

SEEIN' IS BELIEVIN'

A *MURDEROUS* FULL LENGTH FARCE

BY NICK AMATUZIO

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"The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command."

- George Orwell, 1984

'He turned around and he slowly walked away.
They shot him in the back and down he went.'

- Bob Dylan, 'Roll on, John.'

For E.S. and all courageous whistleblowers everywhere.

Description:

'Seein' is Believin' is a contemporary farce centered on mysterious events in Will Emerson's apartment that include hidden bodies, blood-stained knives and a potentially lethal tuba.

A defense attorney by trade, Will conducts clandestine homicidal homework in his flat when he could be spending time with his sexy but attention-starved girlfriend, Cyn Valley.

In 'Seein' is Believin', all the zany mischief and mayhem seen, may not be what they seem.

- Angelo Parra Award-Winning Playwright (The Devil's Music, Blues of Bessie Smith, Journey of the Heart)

Characters

WILL EMERSON: criminal lawyer, late 30's, dedicated, a perfectionist.

CYN VALLEY: receptionist, late 20's, sexy, dresses well/ MAY STONE: 59, Emergency switchboard operator

OFFICER DAWN DELROY: late 20's pretty, rookie cop.

GREG: janitor, retired Vietnam vet, 65, well read/OFFICER DAN STANTON: 49, tough, macho cop.

ROCCO: specialist, 35, tough, big, towering, black, Asian or other visible minority, speaks with Italian accent/ YURI, 33, ex-captain of Russian rugby team, speaks with Russian accent.

TV VOICE: Knowledgeable, trust-worthy, authoritative voice.

Time:

Mid-winter. 2018.

Settings:

1. Will's condo

Acts and Scenes:

Act I -- 7 scenes
Act II -- 3 scenes

ACT 1

Scene 1: Will's condo. Night. City.

LIGHTS up but low on a modest apartment in upper Manhattan. Soft classical music plays on a stereo.

A door leads to kitchen, (O.S.) another to a den, (O.S.), a third, to a bathroom (O.S.) Steps lead to a bedroom (U.R.) a single bed and armoire. A bedside-table holds a lamp and a glowing alarm clock. A sliding glass door leads to a balcony offstage.

A coat stand by the main door (RC). Slippers by the door. A living room (C) with a rug, an old tube TV, reading chair, wastebasket and a two piece couch. A radio, phone and lamp sit on a night stand. A lap top, cell phone and files on a coffee table.

Two spray-painted works showing worlds far away in space, adorn the walls. A tall rubber plant, a window and a bookcase packed with crime novels and legal texts.

A newspaper on the couch. A pair of legs protrudes from one side. What sounds like heavy breathing is coming from behind the couch.

WILL EMERSON, 39, horn-rimmed glasses, a loose tie, slacks, rolled up shirt sleeves, stands up from behind the couch holding a baseball bat. It's dripping red.

He pulls out a rag from his back pocket, wipes the bat clean. Catches his breath. He looks around. Puts the bat against the bookcase, then walks back to the body.

WILL
Happy, Baxter? Happy now?

WILL kicks him. A soft moan seems to come from Baxter.

WILL
You stupid -

There's a knock at the door.

WILL
Be right there.

Another knock.

WILL
Just a minute!

He lifts the body by the shoulders and carries it to the kitchen with the legs sticking out.

WILL returns, looks around, then heads for the door.

The POUNDING continues and reaches a crescendo as he opens it.

CYN VALLEY, late 20's, fiery eyes, sexy, petit, in a flowery skirt and coat enters. Takes off her coat and promptly sits on the sofa. WILL shuts the door.

CYN
News alert. It's Friday night.

WILL
Mr. Guido doesn't believe in Friday nights.

CYN
Your job's gonna kill you. I'll be banging on your door and you won't answer 'cause you'll be dead.

WILL
Did I mention I was busy?

CYN
My calves are killing me.

WILL glances at the kitchen. CYN takes off her shoes.

CYN
Will, this is an emergency. My chiro went to the Orient for two months. I didn't know who else to call. Please?

WILL
Okay, okay. It's not like I was in the middle of something.

CYN
You're funny.

WILL
Yeah, I'm a real laugh. Go on. Lie on your stomach.

He steps into the kitchen. CYN stretches out on the couch. He returns with a bottle of body oil lotion and

applies it to his hands.

CYN

Well, what do you think?

WILL

You have nice legs.

CYN

I meant the pain in my legs.

WILL

Right. Well, Cyn, I'm sure I've told you that wearing high heels can shorten calf and back muscles -

CYN

I'm not giving up my heels.

WILL sighs, touches her calves. Rubs gently.

WILL

Then get used to suffering.

He slaps her calves, then starts giving a deep massage.

CYN

Owww! You sure know how to take the fun out of living.

WILL

We all suffer, Cyn. No one gets a free ride but if you get yourself flat shoes, your body will be so grateful -

CYN

I'd be grateful if you changed the music. I'm in the mood for something with a beat. Have any - Michael Jackson?

WILL

No.

CYN

Too bad he's gone. What a shame. He was so talented. I loved his voice. And his dancing. Ohhh! Talk about moves.

WILL

I never cared for him.

CYN

You're just jealous.

WILL

I don't think so. He was always grabbing his crotch onstage like he was afraid he'd misplaced his dick. I don't understand why women went nuts over it. God, if any other man did that in public, he'd be tasered to a crisp and arrested two seconds later.

CYN

Well, I didn't mind it. I didn't mind it at all.

WILL

You didn't mind grabbing himself down there?

CYN

I bet he was a prisoner of his rhythm.

WILL

Well, whatever he was a prisoner of, he was strange.

CYN

He was not.

WILL

I suppose it's normal to live with a chimpanzee? From what I heard, they were room mates. Tell me that's not strange.

CYN

Bubbles.

WILL

Yeah, in his brain.

CYN

No, dummy. That was his chimp's name. Bubbles.

WILL

And please explain why someone who has made gazillions on his music wastes time doing a stupid pop commercial? You can't take the money with you. I guess he didn't get that bulletin. By the way, that's how his hair caught fire - from doing a stupid pop commercial.

CYN

That wasn't his fault. It was an accident.

WILL

Greed's a sin, Cyn. Do yourself a favour and expand your taste in music.

CYN

Like you're an expert.

WILL

Let's just say I've heard more. Try listening to Neil Young.

CYN

Never heard of him.

WILL

'This Notes for You' might open your eyes. Neil says he won't sing for anyone that makes him look like a joke. Imagine what kind of world we'd have if we all shared that philosophy?

CYN

Well, lots of people do commercials. Pro athletes do them all the time. What's wrong with that?

WILL

Asks someone who happily sings idiotic commercial jingles.

CYN

FYI. Some happen to have nice sing along tunes.

WILL

And those pro athletes are just selling out. As if they don't have enough money. .Don't you see? That's how people are turned into mindless consumers. Zombies strolling malls with their credit card ready to max.

CYN

Oh please.

WILL

Advertisers bombard defenceless human brains with ad after ad after ad. It's like an ad blitz. They tell you what to buy, wear, drink, eat, think, what's cool, what's not. I swear, apes must wonder how the hell we became the dominant race.

CYN

Stop talking and concentrate. You need to do your magic so I can go dancing tomorrow night. I-I love dancing.

WILL

I wouldn't advise it but what do I know?

CYN

Momma said I was born to dance. Wanna come?

WILL

Too busy. I'll dig deeper, zero in on a trigger point.

He rubs his hands together, massages her legs harder.
She grits her teeth. He taps her calf.

CYN
Oh! Ugh!

WILL
Just remember that one inch heels increase pressure on your feet by over twenty per cent. The human body is an amazing machine if you take care of it.

CYN
I get it. High heels are bad. God, once you start preaching - no wonder we couldn't work things out.
(pause)
What are you waiting for?

WILL
I don't want to hurt you.

CYN
You're such a wimp.

WILL
You're lucky I'm not the sensitive type.

He stretches his hands, wiggles his fingers and digs in deep, zeroes in on a trigger point.

CYN
Oww!

WILL
Hey! That was fun! Oh, guess what I found? Another knot. Lucky me. Oh, this one's really tight.

CYN
(panting)
Ohhh! I take it back. Y-you're not a wimp. Oooo! Thanks. Oooh. That feels so much better. Oooh. Thanks. Bye.

She tries to get up. WILL holds her down.

WILL
I'm not finished.

CYN
(groans)
You sure ... you know what you're doing?

WILL

(laughs)

Positive. I worked as a masseuse's assistant at a health club in my college days.

CYN

H-how ... how many people did you kill?

WILL

I lost track but Molly taught me a few things.

He works on her right calf. Cyn beats the pillows with her fists.

CYN

Is .. is she still ... alive?

WILL

Retired but alive and well. Molly lives in Mexico. Sends me two pounds of chocolate-flavored tacos every Christmas.

CYN

Get me her address so I can send her five pounds of hate mail.

WILL gives her one more deep rub, then slaps her calf gently.

WILL

Okay, Your free therapy session is over.

CYN

That wasn't therapy, that was torture.

WILL

(wipes his hands dry)

Try walking across the room. Use your regular stride.

She gets up, gingerly moves around. Takes a few steps
Walks with more confidence. WILL cleans up.

CYN

Hey, that feels better. Maybe you know what you're doing after all. I feel like celebrating. Wanna go out for a quick drink?

WILL

Can't. Once I'm done with Baxter, I'm catching up on my sleep.

CYN limps over to the bookcase.

CYN

You sure have a lot of books.

(reads book titles out loud.)

'Murder at Dawn.' 'Murder in Buckingham Palace.' 'Inside the Killer's Mind.' My, aren't you the life of the party?

WILL

Murder mysteries help me relax.

CYN

I can think of better ways. Thirsty?

WILL

No. Just sleepy. I'm warning you. I didn't clean up.

CYN

I know a good cleaning lady.

She moves to the kitchen (OFFSTAGE). WILL steps to the bookcase, picks up the baseball bat.

CYN (O.S.)

Oh my God!

WILL taps the bat in the palm of his hand. Sits in his chair. CYN returns sipping a drink. She sits on the sofa.

CYN

I stand corrected. You need two cleaning ladies.

WILL

Not my fault. Baxter was - difficult.

WILL drops the bat on the floor.

CYN

You should take a break. God knows you need one.

(stretches on couch seductively)

And when you're not working, you're thinking of working.

WILL

Blame it on my boss.

CYN

Know what your number one problem is?

WILL

Yeah. I need to sleep after I take care of Baxter.

The telephone rings, WILL picks up the phone.

WILL
(into phone)
Hello ... Yes, sir. I-I'm almost done. Alright. Good night

He ends the call. Stands.

CYN
Come here. Sit next to me.

WILL
Cyn, stop goofing around. Put on your shoes.

CYN
(pouts, sits up)
Your wish is my command but that's one big wasted wish.
(lunges at Will)
Speaking of passion ...
(misses, falls on the floor)
Oh!

WILL doesn't notice. CYN gets up, straightens herself out. Puts on her shoes. He makes a call.

WILL
(into phone)
Hello, this is Will Emerson. I need a cab. Thank you.

He hangs up the phone, hands Cyn her coat.

CYN
Are we going somewhere?

WILL
Yeah. I'm making sure you take the cab so I can get on with my work.

LIGHTS dim as he helps her on with her coat. They leave.

Scene 2: One week later.

LIGHTS up but low. WILL's TV is on. We can't see the picture but we hear the audio. A newspaper and Will's jacket are on the couch.

WILL in jeans and sweatshirt, is standing behind the couch holding a cord like he's going to strangle someone.

TV VOICE

"- the NSA appeared to break the law thousands of times according to its own internal documents. And now, a look back; "Every gun made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, is a theft from those who need help the most ... One fighter plane costs half a million bushels of wheat, a destroyer is the equivalent of new homes that could house more than 8,000 people." President Eisenhower tried to warn us about out of control military spending way back in 1953 ...

WILL lowers the TV volume, then walks back to the far end of the couch. Bends down.

WILL

Now you're sorry? Well, it's too late, Gordon. Too late!

He chokes Gordon from behind with a cord.

WILL

Much too late

He stops, stands. Tucks the cord in a back jean pocket and EXITS to kitchen. Seconds later, he ENTERS sipping beer from a can. He sits on the couch, puts down his beer. He turns to his lap top and types away.

WILL

Mr. Thomas. Gordon. Cause of death. Strangulation.

(makes a call. Speaks in cell phone)

Rocco, come by in an hour. I'm finished with Gordon..

(shuts his cell. Turns TV volume up.)

TV VOICE

"We've spent 80 billion dollars on high-tech stealth F-22 Raptor fighter jets and they haven't seen any combat even though we've been in four wars since. We're replacing them with 2,500 new and improved F-35's, for only ... 400 billion. The icing on the cake? We're spending 12 billion more on three state of the art, stealth destroyers that might stay afloat.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Will lowers the volume, walks across the room, checks the peep hole and opens the door.

GREG, 65, looks like an old hippie dressed in maintenance garb, enters pushing a cleaning cart with a binder on top.

GREG

People think they know what's goin' on -

WILL

Greg, now is not a good time.

GREG

You're tellin' me. Creeps are watchin' twenty-four seven.

WILL sighs. Shuts the door. GREG strolls over to the couch. Plops himself down. WILL sits away from him.

WILL

Who's watching?

GREG

Man are you behind the times. Listen to John Lennon's 'Working Class Hero' and then we'll talk.

WILL

I know. I know. Lotta truth in what he said.

GREG

You heard it?

WILL

Course I heard it. Many times believe it or not.

GREG

Right on, man.

(pause)

Maybe you're not as square as I thought.

WILL

Thanks.

GREG

You know he was warnin' us, tellin' us the pricks in power want us distracted, Makes us easier to control. Religion. Fashion. Sports. TV. It's all part of their big distraction plan. You on Facebook? Twitter? Any of that crap?

WILL

No. I'm -

GREG

Good. Social media ain' exactly prime conduits of progressive enlightenment.

WILL

I guess not.

GREG

Someday a rich prick with shit for brains is gonna be elected President by morons who think they're informed. Oh wait! It's already happened. I can't believe America can be so -

(leaps back)

Oh, man, didja see that one?

He grabs his mop, searches under furniture ready to jab something.

WILL

See what?

GREG

It's gone now.

(puts back his mop)

Get my jelly beans? I got a monster cravin'.

WILL

Oh right. I picked some up for you on the way home.

He pulls out a paper bag from his jacket pocket. Gives it to Greg.

WILL

There you go.

GREG

Thanks man. You're-you're a lifesaver.

GREG digs in like he's famished.

WILL

Greg, you okay?

GREG

Feel like shit, man.

WILL

Not enough sleep?

GREG

I wish. They dropped Agent Orange on us when I was in 'Nam.

(laughs)

Thought I was servin' my country. Turned out my country was servin' me - on a fuckin' silver platter. I was nineteen when I was drafted.

WILL takes off his glasses, rubs his eyes, puts his glasses back on.

WILL

You served in Vietnam?

GREG

Yeah. Not old enough to think, drink or vote but just old enough to kill.

WILL

You know, I've met vets from Desert Storm, Iraq, Afghanistan but you're my first Vietnam vet.

GREG

Shoulda gone to Canada, man but I didn' wanna leave my family an' friends. That's how they control ya. How they suck ya in. Guess the joke's on me -

(laughs)

'cause I wake up with chills n' shakes anyway. If I told ya all the crap I seen, your hair would turn white.

WILL

Isn't there someone who can help? Someone you can call?

GREG

Too late, man. I tried counsellin', therapy, took all kinds of meds but nothin' helped. I was just a dumb kid who believed my country needed me. Couldn' see straight. My head was so wrapped up in our flag, it cut off the circulation to my brain.

WILL

Greg, I'm really sorry you're - if there's anything I can do to help, just let me know. But not right now. I-I'm in the middle of something.

GREG

Shit. Sorry, man. You with one of your lady friends?

WILL

Huh? No. I'm alone. Just me, myself and I and we're busy. With work.

GREG

Hear ya loud and clear man. Well, the reason I popped by - wanna sign my petition? I'm suing the government.

He picks up his binder, takes out a ball point pen.

WILL

On what grounds?

GREG

For lyin', man. for fuckin' lyin. The powers that be, I mean the pricks who control government - they never tell the truth.

WILL

(laughs)

That's their job description. You can't sue them for that.

GREG

Slimes in power operate in secrecy. Total secrecy.

WILL

Guess you could say that. But we all have secrets, don't we?

GREG

Not like them pricks. Dylan called the war mongers, Masters of War. Like tell me honestly, do ya think it was right we fire-bombed the shit out of Japanese cities in March 1945?

WILL

(stops)

Fire-bombed?

GREG sidesteps Will and paces about.

GREG

Over three hundred thousand civilians. Instantly incinerated. Those who weren't, fuckin' wished they were. That was before they microwaved Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If that ain' insane -

WILL

Maybe Japan wouldn't surrender. I don't -

GREG

That's bullshit, man. Every reputable historian knows that Russia and the U.S. had Japan by the short hairs but fuckin' Truman wanted to show Stalin how tough we were.

WILL

Greg, please. I have work to -

GREG

Yeah, I know. I know. You're busy. But answer this, wiseguy. Why are we always at war? Why do we spend over a trillion dollars on defense every year?

WILL

The U.S. has a lot of enemies?

GREG

Why are we the only nation with almost a thousand naval bases worldwide? America's paranoid, man, fuckin' paranoid. Truth is, the US military is the biggest threat to world peace.

WILL

I don't ... can we discuss this at another time?

GREG puts his binder down on the cleaning cart. WILL gently steers him to the front door.

GREG

Every signature counts.

WILL

Let me think about it.

GREG

I'll leave ya some readin' material. I got extra copies.

WILL

I'd rather not. I don't know when I'll have a chance to -

GREG takes out a thick file from the binder. Drops it on the coffee table. WILL ushers Greg to the door.

GREG

We strut around like we're Mother Teresa but we're just specialists in spreadin' Ground Zeroes 'round the world.

WILL guides Greg out.

WILL

Good night.

GREG

People think they know what's goin' on. They don' got a clue!

LIGHTS dim as WILL shuts the door.

Scene 3: Two weeks later.

LIGHTS are low. Will's briefcase and a few letters on the coffee table. His jacket is on the chair

WILL appears holding a long knife and a dishcloth. He looks haggard. His tie is loose. He creeps towards the den, waits a moment, then darts in, leaving the door slightly open. We can't see anything but we see shadows and what sounds like a struggle.

WILL (O.S.)

Where's my loot, Ray? I got bills piling.

(pause)

Last chance. Otherwise, you leave me no choice.

A THUD. We hear what sounds like a struggle. Glass cups jump. Pushing. Grunting.

WILL (O.S.)

Where'd you stash my cash? Alright, have it your way.

Someone is being stabbed. A muffled scream. Silence.

A few seconds later, WILL enters, out of breath. His glasses are crooked, his hair disheveled. He wipes the blood off the knife with the dishcloth, adjusts his glasses, enters the kitchen. He returns seconds later with a beer. Sits on the couch, stares into space.

WILL

(sighs)

Another one bites the dust.

He puts down his beer, looks over a file, turns on his lap top. Gets busy at the keyboard.

WILL

Mr. Ray Cooper. Cause of death: multiple stab wounds to chest.

(grabs his cell phone, makes a call)

Hi Rocco ... Unfortunately, Mr Cooper didn't tell me anything new. See you soon. Thanks. Bye.

WILL turns off his cell and turns on his lap top.

LIGHTS dim while he types away.

Scene 4: One hour later.

LIGHTS are still low.

WILL and ROCCO, 38, tough-looking, black (or other visible minority if possible) in a hooded sweatshirt, old jeans, leave the den carrying a rolled up blood-stained carpet containing what looks like a body. An arm hangs lifelessly by its side.

WILL

I appreciate this, Rocco. I really do.

ROCCO

(with an Italian accent)

Is nothing. Happy to help. You will need new carpet, no?

WILL

Yeah. I was sloppy. Should be more careful.

(chuckles)

Blood stains are hard to get rid of. You know, the first time we met I found it hard to believe you were Italian.

ROCCO

(laughs)

Is okay. You no the first.

WILL

I know there are blacks in Italy but seeing is believing, I guess. We're conditioned in so many ways without even knowing it. You were born in Italy, right?

ROCCO

Yes, in Napoli. My parents left Ethiopia when they were married. I come to America when I was twenty.

WILL

Bet you have your share of stories. When we're done, let's stop for a bite - my treat. I've been so busy I stopped eating.

ROCCO

Okay, boss. I know just the place. You gonna love it.

WILL

We better use the rear elevator again. No sense in asking for more trouble if we don't have to.

LIGHTS dim as they leave. The door closes behind them.

Scene 5: Two weeks later. Late night.

LIGHTS up on WILL in a parka, looking exhausted. He's carrying his briefcase and a pizza box. He removes his coat, hangs it up. It falls to the floor. He leaves it there. His suit is wrinkled. He puts on slippers, waves to the droopy rubber plant.

A tuba in an open case is on the coffee table, an open book beside it. Behind the couch, partially hidden on the floor, looks like a man's lifeless body, wearing dark pants and black shoes.

WILL drops his keys on the coffee table, EXITS to the kitchen with the pizza box. He returns seconds later sipping a cup of hot cocoa and stares at the body,

He moves to the sofa, sits. Picks up the book, reads a few lines but puts it down. Rubs his tired eyes. Rests.

Then he pulls a harmonica from his inside jacket pocket, plays a few sad notes then trudges up to his bedroom.

He changes in the dark. Crawls into bed. It is 3:59 a.m. With a groan, he falls asleep. Seconds later, a car alarm (off stage) suddenly fills the air. It goes on and off.

ALARM (O.S.)

Aiiiiiiiiiiiiiiweeeeeeeeeeeeeee!

WILL leaps up. Falls out of bed. Looks around. Peeks out the window

WILL

This is why some people become axe murderers.

He grabs his cell phone. Calls 911.

WILL
Police?

LIGHTS up on MAY, 59, a police dispatch operator. She's at her cubicle. A pop and notebook by her side.

MAY
To make a complaint, you'll need to fill out form 273.

WILL
I'm not calling to complain about the police.

MAY
Thank God. Ever since that retard - mentally challenged man was shot nine times you wouldn't believe the slew of angry calls.

WILL
Shot nine times? That's crazy.

MAY
That's what happens when you resist arrest in broad daylight and insist you haven't done anything wrong. So, in twenty-five words or less, is your problem life-threatening?

WILL
Could be.

MAY
Sir, it's very simple. If someone's been maimed, mauled, molested, or mugged or what we call 'M4,' for short, I'll send a police car or dispatch a paramedic team ,lickety-split. Now, to the best of your knowledge has anyone suffered an M4?

WILL
Not that I know of.

MAY
Good. That narrows it down. Anyone been murdered?

WILL
I'm no fortune teller but I have a feeling someone in my neighbourhood might be real soon.

MAY
I see. To clarify, is a mentally-challenged person waving a pocket-knife, letter-opener, screwdriver, corkscrew, stapler

or any other dangerous life-threatening weapon on your property?

WILL

No. Um - how can a stapler be dangerous and life-threatening?

MAY

For the record, they can be quite hazardous. You've obviously never been stapled or you'd know what I mean. Now if such a person of any sex and I don't have time to list them all, waves one or all of the previously mentioned weapons, er, items, that whacko will be shot ASAP. We've been trained to be socially aware and we don't discriminate and FYI, it's for their own good.

WILL

What? How?

MAY

Helps teach the mentally-challenged to think twice before brandishing anything threatening. Our heavily-armed, highly-trained, handsomely paid law officers with itchy fingers will respond with no questions asked, least not 'til the media gets whiff of it. That's also our policy.

MAY sips a pop, slurping down a mouthful.

WILL

No, it's nothing like that.

MAY

Oh. Okay, let me see ...

(pause)

Anyone blowing bubbles in your face? Our finest will teach whichever vile dirty desperado's doing that, a lesson they'll never forget. Get soap in the eye. Ouch. He or she, will be tasered twice before you can say Bob's your uncle and once they stop twitching, they'll be arrested, booked, strip-searched and de-loused. De-housed, too, if they're in public housing and in the event they continue to resist, they'll be slapped with thick phone directories to show we mean business.

WILL

Uh - that's not why I'm calling.

MAY

Sir, is this a trick? Most sane people are sleeping unless they're working like yours truly. Are you one of those crazy all night radio dj's pulling a prank? I don't have time to

chit-chat unless you can call back when -

WILL

I'm calling because the car alarm's so loud!

MAY

Well, they're supposed to be loud. Otherwise -

WILL

It's probably breaking every noise bylaw in the city.

MAY

Sir, please remain calm.

WILL

All I want is some peace and quiet!

MAY

Sounds like you have a zoning problem. I suggest you call City Hall during regular business hours. They might be able to help.

WILL

Look I need help here. I-I'm a law-abiding, tax-paying, non-complaining citizen ... well, most of the time.

MAY

(sighs)

Okay, okay. Is the vehicle stolen?

WILL

How the hell do I know? Sorry. I've had a long day.

MAY

Apology accepted. Now let's see ...

(sips her pop with a slurp)

You'll need that vehicle's license number so we can check.

Otherwise, it is out of my hands.

WILL

So you can't do anything without a license number?

MAY

Cor- rect.

(burps)

Whoa. Sorry.

WILL

That doesn't mean you will since it might not be -

MAY

Stolen. Cor-rect again, sir. Wow. You are on a roll. Must be your lucky day. Bought a lottery ticket?

WILL

Does it sound like I'm feeling lucky?

MAY sips more pop.

MAY

Sir, this isn't a psychic hotline. However, the Big Ball Lotto jackpot is 297 million so I'd take a chance if I was you. You never know when Miss Lady Luck will dance by.

WILL

Do you know what the odds are?

MAY burps again.

MAY

Excuse me. Pop gives me gas like you wouldn't believe. Normally I'd have six cups of coffee but my doctor said I had to cut down. Anyway, you can't win if you don't play.

WILL

(yawns)

Ma'am, lotteries are nothing more than a tax on the poor. Oh forget it. I'm exhausted. Haven't slept since -

MAY

Sleep deprivation isn't healthy. I strongly advise you to get at least seven hours of sleep. And do something about that noise. I can hardly hear you.

WILL

That's why I'm calling!

MAY

Then get that license number and call right back. If the car's stolen, an officer will be there ASAP.

WILL

But it's freezing outside. I'll have to get dressed.

MAY

I would if I was you. It's twenty below without the wind chill. I bet even those looney Polar Bear club nuts are staying in tonight. Between you and me, they need serious help. However, if you decide to step out without getting properly dressed, you'll definitely need medical treatment for exposure and afterwards, as a bonus, you'll be immediately be

ushered into the psych ward. In that case, call -

WILL

You don't understand. I-I have too many loose ends to tie. I need my sleep. You wouldn't believe what's on my plate.

MAY

Sir, it sounds like you need someone to talk to. How about I connect you with the I.I.A. ?

WILL

Who?

MAY

That's Insomniac's International Association. It's a toll free friendly number and you're practically guaranteed to get a connection with someone who just loves to chat. 'Course they might not speak English but it's the thought that counts.

WILL

Oh forget it!

He hangs up.

Lights dim on MAY as WILL gets back into bed. He hides his head under his pillow. The alarm fades.

WILL falls asleep as the lights fade to dark.

Scene 6 One hour later.

LIGHTS up on WILL asleep in his bed. The wind is rattling his bedroom window. Suddenly, a LOUD COOING noise from outside spills into his room.

PIGEON SOUND EFFECTS (O.S.)

Cooo! Cooo! Cooo!

WILL moans. Turns on his lamp. Stares out his window.

WILL

Stupid birds!

Scrambling out of bed, he peeks out. More pigeons (off stage) gather in defiance, making a racket. He pushes the window open. We hear a burst of wintry wind.

WILL

Get lost! Go away! Vamoose!
(shuts the window)

Man, that's cold!

Squawking pigeons flutter away. WILL shivers from the cold. Climbs back into bed. Drifts off. After a few seconds, all is quiet.

WILL falls asleep. Morning light invades his room. Suddenly, the doorbell rings. RING! RIIIIINGG!.

WILL
Huh? Wha? Oh God -

RING! RIIING! RIIIIING!

WILL
(stumbles out of bed)
Oh God. Someone is eager to die this morning. I'm coming!
(to himself)
Damn building better be on fire!

WILL gropes his way down the stairs. He's wearing green pajamas pants and an old gray sweatshirt

WILL
(peeps in the peep-hole)
Cyn?

He unlocks the four door locks but after each one, he almost falls asleep and has to find energy to carry on.

CYN enters wearing an expensive-looking fur coat and a furry Russian hat. She clutches a chic purse and has a thick file under her arm.

WILL shuts the door. She hands him the file.

CYN
Your janitor insisted. Said it was urgent.

She removes her coat, drops her purse on the sofa and peels off her coat revealing a sexy dress, stockings and two-inch heels. CYN sits. Crosses her legs.

WILL
Oh that's Greg. America's number one foreign policy expert.

WILL drops the file on the coffee table.

CYN
He's weird. Asked if I had jelly beans. Do I look like I might

carry jelly beans?

WILL

Only if you swallowed them. You - you look - nice.

CYN

All men think about is our bodies.

WILL

Keep dressing like that, you'll raise the dead. Well, almost.

CYN

You bought another lock?

WILL

Problem with the door. Super was supposed to fix it eons ago.

(glances at her legs, sighs)

Still wearing heels?

CYN

I've cut down. They're only two inches.

WILL

You can bring a horse to water.

CYN

Someone's grouchy this morning.

WILL

I wonder why? Maybe it's because I worked fourteen hours yesterday, had two hours of sleep, my back's sore and it's not even - eight o'clock in the morning!

CYN

Want a massage? My Saturday nigh-morning special will make your tension dis -

Her cell phone rings. She checks the caller's number.

Shuts it off.

CYN

Wrong number.

WILL

What do you want, Cyn?

CYN

You need to work your magic again. Went out dancing Thursday night. Had a great time but I ache all over. How about you work on my legs ...

(pumps up a cushion.)
Come sit. Keep me company.
(sees the tuba, laughs)
You never told me you played the tuba.
(strolls over)
You don't seem the type. Will, you continue to surprise me.

WILL
I'm not and I don't. Please don't touch it.

CYN
(points to the body)
Don't you ever take a break?

WILL
Can't. Not finished with him yet. Forget him. He's not important. Well, he is but he doesn't concern you.

CYN digs for something in her purse.

CYN
Oh shoot!

WILL
Don't tempt me. Now what?

CYN
I was going to check my lottery tickets but I left them at home. You ever play?

WILL
Did you see the word 'sucker' tattooed on my forehead?

CYN
What?

WILL
'Everybody Knows.' Leonard Cohen.

CYN
Excuse me for living but I don't.

WILL
So much to teach you. So little time. 'Everybody Knows' is the name of his song.

CYN
Sorry. Doesn't ring a bell.

WILL

Suzanne? Marianne? Joan of -

CYN

I'm not interested in your ex-girlfriends.

WILL

Okay, forget that. The point is ... you're too smart to be a sucker even if your music taste sucks. For every winner, there's ten million losers. That's what Cohen was saying.

CYN

Well smartie, my first cousin, Coco, on my mother's side, won a cool million. Whaddya think of that?

WILL

Lightning always strikes somewhere. Were you two close?

CYN

Not as close as I thought. If I ever win big, I'm quitting work, give them two days notice and then I'm gone, gone, gone.

WILL

You have to give them two weeks.

CYN

Yeah, right? What can they do, fire me? I'd visit Europe. Maybe even Moscow but in the summer. Winter's are too cold.

WILL

If you get lucky, don't forget your friends.

CYN's cell phone rings again.

CYN

RRR-r-r-r!

(stands, turns away,)

Excuse me.

WILL

I could use a sound proof room for starters.

CYN

(whispers)

I told you - none of your business!

(shuts her cell.)

My accountant. I need a coffee. You?

WILL

Had over forty cups this week. If I cut myself, I'll bleed pure Colombian. Hope you take it black. I'm out of milk.

He lumbers to the kitchen. CYN steps past the sofa.
Trips. Knocks over a lamp. Falls.

CYN

Oh!

WILL turns around, walks back to her.

WILL

You okay?

CYN

Yeah, yeah.

(gets up)

Did you have to leave him lying there?

She rubs her wrist. WILL helps her to the sofa. Checks
out her aching wrist.

WILL

Does this hurt?

CYN

Owww!

WILL

Guess that's a yes. I'll get you an ice pack.

CYN

Looks like your lamp is toast.

WILL

I never liked it anyway.

CYN

Don't forget my coffee.

WILL picks up the damaged lamp. Puts it back. Enters
kitchen. CYN's cell rings. She answers it.

CYN

Now is not a good time.

She snaps off her cell. WILL returns with an ice pack and
a coffee in a mug. Hands her the coffee. Sits.

WILL

There you go.

CYN

Thanks.

He applies the ice pack. She sips her coffee, chews gum and casts an occasional glance at Will. From time to time, she blows the odd bubble, making him jump.

CYN

You make coffee so yummy.

WILL

It's instant, Cyn. A lobotomized baboon could make it with his eyes taped shut. You just add hot water. Stir.

CYN

You're too modest. That's your problem.

WILL

Cyn, I need sleep. That's my problem. Just my bed and I.

He removes the ice pack. Checks her wrist.

WILL

I think you're good to go.

CYN doesn't get up. WILL pulls Cyn to her feet. She puts the coffee down and wraps her arms around his neck.

WILL

Cyn, please ...

With great effort, he disentangles himself.

WILL

How can you chew gum and drink coffee at the same time?

CYN

I'm a multi-tasker. Prerequisite of my job. Mmmm.

WILL

I'm only saying this once. You listening?

She takes a step back. Puts a hand on her hips. She's a modern woman. She can take it.

CYN

I'm all ears.

WILL

Normally, I'd belt it out but I'm too tired. 'American Woman.' Guess Who.

CYN

I have no idea.

WILL

A Canadian rock group! Give them a listen.

CYN

Who?

WILL

No, Guess Who.

CYN

I said I don't know.

WILL

Forget it. Look, Cyn. You know what they say. Two's company.
Three's a -

CYN

You're so mean.

(walks away)

Jesus, you let what's his name stay. What's so special about
him?

WILL

I'm not finished with Mr. Brody O'Hara yet.

CYN

Can't you stick him in the closet or something?

(moves behind the couch)

At least cover him with a blanket. It's gross. God, his
face - wow, you really cracked his head open. Use the tuba?

WILL

Had to. Get away from him. Please.

CYN

Okay, okay, don't have a bird. You seriously need some fun in
your life. It's long overdue.

With great effort, WILL rises, walks over, pulls Cyn
away. Makes her sit in his chair.

WILL

Speaking of birds, a flock of pigeons dropped by and made
themselves at home on my balcony for a few hours.

CYN

Oh, that's nice. I looove pigeons. Their bobbing heads kill
me. They're so cute.

WILL

And noisy. God, the racket. Naturally, they left their calling card all over the place. I wanted to send them to your place but I forgot your address.

CYN

How'd you like it if no one fed you?

WILL

I wouldn't complain, Cyn. Not if you let me sleep. Honest.

CYN

No one likes being hungry. Not even birds.

WILL

They're supposed to fly south. That's why God gave them wings. It's in their DNA. If we had wings, we'd all be basking in the hot Florida sun.

CYN

Not me. Too many pythons, crocs, alligators and who knows what else on the loose.

WILL

Least you'd be warm. Your cute pigeons are cold, hungry and confused. I'm sure Florida has big worms. They could fly down, pig out - they'd enjoy it so much they'd never return.

CYN gets up, another peek at O'Hara, then steps away.

CYN

He gives me the creeps. When I was a kid, clowns gave me nightmares. That is no freakin' clown. He tell you anything?

WILL

Not anything new. Wasted a lot of time and energy. No wonder I'm so exhausted. Just don't touch him.

CYN

Wouldn't touch him with a thirty foot pole. Got any new books?

She steps over to the bookcase. Checks titles. Picks one.

CYN

'In God's Name.' I didn't know you were the religious type.

WILL

It's about the murder of Pope John Paul I.

CYN leafs through it. Checks the pictures. Puts it back.

CYN

You have a one track mind.

WILL

Can't help it. Murders fascinate me. I need to understand why. Mr O'Hara was alive and then, suddenly, he's not. Why?

CYN

Don't look at me. You're the one who -

She plucks another paperback off the shelf.

CYN

'Crime and Punishment.' More light reading?

WILL

A greedy pawnbroker's killed with an axe. It's a masterpiece.

CYN reads the back, carries it back to the coffee table.

CYN

Number one on my reading list. Oooh, I just love reading axe murder stories.

(puts it down)

Gives me goose bumps. Will, you need to get out more.

WILL

I promise soon as I sleep more.

WILL lies on the sofa. CYN turns on the TV with remote.

TV VOICE

CYN

A U.S. drone killed one (turns off TV)

hundred and fourteen There's something wrong with your TV. people -

WILL

It's perfectly fine. Picture tube died but the audio's great. They don't make 'em like that anymore.

CYN

(sits on chair)

TV's were meant to be seen, not heard. You should get it fixed.

WILL

I will soon as I can find a TV repairman who'll fix it. That's progress. If you don't keep up with technology, you're toast. But I don't mind. The audio is so clear, it helps me relax. I

turn it on before going to bed.

CYN

Oh my! What could be more relaxing than sitting in the dark watching a blank TV screen with what's his name back there, keeping you company? I need a refill. Don't move. I'll get it.

She drops the paperback on the couch and EXITS to the kitchen. WILL shuts his eyes for a power nap. LIGHTS dim.

Scene 7: Twenty minutes later.

CYN and WILL are sitting across from each other. WILL is now wearing his robe.

CYN
Remember the first night we met?

WILL
No.

CYN
You wore that green tie. It was a heavenly sign.

WILL
Aren't you an atheist?

CYN
Not full time but I've been feeling tingly ever since.

WILL
Maybe you caught something. You'd better go.

WILL pulls out his harmonica. Plays a few sad notes.

CYN
Look at you. Plays the harmonica, too.

WILL
Helps me think.

CYN
Thought of anything?

WILL
Yeah but it doesn't include O'Hara.

WILL puts the harmonica in his pocket. Picks up the tuba, walks over to O'Hara. Looks down.

CYN
Imagine getting killed with a tuba?

WILL
Oh God, why the hell did I -

CYN
Plead temporary insanity. That works, doesn't it?

WILL put the tuba back in its case.

WILL
It's not that simple.