization, as we know it, all because you skipped school?

BUDDY

(Still sobbing)

Yep.

FRANK

That really sucks.

BUDDY

You said a mouth full. And when I get to Hong Kong I'm suppose to be looked after by a bunch of warrior nun's called, "The order of Sisters without brothers who really love God." I'm suppose live there till I die or become a man, which ever comes first.

FRANK

If I may be so bold, how old are you?

BUDDY

Fifteen.

FRANK

Fifteen? You sure about that?

BUDDY

Uh huh.

FRANK

I think I can safely say you are the largest fifteen year old I ever seen.

BUDDY

How 'bout you? How old are you?

FRANK

Well, according t' me calculations I am somewhere between the fragile, drooling helplessness of a newborn and the fragile, drooling helplessness of a really old person. I Haven't got it quite pinned down yet. It's on me list of things t' do. But, If were to apply me calculations to you, I'd say your but a stones throw away from being a full fledged man.

BUDDY

No!

FRANK

Yes!

BUDDY

Oh my God! You're sayin' that I'll just become a man sittin' on this boat waitin' t' get to Hong Kong? A man, just like that? I don't gotta live with warrior nuns?

FRANK

Those weren't me exact words. In fact I can't remember sayin' that at all. But, yes, I think we can make that jump in logic.

BUDDY

I can't believe it! This is the greatest thing to happen to me since whatever. I just can't believe it!

FRANK

Believe it my friend I'm never wrong. I was struck by lightning six times.

BUDDY

Didn't that hurt?

FRANK

Well I developed this really big callous and it kind of absorbs the shock.

OFFSTAGE VOICE

Where's Frank! Somebody find Frank! The Captain is wantin' him! Frank!

FRANK

What time is it?

BUDDY

I don't know. I got this watch on my wrist but I can't tell time.

FRANK

(FRANK looks at the watch on BUDDY'S wrist)

Sweet bird in-the-hole! I missed the Captain's snack time. I forgot t' serve him his snack. I'm done for now!

OFFSTAGE VOICE

Frank! You are goin' to your great reward if'n you don't get the Captain his snack!

(A great angry commotion is heard)

BUDDY

What's gonna happen?

FRANK

(He snaps his fingers and a rope ladder drops from above.
He starts to climb the ladder.)

You may have just seen the last of Montenegro Fenimore Claudius De Baptista Guiseppi
Footjuice.

(FRANK exits and the ladder is pulled up and the hatch is
slammed shut. Angry shouts are heard.)

BUDDY

Frank! Frank! Maybe I can help!

OFFSTAGE VOICE

There's the guppy, grab him!

(More angry commotion. Frank is heard screaming for
help.)

BUDDY

Hey! Hey! What are ya doin'! Leave him alone!

(The snapping sound of a whip is heard and with each lash
you hear FRANK cry out in pain.)

BUDDY

(He falls to his knees to pray.)

Dear lord, I never ask much. Well, that's not true I always ask for a bunch of stuff. But this
time I'm really askin' for somethin' big. This is big God so please let's get to grantin' some
prayers here. Please let them stop hurtin' Frank.

(The sounds of whipping, commotion and Frank's cries
are suddenly silenced.)

Wow. Thanks God. Good job. Hey, God while your listening I would mind havin' my
own horse, is that at all possible? I got a name picked out already.

(The hatch door from above flies open. A menacing voice
is heard from above. It is the voice of CAPTAIN POOCH
CARBUNCLE.)

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Hellooooo, down there!

BUDDY

Lord, forget the horse. I think I may need somethin' else.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Peek a boo! Is there a little chunky monkey down there?

BUDDY

Lord. No horse. Just get me the hell out of here.

(A ferocious cackle is heard over the opening moments of Bach's "*Toccata in fugue*." Captain Pooch Carbuncle is lowered in on a swing from above. He is the largest, fattest, most disgusting captain in the Atlantic fleet. His head appears almost the size of a golf ball. That just may be his hat. He is very over-the-top flamboyant. As he lands he speaks.)

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Thank you Pedro you're a sweet heart. Go and prepare a bath for the Captain. Remember you're scraping my back tonight!

(The swing is hauled up and the hatch is closed with a slam.)

Oh, you have to love Pedro. Best back scraper this side of the equator. My, the light is but faint down here.

(THE CAPTAIN lights a lamp.)

Let but light my lamp and gaze upon the little lamb stowed beneath my feet. Ahhh there you are. Mmmmm delicious. My but you are big one. How old are you?

BUDDY

Fifteen.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Fifteen? Are you certain of that my boy?

BUDDY

Yes.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Then, I think I can safely say that you are the largest fifteen year old that I've ever met.

BUDDY

I been told that before.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Well, my furry little bunny, you are not at all what I expected. Though you're hardly little. Are you furry?

BUDDY

I don't know how to answer that.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

No, from my point of view you seem as smooth as silk.

BUDDY

Huh?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I am an acquaintance of your father, Buddy. Is it Buddy? Have I got that correct?

BUDDY

You know who I am?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Your father is a fine, fine man, Buddy. I enjoy his company immensely. We have known each other for years. We traded slaves together back in the day. We both belonged to "The International Society For The Suppression of Savages." In fact we were both on the entertainment committee. We would entertain the slave traders as they travelled in and out of Charleston. We would stage plays and the traders loved us for it. One of our crowning moments was when I played Cleopatra to your father's Marc Antony. As Cleopatra I remember being so very, very, very pretty.

(He is lost in a moment of revelry. Then he immediately snaps out of it with a riotous laugh.)

I am Captain Pooch Carbuncle! I run this ship!

(He delivers a gross loud belch)

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Damn my spleen! Your dear handsome father requests that I deliver you persona intacta to a group of angry but saintly nuns in Hong Kong. But I ask you how shall I do such a thing when you, my juicy morsal, have been such an incorrigible monster!

BUDDY

A what kind of monster?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

(He spies a rat. We hear it squeaking.)

Oh goody a rat!

(He stomps on the rat. Then lifts it to his mouth and chews it up with such orgasmic pleasure. He swallows and wipes his mouth with a soiled handkerchief.)

Forgive my rudeness in not offering at least a taste of such joyous victual caked in a crispy skin of severe contempt. Oh by the way, my sweet dear Buddy, I have a slight eating disorder.

BUDDY

Okay.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I can't stop eating. Everything. Anything. I am a chronic masticator.

BUDDY

Okay.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

My boy, Frank, was to provision me my hourly snack. My snack! Alack, I was not to receive my intended gastronomical gifts. I did not get my snack!

BUDDY

Sorry.

(A loud stomach growl.)

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Yes, little tummy, I know what thou wantest. Soon. Very soon.

BUDDY

Where is Frank!

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

You can shut your pie hole! Why was I unable to ingurgitate at my appointed hour? Maybe because Frank was busy chatting with you. Is that not so?

BUDDY

Uh, we was talkin,' but --

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

He was “chatting” up with you. Therefore, e pluribus unum, I am without my snack. No snacks!

BUDDY

Well, this has been a great conversation. Let’s just agree to disagree-

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

(Lifts a latch on the floor. From that latch he retrieves a bib with a picture of a lobster on it. He puts it on. He then the retrieves A really large fork and knife.)

BUDDY

What are you doing?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I am preparing to ingest my repast.

BUDDY

What?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I’ am getting ready to eat, dummy.

BUDDY

What are you gonna eat?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

(after a beat)

You.

BUDDY

Not sure I got that.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I’m going to put a dummy in my tummy!

(He let’s forth a menacing cackle.)

I know what you are thinking, how can one human being eat another human being! Well, it all depends on how you prepare the meat!

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE (CONT.)

(He let’s forth another big cackle.)

Who cares if you make it to Hong Kong. You think your father will miss you? Not likely. Your usefulness at this point of our trajectory is to be my main course.

BUDDY

You wanna eat me?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I want to devour you!

BUDDY

No!

(BUDDY eludes the captain's grip. At which point THE CAPTAIN stops his pursuit and breaks down in dramatic tears and sobs.)

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Oh Buddy, Buddy, Buddy! What was I thinking to scare you so? Hither, to, I do not want to eat thouest, albeit I am hungry. It is an insatiable sickness of mine born out of a profoundly sad childhood that effects my better judgment. Please, young Buddy, please accept my apology. I am awashed with sin and I ask that you lead me to the promise land. I need to purge the bitterness, sadness and familial anger that burns like a raging fire in my soul.

BUDDY

I don't know what to say.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I am a wicked man. Zounds! I am suddenly gripped with the fever of death. I do not deserve to live! Oh, I shall go mad!

BUDDY

Now, don't worry Captain. I don't want you to suffer. You was just really hungry. Seized by a terrific hunger spell. Please, don't be tough on yourself. I know about a sad childhood. I've had one and I can totally relate to you.

(BUDDY pats the captain on his shoulder)

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Totally relate? How sweet. Do you forgive me? Will you ever forgive me?

BUDDY

Sure. Why not. I ain't one to hold a grudge.

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Good. Thank you, kind sir. "O Lord that lends me life, Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness!" Buddy, I need to connect with you on a human level. Come, give us a hug.

BUDDY

I guess.

(They hug)

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Guess what buddy.

BUDDY

What?

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

Our embrace, while treasured and somewhat erotic, just makes me want to eat you raw and uncooked!

(The captain attempts to bite on buddy's arm.)

BUDDY

You lied!

CAPTAIN CARBUNCLE

I was acting! You see how I would have made a fine Cleopatra! Open my teeth, show my gums, look out tummy here Buddy comes.

(THE CAPTAIN attempts to bite buddy he responds by pushing THE CAPTAIN away. He stumbles and falls backward offstage. All we see are his legs.)

BUDDY

You is the most disgusting person ever! You make me want to wretch on myself and use curse words in crazy random way!

(A distant sound of thunder.)

I just want to let you know that I think I wet all over my self .

(The thunder gets louder. Buddy checks on the body of THE CAPTAIN.)

BUDDY (CONT.)

Lord have mercy he's dead. Dead. Did I kill him? Dear lord did I kill him? But I didn't mean to. I mean I wasn't tryin' to- he was going to eat me.

(A great thunderclap. The clanging of a bell.)

OFFSTAGE VOICE

Where is the Captain! There is a storm approaching. It Looks like a Hurricane!

BUDDY

What do I do? I didn't want to be eaten.'

OFFSTAGE VOICE

Where's the Captain! We're being attacked by Spanish pirates and they look really mad!

BUDDY

Dear Lord, I'm back on my knee's praying again. I just want t' say I really didn't want t' be eaten-

OFFSTAGE VOICE

Where's the Captain? Iceberg dead ahead!

BUDDY

Lord, I'll just tell 'em what happened. They gotta believe me, right? I'll just say the Captain was eaten' me and then everything will be okay.

(A loud crack of thunder. The hatch opens and a rope ladder drops down. FRANK climbs down the ladder.)

FRANK

Hey Buddy!

BUDDY

This is not my fault!

(The ship is listing left and right. Sounds of a storm and a creaky ship.)

FRANK

It's me! I barely escaped with me life!

BUDDY

The Captain is dead!

FRANK

We have to get up on deck-what did you say?

BUDDY

The Captain's dead.

FRANK

The Captain is dead? Don't tell me you killed him?

BUDDY

Why do you say that?

FRANK

He's dead and you're here. They'll say you did it. That you is the murderer and then they'll hang ya.

BUDDY

Hang me?!

(A crashing sound accompanied by a piece of an iceberg bursting through the floor.)

BUDDY

What's that?!

FRANK

Looks like an iceberg!

BUDDY

Excuse me, I need to take a moment.

(BUDDY walks out of the scene to the front of the stage. The noise and commotion instantly stops. A single light on BUDDY.)

As you can see I was having a really bad day--

FRANK

(Stepping into the light.)

Excuse me, what do you think you're doing?

BUDDY

I'm talkin'.

FRANK

To whom?

BUDDY

To them.

(Points to audience.)

FRANK

Are you out of your bloody mind? You just can't jump out of a plot and start rogue narratin.' It's dangerous. God knows what you started. Probably disrupted the whole universe you did.

BUDDY

I was just talkin'.

FRANK

So what. There are certain rules. This is my story. I'm the story teller.

BUDDY

But you're tellin' a story about me.

FRANK

Characters do not leave their stories! This starts happenin' an' you're lookin' at universal anarchy. I ain't talkin' rivers of fire, trumpet blowin damnation. That's kids stuff. I'm talkin' about the very seams that hold life together would split open and humankind would fall forever into void of meaningless nothingness. Now you don't want that on your conscience now do ya?

BUDDY

Guess not.

FRANK

Now I'm gonna snap me fingers and get us back to where we belong.

(FRANK snaps his fingers and all the sound and fury immediately returns.)

BUDDY

(Shouting over the noise of the storm.)

Where are we?

FRANK

We're on the deck of the ship. There's no time to lose, the ship is sinking, we have to get to the Dinghy before we drown!

BUDDY

A Dinghy?

FRANK

A Dinghy.

(A Dinghy seemingly appears from out of nowhere.
FRANK and BUDDY climb into the Dinghy.)

BUDDY

We can't go out in this storm, we'll die.

FRANK

Better to die at sea than at the hands of some rummy sailors.

BUDDY

But it's lightning everywhere ain't you scared?

FRANK

I never thought about that.

(Lightning strikes all around them.)

Buddy is you a prayin' man?

BUDDY

I just took up the habit a few moments ago. But I haven't had much success.

FRANK

Oh great.

BUDDY

I guess this is the end. I guess this is our destiny to die at sea.

FRANK

Bloody hell! This can't be. We will fight. Do you hear me Fight! I'm not afraid of you Mother Nature! I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat! Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! Rage, blow! Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth! Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more! Four score and seven years ago You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks!

BUDDY

Drowned Our what?

(Immediate black out. In the darkness the sound and fury crossfades into Erik Satie's "Gymnopédies No. 1".)

(End of Scene)

Scene 3

3

SETTING: A Dinghy floating in calm waters.

AT RISE: A full moon with clouds fill the sky. It looks like the full moon is sleeping. BUDDY is holding a paddle like a baseball bat and FRANK is in a panic.

There it is!

Where?

Over there!

I can't see it!

There it goes!

Where?!

Now, it's comin' for the Dinghy!

I don't see nothin.' There ain't no shark out there!

Are you blind! Here it comes!

BUDDY

Would you just relax!

(BUDDY smacks FRANK on the head with the paddle.)

FRANK

What you do that for?

BUDDY

You're actin' nuts.

FRANK

I'm deathly afraid of sharks. They make me crazy. I once saw a shark leap out of the water pull a man out of crows nest. Must've leapt two- three hundred feet in the air.

BUDDY

But we're floatin' on a big river. Sharks don't live in rivers.

FRANK

How do you know? Ever talk to a shark? Ever ask where they live?

BUDDY

You're crazy.

(The previous music cue crossfades into the natural sound of a slow river.)

The sky is pretty. I'm glad we made it through.

FRANK

That was more than a storm. By all rights, we should be at the bottom of Davy Jones' locker.

BUDDY

I think it was your inspirational speech that saved us.

FRANK

I've been told I'm a bit of an orator. How 'bout I work us up some snacks.

BUDDY

Sure.

FRANK

Let me see what I got here.

(FRANK searches his bag and begins preparing snacks.)

BUDDY

You wanna know somethin' strange?

FRANK

What?

BUDDY

The Captain said he knew my daddy.

FRANK

That's somethin,' I'd say.

BUDDY

It is something.

FRANK

When I seen ya for the first time, down in the bottom of the boat and you was havin' that nightmare. You was yellin' somethin' about your father.

BUDDY

Oh. Well I just have these crazy dream about my dad. It never goes well.

FRANK

What your father do?

BUDDY

He's a rich industrialist. I'm not quite sure what that is. That's what he told me he was.

FRANK

What about your Mum?

BUDDY

Don't remember her.

FRANK

Sorry.

BUDDY

No, it's not like that. I mean I sorta remember her, someone who would've been my mom, but when I was old enough to figure out I had a mom I didn't have a mom. She just, sorta, kinda, disappeared I guess.

FRANK

(Lifting up a Silver samovar of snacks.)

Snack time! I think I out did my myself this time. The ones with the umbrella's are lobster resting elegantly on a creamy Brie with a hint of mindless optimism. These small squares are pumpernickel topped with a liver pâté made of angel's breath and love. And then finally we have creamy Herring coated with abstention and self loathing on top of a frisky, orgasmic cracker.

BUDDY

Wow Frank, It looks like Thanksgiving.

FRANK

Dig in.

BUDDY

I've been thinking that I maybe I need to go back my daddy. I think I'm going to find him and tell him I am a man.

FRANK

Well I hate to be the bearer of bad news but we may never leave this bloody dinghy alive.

BUDDY

Somethin' will happin.'

(Eerie music is now heard underneath the scene. In the back ground we see a city skyline emerge. Then a dock with a sign that reads "Welcome to Via Dolorosa.")

BUDDY

Hey Frank how about you goin' with me t' find my dad.

FRANK

Well I don't see why not. Nothing else for me to do.

BUDDY

That be great.

FRANK

Course we may just end up floatin' till the the end of time. Or, we'd kill each other in a fit of psychotic rages. Or, we may get swallowed whole by an whale with a bad attitude. Or, we may be kidnapped by pouncy swedish pirates and forced to become hairdressers. Life can be peculiar.

BUDDY

Frank, Look we're at a dock!

FRANK

How did that happen?

BUDDY

I don't know, you was yammering on and then, bam, this showed up.

FRANK

We're saved from death and damnation!

BUDDY

You're right, life is undoubtedly peculiar. What's this sign says, "Welcome to Via Dolorosa."

(An ominous chord.)

Not one of your more cheery places. Where is Via Dolorosa?

(An ominous chord.)

FRANK

It's on the backward side of the Rio Grande river. This ain't no place for us. Nothing but bad news here.

BUDDY

I wonder how to get to my daddy from here?

FRANK

(Finds a fish wrapped in a newspaper and picks it up.)

Look here a fish wrapped in a newspaper.

BUDDY

I'd hate t' be a fish wrapped in a newspaper.

FRANK

(Unwrapping the fish and then reading the newspaper.)

Banner headlines on the Via Dolorosa Evening Star, "Crazy psycho dude kills Captain Pooch Carbuncle." Look, your face on the front page!

BUDDY

Gimme that.

(Grabs paper from FRANK.)

“Captain Pooch Carbuncle, Skipper of the Yankee Thunder, was found dead below deck during a pirate attack just prior to the ship hitting an iceberg during a hurricane. According to an eyewitness by the name of Shirley, Who’s Shirley?”

FRANK

Shirley the sailorman. An ornery sot, but a great dancer.

BUDDY

(Continues reading)

“Shirley said the Captain was murdered in cold blood by one, Manfred Pinkerton also known as “Buddy” who is the son of the wealthy railroad magnate, Elrod J. Pinkerton.” I can’t believe I’m wanted for murder.

(Buddy, in a daze, drops the paper out of his hands. Frank picks up the paper and continues to read.)

FRANK

“According to Shirley The Sailorman, Buddy was spotted releasing a Dinghy moments after the body was found. One body has gone missing, that of the Captains Cabin Boy, whose name is unavailable at this time. The missing cabin boy, whose name nobody really knows, is presumed to be dead.” Lousy rag.

BUDDY

I’m wanted for murder.

FRANK

I’m right here-still breathing.

BUDDY

Why is all this happening?

FRANK

I see they failed to put me name in the paper. I see your name is in there. I guess I’m not good enough.

BUDDY

Murderer.

FRANK

I mean, they think I’m dead the least they could do a little digging and put me name in there.

BUDDY

Shut up, Frank! Would you just shut up! I'm wanted for murder, Frank!

FRANK

Yes, I understand, murder, but they could have at least told a little ditty about me.

BUDDY

My dad put me on a slow boat to China for skippin' school. Lord knows what he's gonna do once he finds out about this! Frank, we gotta get to my dad pronto. I gotta explain this mess and you gotta help.

FRANK

Can't do anything now the sun is just about to come up. We can't take a chance being spotted in the daylight. We'll have to travel at night.

BUDDY

But you can go and find a sheriff, tell them you're alive and that I am not a murder.

FRANK

Are you off your nut! If I go to a sheriff and start jabberin' about this and that he'd think I was part of your murderous plot.

BUDDY

I didn't murder him!

FRANK

Well I didn't murder him.

BUDDY

You think I murdered him?

FRANK

Stop feelin' sorry for yourself.

BUDDY

No, you do. You think I murdered him!

FRANK

Read my lips, Buddy.

(FRANK silently mouths some words.)

BUDDY

What did you just say?

FRANK

How should I know I can't see me own mouth. Now let's get some rest in the Dinghy until nightfall then we'll figure something out.

(They both climb back into the Dinghy. "Gymnopédies No. 1" is reprised.)

BUDDY

I gotta find my dad.

FRANK

Sleep is what we need now.

(As they sleep. Time speeds up. "Gymnopédies No. 1" speeds up. An angry looking sun quickly circumnavigates across the sky. Clouds race across the sky. Birds fly then collide with each other. Then the smiling moon returns and pushes down the sun. Stars spring to life. "Gymnopédies No. 1" is replaced be a heavy ominous sound.

A very large shark fin appears by the dock and then dives underneath the water. Entering on to the dock are two sad looking clowns. They are known as BANGERS AND MASH, THE DANGER CLOWNS. They are from France and, as such, speak with french accents ala Sid Cesar.)

BANGERS

There it is! A boat. I told you. I saw it float in. This is our ticket home. I said to myself, this is our return to France.

MASH

My consciousness is seized with a doubt. The boat is small and we will die.

BANGERS

I will smash your nose now. The boat is not to small.

(In a punch and Judy fashion BANGERS begins beating MASH.)

I smash you! Smash you! Your nose will become small because I am smashing it.

MASH

Oh my nose! Stop making it small, I say!

BANGERS

Are you a weasel?

MASH

I am a clown!

BANGERS

You are an idiot! We have been abandoned. The circus has left us. We are alone. Abandoned. They left to return to France and did not tell us. We are here in this God forsaken outpost of unbridled hell.

MASH

I believe they did not appreciate our clowniness.

BANGERS

Are you not a man?

MASH

I am a clown.

BANGERS

I am a clown too.

MASH

But we are adrift in the meaninglessness of life. Two dark clown souls caught in a stagnant reality of forgotten dreams with our whoopie cushions and balloon animals to comfort us.

BANGERS

Shut up! I want to smash your brains now!

(He takes out a slap stick and smashes MASH on the head.)

MASH

Oh my head. You are hitting my head. Stop! My head will smash into pieces!

BANGERS

What are you, a pig?

MASH

I am a pig with smashed brains.

BANGERS

I thought you were a clown.

MASH

I am a clown who looks like a pig with smashed brains! How can we go sailing back to France when we have no money? How will we eat? On the open sea you will go crazy hunger and try to eat me. I am clown and I will not be eaten.

BANGERS

Shhhh, I think there is someone in that boat. Do you think they heard our diabolical plan to sail this dinghy back to France?

MASH

I do not know. I am scared. We must run away.

BANGERS

We are clowns and we do not run.

MASH

Then let us stand here and act nonchalant, like tourists. When they leave we shall steal the boat.

BANGERS

I shall act like I am reading the news of the day.

(Picks up a newspaper from the ground.)

MASH

I shall act like I am looking out to the sea, longingly, clutched in a painful memory of my romantic youth.

BANGERS

Ready? Set, go!

(There is movement in the dinghy. BUDDY emerges and looks around getting his bearings.)

BUDDY

Frank? Frank, where are you?

(Buddy searches the dinghy.)

Oh, Lord what has happened? Frank, you disappeared. What is going on?

BANGERS

(In a whisper)

I think we have hit the jackpot! Here, look at this newspaper.

(Discretely hands MASH the newspaper.)

That boy is a wanted murderer. His capture is worth five hundred dollars.

MASH

Suddenly I m choked with fear.

BANGERS

He is him. That boy is a boy.

MASH

What do you expect us to do? He is a psycho killer.

BANGERS

Stupid fool. He is a boy and we are clowns. We have the advantage. Follow me.

(In a cartoonish manner they move surreptitiously toward the Dinghy. As they are moving a shark appears behind them and then disappears.)

MASH

Stop. Suddenly I feel the shadow of death loom ominously over me. A great pain echo's in my soul.

BANGERS

There's a great pain in my ass and it is you! Follow me.

(They leap toward the direction of the dinghy.)

Hello! Bonjour! Bonsoir! We are clowns

MASH

Funny clowns!

BANGERS

We have come to entertain you!

(BUDDY is completely startled by the appearance of clowns in the middle of nowhere.)

BUDDY

Huh?

BANGERS

Let me introduce ourselves to you. I am Bangers and he is Mash and we are The Danger Clowns!

(They strike an absurd pose.)

BUDDY

Huh?

BANGERS

The Danger Clowns. Now please step away from that Dinghy so that we can entertain you with some really funny clown stuff.

BUDDY

Huh?

MASH

We do funny clown stuff.

BANGERS

We are The Danger Clowns! Not only is our comedy funny but it is dangerous!

MASH

Dangerous!

BANGERS

Watch a smile grow on your face when we juggle live farm animals before your very eyes. Quick, Mash, go get me a cow and a couple of chickens.

MASH

Now?

(BUDDY grabs the oars and attempts to paddle away.)

BANGERS

Wait! You don't want to leave.

BUDDY

Yeah I do.

BANGERS

No you don't! Not before you see a clown dance the Hokey-Pokey with his head on fire. Quick, Mash, torch my head.

MASH

Now?

BANGERS

How would you like to see me rip off my right thumb and stick it in my left ear!

BUDDY

That's gross!

MASH

And painful.

BANGERS

But entertaining.

BUDDY

You are scaring the heck out of me!

BANGERS

Scary? Us? How can a clown be scary? Does this look scary to you?

(BANGERS takes out a large hammer and starts hitting himself in the head while running around in circles and screaming in pain.)

MASH

I think the psycho in the boat may have a point.

BANGERS

Shut up, I'm doing funny clown stuff.

(Blood begins to ooze from Bangers head.)

MASH

Maybe that's why we have been abandoned. You are very scary. And so am I.

BANGERS

Shut up will you!

(BANGERS stops smashing his head.)

BUDDY

You're bleedin'!

BANGERS

This is not real blood it is comedy blood. Laugh at my comedy blood!

MASH

I would like to take this moment to apologize for being so scary.

BANGERS

If you don't shut up I will kill you!

MASH

Death, death! That's all you see! It's always death with you!

BANGERS

That's it! Time to beat you!

MASH

Why don't you beat me to death! What do I care. I am a scary clown what do I have to live for?

(BANGERS starts hitting mash on his buttocks. They, again, flail about like Punch and Judy.)

Oh you are hitting my De Rigueur, my Dauphin, my Derriere! Oh the pain, the humility.

(During the ensuing malay. BUDDY has left the dinghy and is on the dock laughing uncontrollably at the situation before him.)

BUDDY

Oh my gosh that is so funny! Don't stop keep goin'.

(BANGERS and MASH freeze in mid motion.)

BANGERS

Excuse me. You said something?

BUDDY

Do it again.

MASH

Do what again?

BUDDY

The whacking part. Him hitting your butt like that. And you yelpin' like a dog. I had dog that yelped just that way everytime my daddy beat him with a belt. Hit him on the rump again.

MASH

He wants you to hit my rump.

BANGERS

Oh. Get him!

(BANGERS and MASH converge on BUDDY.
BANGERS holds BUDDY'S ear while MASH twists his
arm.)

BUDDY

Say, what's goin' on here?

BANGERS

Well, Mr. psycho killer you are now a prisoner of The Danger Clowns!

BUDDY

You're hurting me!

BANGERS

I'll stop twisting your ear as soon as you stop flopping about like a yellow finned tuna.

MASH

I love Yellow finned tuna!

BANGERS

Now let's talk, clown to psycho killer.

BUDDY

Is my ear bleedin'?

BANGERS

You are a loopy adolescent wanted for murder-

BUDDY

I didn't do no such a thing-

BANGERS

And we are clowns in search of our circus.

MASH

We are like babies abandoned on a doorstep. They left us behind and must find them.

BANGERS

No one abandons the Danger Clowns. They have gone to a country very far away and I
need to go to them and kill them.

MASH

What?

BUDDY

What?

MASH

Always with the death! Were you going to discuss this plan with me?

BANGERS

Shut up! In order to do this plan-

MASH

That he has never discussed with me-

BANGERS

We are going to need money. L'argent!

BUDDY

You gonna turn me in?

BANGERS

In a word, yes. In a phrase, we want the booty! In short, we are turning your despicable psycho killing self in so that we may go to France and kill circus people.

MASH

We still need to discuss.

BANGERS

With out further ado let us saunter to the jail.

BUDDY

Frank!

BANGERS

Excuse me.

BUDDY

Frank!

BANGERS

Excuse me. I wish you wouldn't shout like that.

BUDDY

Frank, help!

MASH

I believe he is asking for the company of someone named Frank.

BUDDY

Frank!

BANGERS

How can we stop him?

MASH

I have this whoopee cushion.

(BANGERS shoves the whoopee cushion in Buddy's mouth. Silencing him.)

I knew that would come in handy one day.

BANGERS

We need to tie his hands up.

MASH

I have a rubber snake.

BANGERS

No, I love that snake.

MASH

Me to.

BANGERS

I'll get some rope out of the dinghy.

(BANGERS climbs in the dinghy to retrieve some rope. An ominous sound is heard. A shark looms up behind BANGERS chomps down on him and drags him into the water. BUDDY, seeing the whole situation play out before him, is trying to warn the one remaining clown but is muffled by the whoopee cushion in his mouth.)

MASH

What are you saying I can't understand you? What? What? Oh you have a whoopee cushion in your mouth.

(MASH removes the whoopee cushion.)

BUDDY

Your clown friend just got ate by a shark!

(BUDDY tries to escape but MASH holds him in place by grabbing buddy's ear.)

MASH

Wait one moment. Are you trying to escape?

BUDDY

A gigantic shark just ate him!

MASH

Ate who?

BUDDY

Your clown friend dang it!

MASH

I have no clown friend named, "Dang it."

BUDDY

Look in the Dinghy, he ain't there.

MASH

What?

(He turns and walks to the dinghy dragging BUDDY with him.)

Bangers? Bangers? Where are you. Did you go for a quick dip without asking me. Stop your frivolous play and come out of the water. Did you here me? Come out right now and-

(The large shark lunges out of the water.)

MASH

You do not look like a danger clown to me.

(The shark chomps on MASH and drags him into the water. After that action there is silence. After a moment BUDDY speaks.)

BUDDY

Dear Lord, I am finding it hard to think clearly lately. After my recent experiences with a cannibal Captain, Danger clowns and a ferocious shark leapin' out of the Rio Grande, I am feelin' that this world is out of control, unbalanced and that you need to intervene before I explode into tiny pieces. Thank you. Amen.

(There is the sound of gunfire muffled at first but increases from off stage we hear FRANK yelling.)

FRANK (OFF STAGE)

Buddy! Buddy! Hurry, get in the dinghy!

(FRANK immediately appears on stage he is dirty and his clothes are torn.)

FRANK

Buddy, get in the dinghy now!

BUDDY

Frank?

FRANK

We're knee deep in it, you and I.

BUDDY

Frank, is that you?

FRANK

We gotta go! They're after us!

BUDDY

Where ya been Frank?

FRANK

I thought I'd sneak into town and rouse up some supplies but some local scum thought I looked suspicious I got scared started t' run an' they been chasin' me from kingdom come and back again. If they see you then it's adios to your back end 'cause they's a reward for you capture dead or alive. Get in the dinghy they're comin' down the road.

(Sounds of bullets whizzing by.)

BUDDY

I can't get in the dinghy I'm a bit unstable right now.

FRANK

Y' look down right cracker-jack to me now get in the boat!

BUDDY

I seen a jumpin' shark eat a pair of clowns.

(FRANK reaches to grab hold of buddy and is shot and knocked off of the dock and into the water.)

Frank! Can you see my hand? Grab hold of it! Frank!

(As buddy searches for FRANK from the dock an incredibly tall man in a black duster, black hat and a black scarf enters and pointing his gun at BUDDY. His voice is dark and sinister.)

COWBOY

Hold it right there!

BUDDY

What?

COWBOY

You heard me!

(Calls offstage.)

Stop your firing! I got him boys.

(Gunfire ceases.)

Let me bring this puny little killer to ya.

BUDDY

Frank, I'm comin' for ya!

(BUDDY makes a move to jump off of the dock.)

COWBOY

I said, hold it right there!

(THE COWBOY cracks buddy over the head with the butt of his gun. BUDDY falls unconscious.)

You is gonna make me real rich.

(He lets out a sinister chuckle that grows into a wild cackle as the lights fade on the scene.)

End of Scene 3

SCENE 4

4

SETTING: A dark, dank jail cell.

AT RISE: Several weeks have passed. BUDDY is in the corner of the cell asleep and having a nightmare.

BUDDY

Daddy? Stop! Daddy, I'm your son! Daddy don't make me-

(BUDDY screams and bolts up he is wet with sweat and his clothes are all grimy.)

I gotta stop dreamin' like that.

(Picks up a small rock and makes a mark on a wall that is already full of marks and then he silently counts all the marks.)

Twenty-eight? Twenty-eight... I ain't never gonna get out of here.

(He stands and walks to the bars of the jail cell and yells out.)

Hey out there, I'm thirsty! I need some water! I'm dyin' in here! Anybody here me? Please somebody hear me!

(Grumbling of voices. Shadows of tmen reflected on the wall. The sound of keys clinking together. Then keys in a lock. A jail door opening. Tossed Into the jail is an incredibly old man with long bright white hair and beard. He is wearing some type of military uniform. The door is slammed shut. The old man is named SENATOR TWITTY. He jumps towards the bars of the cell.)

SENATOR TWITTY

No jail has ever kept me! Give me liberty or give me death!

(He turns and is startled by buddy's presence.)

SENATOR TWITTY

Who are you, friend or foe?

BUDDY

Friend?

SENATOR TWITTY

Friend! You look like a foe to me. What are you doing in this dead man's brig?

BUDDY

I been accused of murder.

SENATOR TWITTY

Murder! Who'd ya murder?

BUDDY

A captain. But I didn't really murder him.

SENATOR TWITTY

A captain, but you didn't really murder him? Poor words, them are, your gonna die by the rope just like me. Let me tell you son I've killed many a captain in my life.

(Suddenly he grabs his head as if in great pain and drops to his knees. He falls into a schizophrenic delusion.)

Hold your stations Rodney! I can't! I can't! Yes you can! But I got a limey on my tail! General Washington, I wish to report that we have crossed the Delaware. Gimme that hot sausage! Franklin, you're missin' the bottom half of your right leg!

(Quickly returns to his previous demeanor.)

Sorry. A flashback. What's your name son?

BUDDY

Buddy.

SENATOR TWITTY

Buddy? That's a good name. A manly name. You manly, boy?

BUDDY

Last time I checked sir I was.

SENATOR TWITTY

That's good 'cause you can't live in this world unless your manly. Course, if your crazy like me that always helps.

BUDDY

I bet you're right.

SENATOR TWITTY

Course I'm right, you twazling gallumpus! Senator Twitty Bumgarden, pleased to meet you.

(offers his hand for a shake. Buddy responds tentatively.)

Used to be Sargent Senator Twitty Bumgarden, but the government, the same damn government I fought for, busted my rank. Can you believe that?

BUDDY

Well, that doesn't seem right.

SENATOR TWITTY

You're damn right it's not right. Excuse me for moment my mind is about to be invaded by the memory of my former wife. She fell into a really large hole-haven't seen her since.

(Senator twitty has a sudden epic crying fit.)

BUDDY

You okay?

SENATOR TWITTY

(He abruptly stops crying.)

Course not, ya pansy! God, I miss the ole gal.

BUDDY

You don't seem like a real Senator to me.

SENATOR TWITTY

That's 'cause I'm not, ya rumbed up jackass. You have to be damn nuts to be a Senator. I'm only crazy. My name is Senator.

SENATOR TWITTY

That's what my mom named me before she fell into a really large hole. Spooky, huh? First name, "Senator," middle name "Twitty," last name, "Bumgarden." There's a story to that last name but I don't want to go into it. I used to be Sargent but they stole my stripes! Damn Government! God's holy trousers I am so tired!

BUDDY

Me too. I haven't been sleeping well for quite sometime.

SENATOR TWITTY

Dream about the war, do ya?

BUDDY

The war?

SENATOR TWITTY

The war to end all wars, well, sort of. I remember O'hara handing his sword to General Benjamin Lincoln. I was there. Fought in the damn thing myself... Damn, how long have I been fight' in this damn war.

BUDDY

The Civil War?

SENATOR TWITTY

Civil war! There's nothin' civil about war! Where the hell ya been kid? I been out there protecting your stink hole from the British!

BUDDY

The British are attacking us?

SENATOR TWITTY

They are? We had them on the run after Yorktown. I was there.

BUDDY

I'm real confused right now.

SENATOR TWITTY

Imagine how I feel. Would you mind if I just lay down at your feet like a dog?

BUDDY

I don't think I'd like that.

SENATOR TWITTY

Didn't think you would. Where the hell are we?

BUDDY

You're in a federal prison at an army fort just outside Marshall Texas.

SENATOR TWITTY

Name?

BUDDY

Buddy.

SENATOR TWITTY

No, ya sack of dirt. The name of the prison ya bonehead!

BUDDY

Yackadew. Fort Yackadew.

SENATOR TWITTY

Yackadew, eh-h-h.

BUDDY

You been here before?

SENATOR TWITTY

Hand me that stick.

(BUDDY picks up a stick and hands it to SENATOR TWITTY who begins to make a diagram in the dirt floor.)

Okay, Buddy. Take your forces and hook up with the French Battalion comin' from the north. I'll come from the south with my Indians and the Boston attachments. Cornwallis ain't got a chance!

BUDDY

What are you talkn' about?

SENATOR TWITTY

What are ya, a nancy boy?

BUDDY

Huh?

SENATOR TWITTY

They got a rope outside for me, don't they? They're gonna have me do a midair ballet from a cottonwood.

BUDDY

I don't know.

SENATOR TWITTY

Hey good lookin' I'm a hundred and three years old today.

BUDDY

You're a hundred and three?

SENATOR TWITTY

Who's a hundred and three, smart guy?

BUDDY

Well, you are. You just said that. But you look wonderful for your age--

(Senator twitty puts his face in his hands and begins weeping.)

SENATOR TWITTY

I'm over a hundred years old and I can't seem to account for the last eighty years of my life!

BUDDY

Just relax maybe we can-

SENATOR TWITTY

(He falls into another delusional moment.)

Hey Cabot, your insides are falling out! It was cold and my two mates Cabot and Sandy Hook was layin' in the snow with there guts hanging out. Musket fire everywhere. Then a bayonet caught me in the back of my head penetratin' all my most important thinkin' parts. That was Camden. We were slaughtered at Camden. The first time I ever fired at anyone I hit a tea drinking loyalist just outside Delaware. It was at point blank range. The musket ball tore right through his face. He stood there 'bout arms length away holdin' his face and screamin' like a little girl. Then he dropped to the ground like a sack of potatoes... My first one for liberty.

(He stands and begins to march in place and sings several lyrics from the Irish folk tune, "The Holy Ground.")

"And now the storm is over, and we are safe and well. We will go into the public house and we will drink our fill."

(Stops singing but continues to march in place as he speaks.)

Lost the only two friends I ever had at Camden. It wasn't fightin' like I was told it would be, standing like a man and marching in a shiny uniform, It was more like being crouched like a dog wonderin' who was in charge.

(Stops marching.)

Give me liberty or give me death. Get me the hell outta here was more like it. Everybody was so damn angry. You should have seen it. Hey Sandy, who we gonna fight?

The Redcoats, you damn joker. Hey Sandy don't call me a joker! Sweet Jesus, I am so exhausted.

(Grabbing BUDDY by his collar.)

I don't why, but everytime I see a British man, bang! I shoot 'em. Every time I shoot 'em I wind up in one of these places. All these years after the war, I just keep shootin' British people. I haven't stopped. They never taught me how to stop. I bet I killed upwards 'bout three, four hundred British since the war.

BUDDY

You killed three hundred people?

SENATOR TWITTY

I did?

BUDDY

Well you just-

SENATOR TWITTY

Who on this gorgeous earth of ours can say they've fought for liberty? Who? No one!

(In the background plays Barber's "*Adagio for strings*.")

I don't feel very good. I need to rest. All my body parts are all wore out... Oh do you hear that?

BUDDY

Hear what?

SENATOR TWITTY

The music. Finally, my music!

BUDDY

I don't hear nothin'.

SENATOR TWITTY

Dear Lord I was wondering how long you was gonna let me go on. I mean I'm a hundred and three, where you been? This is a great ditty you picked to send me out on. Great music isn't it?

BUDDY

I'm tellin' ya I don't hear nothin.'

SENATOR TWITTY

I wouldn't expect you to hear anything. You're too young, you got a lifetime left. Me, it's finally time to go. Thank you God.

BUDDY

I don't understand what's goin' on?

SENATOR TWITTY

That's my music is my cue. I get to follow the light to the other side. I just want to say you've been a great friend to me all these years-

BUDDY

I just met you-

SENATOR TWITTY

And I really appreciate us learnin' the flamingo together when we was in Sing-Sing.

BUDDY

But I don't know you. We just met.

SENATOR TWITTY

(He removes a medallion on a chain from around his neck.)

This here is a bona fide ancient sovereign given to me by a Spanish sailor I met up with in an asylum out east. He got it when he was captured by a tribe of angry indigenous folks in a jungle somewhere's. He escaped but not after being repeatedly stuck in the ear with a hot poker. He said it was uncomfortable and made him crazy.

BUDDY

I bet.

SENATOR TWITTY

Take it. If ya use it just right it might bring ya good luck... It's time. Think I'll just go over there in that dark corner, if'n you don't mind. Like to die with some dignity. No use to see me squirming like a broken-hipped dog.

(SENATOR TWITTY crosses to where here no longer is visible. But he continues to talk.)

I did fight, Buddy, but it was horrible, like you'll never know. I lost Cabot, Sandy and my mind. You don't have to thank me though, I was glad to do it... Give me liberty or give me death. Damn shame ya can't have one without the other.

(An audible last breath is hear. SENATOR TWITTY is dead.)

BUDDY takes a blanket over to the shadowy area where SENATOR TWITTY is and covers him up. He comes back from the shadows and falls to the ground and starts to cry. After a moment, a loud explosive rumbling sound interrupts the previous music cue and builds to an explosion. FRANK emerges from the stage floor.)

FRANK

Hello Buddy, Long time no see!

BUDDY

Frank!

FRANK

You can't imagine how surprised I was when I came upon a complex systems of tunnels right beneath this jail.

BUDDY

Frank, you're here! I can't believe it! I thought you forgot about me or you was killed in some abominably way.

FRANK

What? The moment I pulled myself from that raging river, I've been on a quest to find you. From the shark infested Rio Grande to the dungeons of Fort Yackadew, I've been hunting you down like a loyal dog, relentlessly searching for his master or your case a Buddy.

BUDDY

Thanks for being my dog, Frank.

FRANK

I was speaking metaphorically. I'm not really your dog.

BUDDY

I never had a dog, Frank. I had a pet birdie once but it died. It fell into a picklin' barrel. It became a pickled birdie. It's name was Dickie. Then it became Dickey the pickled birdie. I still kept it even though it was dead and smelled like a pickle. Then one day, a neighbor boy with an uncontrollable appetite, mistook my Dickey for a kosher dill and ate it. He was sorry but I haven't been the same since.

FRANK

Interesting story, loved to break it down sometime, but we need to escape.

BUDDY

Escape? But where we gonna go?

FRANK

To find your father like you said.

BUDDY

My Daddy? I almost forgot about that.

FRANK

Well, I haven't. Let's make a go of it, shall we? Escapin' prison is gonna make us outlaws again. We'll have to get some horses and travel at night. We'll be like ghost riders.

BUDDY

When I finally see my Daddy I'm gonna look my daddy in the eye and say that 'I am a man.' 'No sir,' I'll say, 'I didn't kill no one.' And then you know what he'll do then, Frank?

FRANK

What?

(A beat BUDDY looks like he is replaying an event in his mind.)

FRANK

What would he do, Buddy?

BUDDY

I guess we'll find out soon enough... Thanks for coming back for me Frank. You're my good and only friend.

FRANK

The feeling's mutual... Is this the part where we have the obligatory awkward hug where we show our sensitivity and yet demonstrate our disdain for physical intimacy?

BUDDY

I think so.

(They have the obligatory awkward hug. As they release from the hug FRANK notices the medallion the buddy is wearing.)

FRANK

Eh now, what's that?

BUDDY

The Senator give me that.

(A sudden realization)

The Senator!

(Buddy rushes to the corner of the cell where he last saw the senator. he is no longer there.)

Senator? Senator?

(Frantically searches around the prison cell.)

He's gone. He was right there just a minute ago.

FRANK

Buddy, I have a feelin' you're not batting with a full wicket.

BUDDY

The Senator was here. I mean he was here but he was dead. I mean he died right over there.

FRANK

The Senator?

BUDDY

What's goin' on?

FRANK

I'm asking meself the same thing.

BUDDY

Did I just imagine all that? Was it a dream? Did he really die? Are you really here Frank?

FRANK

Where else would I be?

BUDDY

I don't know what's real anymore. I'm going crazy Frank. Are you really Frank? Or are you someone who looks like Frank, sounds like Frank, smells like Frank-

(FRANKS slaps BUDDY in the face. BUDDY is in a state of shock.)

FRANK

Snap out of it! You got to get a grip on life. I'm here to save you but I don't know how to get you to your father's place. Only you do. So if you could provide me with a few lucid moments combined with some directions so we can be on our way.

BUDDY

Okay, Frank. I'm okay. Let's get on the road.

FRANK

I'm not sure what went on in here and believe me I don't want to know. I have heard many a sordid tale of prison life. Just forget your experience here.

BUDDY

I will. I just hope I'm not losin' my mind.

FRANK

You need to brass it up. When they find out you're gone they is goin' to send every Marshall and Deputy east of the Rockies and west of the Mississippi out after you.

BUDDY

Oh, great.

FRANK

It's more than great it's an adventure! Onward ho!

(“Ghost riders in the sky” played by *The Sons of the Pioneers* plays as FRANK retreats into the stage floor. Buddy starts toward the hole. Stops and looks out.)

BUDDY

Thank you, Senator.

(BUDDY crawls down into the hole as the music swells and the lights fade to black.)

End Of Scene 4

Scene 5

5

SETTING: An open prairie.

AT RISE: Night. Stars in the sky. Full moon but it looks even more angry than the moon in Scene 3. The music from the end of the previous scene cross-fades into nature sounds of a prairie. FRANK is trying to sleep but is kept awake by BUDDY who is full of manic energy and is pacing about.)

BUDDY

(Singing.)

“And now the storm is over and we are safe and well...”

FRANK

I would really appreciate it if you found something else to sing.

BUDDY

It’s stuck in my head.

(Suddenly he freezes. Trying to hear something.)

Hey, did you hear that?

FRANK

What?

BUDDY

They’re out there. There comin’ to get me.

FRANK

Ain't nobody out there. Just rabbits and prairie vermin

BUDDY

I bet there's about a thousand of them. Trackin' us like animals! Give me liberty or give me death!

(A wolf howls and BUDDY howls back.)

FRANK

Could you just put a lid on it. You been goin' to many days without sleep.

BUDDY

I can't sleep, Frank.

FRANK

You're kidding, I didn't know that.

BUDDY

Really? You didn't know that?

FRANK

I'm not going to dignify that with an answer.

(FRANK covers his head with the blanket. A moment passes.)

BUDDY

Aren't you gonna ask why I can't sleep?

(Pause.)

Frank, aren't you going to ask me why I can't sleep?

(Pause)

Frank, aren't you going to ask me why I can't sleep?

FRANK

(From underneath his blanket.)

Why can't you sleep?

BUDDY

Because when I sleep I dream that I kill my Daddy.

FRANK

Well, that's cheery.

BUDDY

It's a nightmare and It won't go away. It's so real that I wake screamin.' I mean you hear me screamin,' right?

FRANK

I just thought you had to pee really bad.

BUDDY

But that's so strange-

FRANK

Peeing?

BUDDY

No, killin' my dad, 'cause I would never hurt a fly. Well, actually I did hurt a fly. Well, I hurt a lot of flies. Killed 'em, actually. Mosquitos too. I hate mosquitos. But this is what I'm sayin,' I don't know much about killing-

FRANK

(Throws off his blanket.)

Would you shut up! Your brain is driving me crazy!

BUDDY

Imagine how I feel.

FRANK

Can't you think of anything else?

BUDDY

I want to think about other things but I can't.

FRANK

What do you mean, of course you can. Think about the sky. Or dirt. Or little squirrels or girls, think about girls.

BUDDY

Girls?

FRANK

You need to get some sleep. You don't want to show up tomorrow, to your Father, lookin' like something the cat dragged in.

BUDDY

I've always looked like a cat's been draggin' me. I think it's genetic.

FRANK

Sleep.

BUDDY

(A beat.)

Do you think about girls?

FRANK

Well, I don't think about killin' me own father.

BUDDY

(A beat.)

So, what is it about girls that you're suppose to think about?

FRANK

I don't know, you just do. It's like how you think about anything. You think it and that's all. It's all part of growin' up and being a man.

BUDDY

I knew it! Oh man, I knew it!

FRANK

What's wrong now?

BUDDY

I have never thought about girls, Frank! Honestly, I never did. Now what am I suppose to do? Nobody ever told me I was suppose to think about them. Now you tell me it's part of bein' a man. I'll get to my daddy's tomorrow and he'll ask me, 'are you a man son?' And I'll say, 'no Dad 'cause I haven't thought about girls.' Then he'll say, 'well what have you been thinkin' about?' And I'll say, 'I been thinkin' about killin' you dad.'

FRANK

You're blowin' everything out of whack. You just had some nightmares. You are going to be at father's place tomorrow and he'll fix everything up-

BUDDY

Not if I'm suppose to be thinkin' about girls. Which I'm not, which I'm suppose to be but nobody ever told me. My daddy only wants me back only when I become a man. That's why he sent me off in the first place. Would it annoy greatly you if I tried to kill myself right now?

FRANK

A little but, yes.

BUDDY

I am feeling things, Frank. Like, I don't know who I am. My body is different, my bones hurt, my brain's on fire. I been hit hard by somethin' and I don't know what it is.

FRANK

Okay, what do you want? Right now. Right at this very instance. What do you really want?

BUDDY

(Beat.)

I wanna go back.

FRANK

Go back to where?

BUDDY

The pond.

(An orchestra of mini angels descends from above of course they are not really angels but your puppet angels. They are playing Holst The Planets-OP 32 'Venus bringer of peace.' Frank and Buddy are oblivious to such goings on.)

FRANK

What pond?

BUDDY

The pond. When I was a kid. The pond. I would lay by that pond all day. It was out in a field about a mile from town.

FRANK

Lay down, Buddy and drift back. Go back. I'll just wait for you right here. Go back.

BUDDY

So peaceful and warm.

(Time changes. Buddy has fallen into a visiting memory. The scene looks like a Botticelli painting)

Sitting there in the tall grass. The sun shinning. The sun's heat warming my face. I loved that place especially after the winter thaw. Spring is just about to arrive. The wind would be blowin' softly and it be cold.

But if you snuggle deep into the tall grass it would block the wind and the sun would warm you up... That was my favorite place to hide. I'd hide from school and Daddy... Heck, who want's to go to school an' be pestered about how dumb you are. I mean, I already know that. That place was so peaceful. I stare at the fishes swimmin' about in the freezing cold water. They'd flip above the water and grab a bug. I could watch that for hours. I did watch that for hours... It was my place where I could just be till one day Daddy appeared out of nowhere with a strap. He was angry.

BUDDY
(CONT.)

I got beat so hard. I just wish he would have finished me off... He tore me away from the pond, I was like a fish out of water and he shipped me off. How can God give you such a peaceful place and then rip it away. What had I done? I never would have figured, that layin' in that tall grass by the pond, that I would end up here.

(Fade to Black.)

End of Scene 5

SCENE 6

6

SETTING: The fifth floor office of BUDDY'S father, ELROD J. PINKERTON. The office has a large collection of indefensible trophies. Lions heads, rhino heads, elephant heads even tiny creatures such as bunnies and squirrels. All the animal heads have an expression of surprise, anger and abject despair. On one wall there is a large map of the on a world. There is also a large picture window. There are glass cases containing Brains, teeth and one that contains a burning bush.

AT RISE: A loud train whistle interrupts the memory from the previous scene. The music stops the orchestral angels fly-out. Time has shifted.

FRANK

Well, you're here.

BUDDY

Yep. I'm here.

FRANK

It's been an adventure so far.

BUDDY

My daddy's office. Hard to believe.

FRANK

You can look out this window and see for miles. How high up are we, would you say.

BUDDY

About five floors.

FRANK

That's pretty high up.

BUDDY

Listen, Frank, I'll put in a good word for you. I'll get you fixed up.

FRANK

Don't worry about me.

(Pointing to the burning bush housed in a glass case.)

What you suppose this is?

BUDDY

I don't know. He's always goin' about the world collecting stuff.

FRANK

I can see that.

BUDDY

I'm having trouble breathing.

FRANK

Maybe your catching a cold.

(FRANK is in front of a large ornate, gilded box with lots of levers and cranks. It also has a large brass megaphone attached. FRANK turns some cranks and pulls some levers and then suddenly the sound of a beautiful operatic soprano is heard.)

Will you listen to that!

BUDDY

(BUDDY rushes to the box and turns it off.)

He doesn't like it when people touch his stuff.

FRANK

How did that work? That was magic.

BUDDY

Hey, should I wash up or something? Do I smell?

FRANK

How did that work?

BUDDY

I don't know, Frank.

FRANK

Well, Your Father has quite a collection here.

BUDDY

Do you have a comb? How's my hair?

FRANK

You look fine.

BUDDY

Do I look like a man?

FRANK

A fine upstanding man.

BUDDY

Do I look like a son?

FRANK

You know, I think I'm gonna wait outside. You father should be here any moment.

BUDDY

You can stay, he won't mind.

FRANK

Well, it might be kind of awkward with me being here.

BUDDY

It's gonna be awkward either way.

FRANK

Just be yourself, tell the truth and put in a good word for me.

BUDDY

Don't go far.

FRANK

Nope. I'll be just wait downstairs in the lobby. It'll be as if we is in the same room.

BUDDY

(BUDDY wanders towards the large map on the wall. He raises his hands and touches the map.)

I wish I had the courage to run away and travel the world.

(The burning bush glows inside the glass case. A voice is heard, "I am who I am." BUDDY turns toward the burning bush.)

Huh?

(ELROD J. PINKERTON bursts into the room. He is a boisterous mean soul. He is a rich industrialist and a craven bully. He wears a long black coat. Black top hat and he is carrying a long shiny silver sword.)

ELROD

The sword of Damocles! By God I didn't even know it actually existed. What a prize! It says 'Damocles' right on the side. Another prize to my collection. Wonder where I can hang this thing.

(sniffs the air)

What the hell is that smell?

BUDDY

(Quiet at first.)

Hello sir, I'm back. I come home.

ELROD

(Crosses to the door opens it up and calls out.)

Hey, Leon, smells like wet dog up here what the hell is going on?

BUDDY

It's me, Buddy. I'm back

ELROD

Leon, I hope none of your damn coolies snuck up here again. Go rough 'em up a bit see which one is the miscreant. Then kill him.

BUDDY

(Approaching ELROD)

I'm back

ELROD

(Wheels around points the sword at Buddy.)

You step any closer boy I'm gonna lop off that head, have it stuffed and mounted before it hit the ground.

BUDDY

It's me, Buddy.

ELROD

(After a moment.)

Manfred?

BUDDY

I've come home. I'm a man now.

ELROD

You look like the east end of a west bound jackass, boy.

BUDDY

Well, I been through a lot.

ELROD

Seriously, you look bad ugly and you smell like butt.

BUDDY

I'm back and I need your help.

ELROD

You're damn right you need my help! You been a busy little psycho beaver. Isn't that right?

(Suddenly distracted by the burning bush in the glass.)

What are hand prints doing all over this?! I hate nothin' more than finger prints. If I was president I'd outlaw finger prints.

(Polishing the glass.)

This damn thing is one of a kind. Not sure how it works. You're suppose t' hear stuff but I ain't heard nary a thing. But it looks pretty. I got this off some damn mountain in Egypt. I got quite a haul from that trip. Works really well in the winter. Warms up the place. So what do ya have to say for yourself?

BUDDY

What?

ELROD

What are you deaf? I thought I sent you on a slow boat to China.

BUDDY

Things happened.

ELROD

What the hell you come back for? It's not like I'm not busy. Oh sure Elrod take time out of your busy day so you can tend to a slob who's gone mental and killed an old friend of mine.

BUDDY

I didn't kill no one.

ELROD

Carbuncle was a great friend and not mention the sexiest Cleopatra I have ever laid eyes on.

BUDDY

But he tried to eat me.

ELROD

Seriously? You got a screw in that nogin looser than a two dollar whore.

(Grabs buddy's head.)

Hello in there! Earth to Manfred!

(Tosses BUDDY aside.)

It was suppose to be prunes to proverbs, boy. You was suppose to be flushed from head to toe. I got a contract in my desk that guarantee's one cleaned up lunatic child.

(Suddenly is distracted by his musical contraption. He crosses to it and starts to vigorously polish it.)

Are you sure you haven't been touching my things? Better not lie boy, 'cause I'll bust your heart. I love this thing.

(He cranks it and the a bit from the 'Commendatore' scene from act 11 of Mozart's 'Don Giovanni')

ELROD

I hate this music. Gives me gas. But I love this thing. Hell, I just love to own things!

BUDDY

Daddy, I need to talk with you.

ELROD

What's to talk about. You didn't do as you were told, that ain't nothin' knew, then you go off half-cocked and murder!

BUDDY

I didn't murder no one!

ELROD

(Turns of the musics and approaches BUDDY in a threatening manner.)

Don't you ever raise your hackles to me again, boy! Your memory can't be too short to know that I have and I will again, bust you in half...

BUDDY

Yes sir.

ELROD

You are lucky today, Manfred, because I'm in a good mood. Railroad is moving along, now that I got them damn savages off my back and, oh by the way, they's never comin' back. I am making money. A lot of money. I mean a lot. And That curious rash that formed on my back end has pretty much cleared up. I'm feeling jolly. I nearly own half the world and honestly people love me for that. I am admired. The point is this, I'm not going to punish you, personally, for your vile, imbecilic indiscretions.

BUDDY

What?

ELROD

Nope. I have moved beyond all of that.

BUDDY

(BUDDY reacts by attempting to hug Elrod.)

I can't believe this!

ELROD

Whoa! Hold on there boy. Can't stand human contact makes me break out.

BUDDY

This is the greatest day of my life. I knew you would help.

ELROD

Like I said I'm not gonna punish you-

BUDDY

I'm going to be such a great son. You are gonna be so proud of me.

ELROD

But I am gonna turn you in-

BUDDY

This is not all what dreamed would happen. I mean I would have these crazy dreams about you.

ELROD

I'm turning you in, boy. You hear that?

BUDDY

What?

ELROD

I'm gonna let the law take care of you. And I get a little money in return. Ain't that something!

BUDDY

What are you saying?

ELROD

It's the only way you're gonna learn.

BUDDY

But I am you son.

ELROD

Technically yes. I mean I had an itch that needed a scratch and nine month later you appeared. I wasn't too happy about the situation. But I figured when you grew up you'd be good around the house.

BUDDY

What ever happened to her?

ELROD

Who?

BUDDY

My Mother. I had to have a mother.

ELROD

She was just a wrinkle in time. What the heck was her name?

BUDDY

You don't remember her name?

ELROD

It started with an 'f.' Far-something. It'll come to me.

BUDDY

What happen to her?

ELROD

She's probable kickin' about somewhere. What happen was that I tossed her in to sweeten a deal for some bottom land I was wanting in Arkansas. Them hillbillies thought she was the cat's meow.

BUDDY

What! You sold my mother?

ELROD

I remember the little minx put up some fight. Of course she would, I mean look at me. I'm damn handsome and rich. Anyway, after a fair amount of rope around the appendages she knew that a deal was a deal. Women, Manfred, live entirely in a world of there own.

BUDDY

This is crazy. You throw away my mom you're gonna throw away me. How can you do that?

ELROD

Well, I think it's always healthy to declutter.

BUDDY

But it's people. Human beings. I'm a human being. I am your son.

ELROD

I have lawyers working to erase that moniker.

BUDDY

You're office is stuffed with all this junk.

ELROD

Not junk, you moron. Valuable items that I collected from around the world

BUDDY

You collect things and throw away people.

(BUDDY reaches for the shiny sword picks it up and backs away.)

ELROD

What the hell do you think you are doing? Put that down!

BUDDY

What happens if I was to take this sword and bust everything here all of your possessions.

ELROD

It would be safe to assume that you would not leave this office alive.

(Crosses to door and shouts.)

Leon! I need you up here pronto! My son, who is not my son anymore, has gone batshit crazy!

BUDDY

Tell me, how would you feel if I just busted up something. Destroy all this stuff that means something to you!

(BUDDY swings at and breaks an object hanging on the wall.)

ELROD

Good Christ! That was my stuffed human headed butt frog from the wilds of Topango! I loved that thing!

BUDDY

I just realized something.

ELROD

That you're off your fricken rocker! Put down that sword.

BUDDY

I hate you. You got rid of my mother and you have never treated me right at all. I really hate you.

ELROD

You got it all wrong, Manfred.

(Slowly circling BUDDY. Looking for an opening.)

You don't actually 'Hate me.'

BUDDY

I do. I just realized that I do.

ELROD

It's yourself that you really hate. Not me.

BUDDY

No. It's you.

ELROD

No it's not. It's yourself that you can't stand and your making everybody else the reason for your problem. You're suffering from a sense of displaced anger. You're in rebellion with your dysfunctional inner child that lies seething beneath your retardo outer-self. You are an anal retentive, passive aggressive, compulsive, codependent mass of ego phobic muck.

BUDDY

Stop it!

(BUDDY moves to smash the burning bush but ELROD stands in front of it.)

ELROD

No smashy daddy's things, lil boy. You're jealous that I'm a well adjusted, high-powered industrialist hell bent of making America great even if it means some epic ass whooping.

BUDDY

What kinda crap is that?

ELROD

An excerpt from my forth coming autobiography entitled, "I'm better than you."

(ELROD violently lunges toward BUDDY smashing the sword away. BUDDY falls to the ground. ELROD retrieves the sword and dangles it over BUDDY who is cowering in a heap.)

You can see why I titled the book the way I did. I always get what I want. Leon, Where are you?

(ELROD rushes toward the door. The door flies open and woman who is a cross between ‘Granny’ from *The Beverly Hillbillies* and *The Bride of Frankenstein* bursts in. Her name is FARFALLA. She has rope tied around her neck wrists and ankles. With an outstretched hand she grabs ELROD by the throat and with what seems like super human strength tosses him across the office where he smashes into the glass case containing the burning bush. He burns his hands. There is a voice from the bush, “Thou shall not covet...” the voice slows down and out. FARFALLA recovers the sword that has left the hands of Elrod and points it at him.)

FARFALLA

So, you’re back!

ELROD

I’m back? I never left.

FARFALLA

Do you know how long I been waiting for you to return! Scanning the horizons day after day. Week after week. Month after month. Year after every fricken’ year!

ELROD

You’re not who I think you are.

FARFALLA

I’m Farfalla, Pinkerton. Your wife!

ELROD

I can’t believe it. Farfalla? That you?

FARFALLA

In the flesh, you double-dealing, treacherous heart-breaker and now you’re back!

ELROD

You’re back, you donkey! I never left!

FARFALLA

I loved you, Pickerton!

ELROD

I’m sorry about that Farfalla. We just had a misunderstanding.

FARFALLA

You loved on me. I had your child and then you sold me.

ELROD

You got the time line right.

FARFALLA

(In rage she swings the sword about and hits the musical contraption. From the machine we hear 'un bel di vedremo' from act 2 of madam *Butterfly*. FARFALLA rages about the office.)

Oh I shall burst with anguish! My soul has been raided and emptied.

FARFALLA (CONT.)

My heart is without a home. The man that won you has gone off and undone you. That great beginning has seen the final inning. How could you ever think of doing this to me!

(She inadvertently strikes the machine and the music stops.)

ELROD

Being a little over dramatic don't you think?

FARFALLA

What if I cut you to pieces. Cut you the way you cut my heart, my soul!

ELROD

Listen, Farfalla, I'm not gonna be scared of you, even though, I must admit some pee has come out. Instead, we is gonna talk like adults.

FARFALLA

You sold my ass to a bunch of hillbillies. Me! Your lover!

ELROD

Lover? Really? I don't quite remember it that way.

FARFALLA

You filled my mind with promises and filled my body with your-

ELROD

Okay, a little too much information, Farfalla.

FARFALLA

You tied me up and dragged me to the worst spot in the world, to cohabitant with a species that should have been designated as the missing link. And on top of that, everybody was a cousin!

ELROD

Stuff happens. Life is unpredictable. It's all existential.

FARFALLA

You ripped out my heart so I'm gonna chop off your baby-maker.

(She raises the sword moves toward ELROD.)

ELROD

I'm a big fan of my baby-maker.

(BUDDY stands and reveals himself.)

BUDDY

Momma?

(FARFALLA comes to an immediate stand still. After a beat she speaks.)

FARFALLA

Trouble?

BUDDY

What?

FARFALLA

(Turns in his direction.)

Trouble?

BUDDY

Momma, is that really you?

FARFALLA

Trouble. You are trouble.

ELROD

Actually he is. Anyway, that's what she named you. I choose Manfred but I think given the circumstances she was right.

FARFALLA

(She drops the sword. Arm extended, she floats toward BUDDY.)

Trouble. You are all grown up.

BUDDY

I think I'm a man.

FARFALLA

Not like your father I hope... The night is bitter, the stars have lost their glitter,
The winds grow colder And suddenly you're older, And all because of the man that got
away.

BUDDY

Okay.

FARFALLA

Sorry, That just came out. You? You? You? Little idol of my heart. My Love, my love,
flower of the lily and rose.

BUDDY

You okay?

FARFALLA

Living with hillbillies for 10 years tends to make one crazy.

BUDDY

Please don't be crazy. I don't want you to be crazy. I need you not to be crazy.

FARFALLA

Trouble, Oh, you who have come down to me from high heaven, look well, well
on your mother's face.

BUDDY

I can't believe it's you. I can now finally say I have a momma.

(Unbeknownst to BUDDY and FARFALLA, ELROD has surreptitiously crossed to the sword and has grabbed hold of it.)

ELROD

Not in this life.

(ELROD runs the sword through the back of farfalla which pierces her torso with the tip of the blade sticking out of the front of her torso. She screams smashes into the musical contraption we hear 'Un Bel Di Vedremeo' pick up where it once left off.)

BUDDY

Momma!

ELROD

To hell with prison. I'm taking you out myself. Say good bye to this sweet world.

(ELROD retrieves a revolver from his desk drawer crosses toward BUDDY with the gun pointed. FARFALLA runs into the back of ELROD stabbing him with the part of the sword sticking out of her. She wraps her hands around him.)

ELROD

That hurt.

BUDDY

This is not at all what I thought would happen.

ELROD

I'm thinkin' the same thing.

FARFALLA

I guess we're going to be together after all.

(She pushes elrod toward the big picture window. Once she is at the window she turns to BUDDY.)

FARFALLA

Look well, on your mother's face, that you may keep a faint memory of it, look well!
Little love, farewell! Farewell, my little love! Go and play.

(She uses the last of her strength to lunge, along with ELROD, and break through the big picture window. BUDDY races to the window to stop the fall but only is able to grab hold of the sword. They continue to fall, sliding off from the sword. ELROD is exclaiming as he falls.)

ELROD

Farfalla! Farfalla! Farfalla!

(BUDDY is left alone with the sword in hand staring out of the window. The burning bush glows and exclaims, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me.")

Buddy retrieves the glass case containing the burning bush and tosses it out of the window. In the ensuing action we hear at half speed: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The music has stopped and we hear a sound of a needle at the end of a record. Buddy walks to the music contraption and moves a few levers all sound stops. He walks to ELROD'S desk he retrieves some matches lights a candle. FRANK Runs in.)

FRANK

Buddy? You're still here. Thank you baby Jesus. There is a wild commotion down in the lobby. People screamin' that a two bodies fell out a window. I raced up here thinking it may have been you.

BUDDY

It wasn't me.

FRANK

I can see that. Why are you holdin' a bleedin' bloody sword? What went on in here?

BUDDY

I'm not sure I'll ever understand.

FRANK

Where's your father? Where is he?

BUDDY

With my mother.

FRANK

What?

(Using the sword buddy points to the window. Frank crosses to the window.)

FRANK

Is that your mother? Sweet Deus Ex Machina, did you kill them and push them out a window?

(With the candle he has been holding BUDDY begins to light things on fire.)

Wait a minute. What are you doing?

(FRANK takes the candle away from BUDDY and tries to snuff out some of the fire.)

BUDDY

(Buddy retrieves another candle lights it and goes back to lighting things on fire.)

Gettin' rid of the past. I'm gonna be a blank slate. I'm takin' control of my own life now.

FRANK

(Takes the second candle away from BUDDY who then goes and lights a third candle and goes back to his task of starting fires.)

Stop that. Are you off your nut?

BUDDY

I'm gonna start all over.

FRANK

Do you know what's happening? From some reason, which you have yet to explain to me, your parents are five floors down and half way either to heaven or hell and you're about to burn this building down. Do you know what that means?

BUDDY

(He removes the map from the wall.)

I don't care what it means 'cause I'm goin' to place where nothing matters.

FRANK

You are gonna be hunted down, drawn and quartered and what does that leave me. Only with just little bits of you.

BUDDY

I'm gonna wander the earth till I find such place.

FRANK

Really? Well good luck 'cause there is no such place.

BUDDY

Then I'll make one. I'll be the King. I'll make the rules and no one is ever gonna hurt me again.

FRANK

I don't think you understand, there's no gettin' out of this situation.,

BUDDY

What do you want me to do?

FRANK

I want you to stop lightin' things on fire.

BUDDY

Go with me Frank.

(BUDDY slides some levers on the music machine a modern version of The Irish folk song 'The Holy Ground' plays softly at first, but builds in volume toward the end of the act.)

BUDDY

Go with me. We can be partners. We can search for a destiny. My destiny.

FRANK

I can't believe this is happening.

BUDDY

We'll wander the earth until we find such a place.

FRANK

You really have lost your mind?

BUDDY

(BUDDY grabs an oil lamp unscrews the reservoir pours the the contents on the ground. He grabs the candles from FRANK.)

The one thing that my daddy said that ever made any sense is this, ‘beggars can’t be choosers.’ I never had a choice at nothin’ till now. I am gonna set this place ablaze cause I am gonna erase who I was and we can choose to die in the fire here or run like hell.

FRANK

Where do we go?

BUDDY

I’m gonna find my own Holy ground. I would like it if you would be so kind as to accompany me on a journey, Frank. What do you say.

FRANK

I don’t know if we will escape.

BUDDY

We will.

FRANK

How can you be so certain.

BUDDY

Well, honestly, I can’t.

FRANK

Uncertainty never stopped us before. Very well then, let’s brass it up and head off. To the Holy ground, Buddy.

(BUDDY sets the office ablaze with the candles he’s been holding. BUDDY picks up the bloody sword points it to the sky. The office is filled with flame and smoke.)

BUDDY

The Holy Ground!

FRANK

God save us!

(Smoke obscures our adventurers as the music reaches full intensity then black out.)

End of ACT I