

# **MURDER!**

and other fun things....

**GEOFFREY STODDARD**

## MURDER AND OTHER FUN THINGS

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A play in three acts

by

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## Cast of Characters

### CHATEL VON CASH:

Wealthy widow. Because of her wealth she feels she has the right to look down on everybody, and therefore, does not bother to remember names. The only person she looks up to is her psychic advisor, Sylvia. Chattel has been married 28 times, each to very wealthy men who all died under very suspicious circumstances. She loves martinis.

### PLANKTON:

Chattel's longtime butler. He is snobbish and really does not like Chattel but is nevertheless loyal (nobody knows why).

### OH GREAT MYSTICAL SYLVIA:

Sylvia is a clairvoyant to the very rich - but a very phony one. She is moody and prone to losing her temper, at which times truth of her sordid past always comes to light - accidentally. She wears a long robe.

### DETECTIVE SCHENECTADY:

Private detective. Like Chattel, he loves martinis but can never seem to get one. He has a mind like a sieve and has trouble piecing together coherent sentences. One theory has it that he is thinking too far in advance and therefore loses his concentration, another being that he is merely an idiot.

### TIFFANI:

Chattel's maid. She is a bubble-headed valley girl type who carries a deep hatred for Ginger, the

gardener. She has the mental acumen of a bulldozer.

GINGER SNAP:

The estate gardener. He is very gay and flamboyant. He is prone to over-the-top theatrics with broad gestures. He hates Tiffani with the heat of a thousand white-hot suns.

COUNT PEDIGREE ROMAINE SAUERBRATEN GOULASH PTOMAINÉ III:

Chattel's personal Chef, and has a penchant for cooking exotic dishes... some of a cannibalistic nature. He is a Peter Lorre type and tends to slink about while always sizing people up as potential meals.

PROPS

-Act One-

Wristwatch (Chattel)  
Glass candy dish (coffee table)  
Bag of hard candy (bar)  
Magazine (coffee table)  
Vodka bottle (bar)  
Green olives  
Toothpicks  
Drink shaker (bar)  
Ice cube tray and ice cubes (bar)  
Oversized martini glass  
Feather duster  
Magic 8 ball  
Drink flask  
Purse  
Compact  
Man's wallet  
Cell phone  
Toaster

-Act Two-

Folding pocket Knife  
Cell phone  
Long swizzle stick with an olive stuck on the end  
Kitchen knife  
Garden sheers  
Large stack of white towels  
Paper airplane with writing on it  
Driver's license  
Wallet  
Medical gloves  
Plastic hand lotion bottle with pump top  
Candle  
Pair of underpants  
Martini Glass  
Latex gloves

-Act Three-

Gun  
Martini Glass

ACT ONE

SETTING:

A living room. Center stage sits a couch with a coffee table before it. Right center is a small round table with two chairs on either side of it. Up right is a tall bar.

AT RISE:

Plankton walks in from center entrance with a feather duster. He dusts the top of the bar before heading gracefully to the back of the couch and dusting it. He next dusts the end table and plant before rounding the couch and dusting the coffee table. Returning to the bar he withdraws a bag of candy from beneath and returns to the coffee table to fill the glass bowl. Glancing around the room to make sure he is alone, he then pops a piece of candy in his mouth, finds it distasteful and spits it right back into the bowl. Plankton then dusts the coffee table. Next he dusts the round table and then steps behind the bar, stashing the candy below. Plankton withdraws a vodka bottle, drink shaker and ice cube tray. Ice is added to the shaker and then vodka. The drink is shaken lightly. He then reaches down and withdraws the oversized martini glass, pouring the drink into it.

PLANKTON

(Speaking to no one in particular.)

Madam, your drink has been prepared.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL enters UC with her purse on her left arm and walks to the back of the couch, staring straight ahead the entire way. She comes to a halt and holds her hand out to accept the martini.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON shakes his head.  
He walks over to place the  
drink in CHATTEL'S hand.)

**CHATTEL**

Thank you, Jeeves.

**PLANKTON**

The name is 'Plankton', madam.

**CHATTEL**

Like I care, darling. I am filthy rich and you work for me.  
Therefore, I am important and you are not. In fact, were it not  
for my compassionate nature I would not even allow a lowlife like  
yourself into my mansion.

**PLANKTON**

Madam has the compassion of a rabid wombat.

**CHATTEL**

Yes, I am rich, but it must really stink to be you.

**PLANKTON**

I see that madam had her usual bowl of Cream of Bitch for  
breakfast this morning.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL begins to take a  
drink, then stops. Looks at  
the drink a moment before  
holding it out to PLANKTON,  
all while continuing to  
stare straight ahead.)

Ahem! Hobbs?! You know better than that.

**PLANKTON**

Of course, madam. My bad.

(PLANKTON reaches inside  
coat pocket and produces an  
olive on a toothpick. He  
then drops this in her drink  
at such a height as to  
splash the drink.)

**CHATTEL**

Dress, James, dress! I am far too fabulous to have my fabulous dress splashed with a fabulous martini.

**PLANKTON**

It is fortunate that none of it got on your skin, madam. We would not want you to melt, now, would we? Allow me, madam...

(PLANKTON takes the drink from CHATTEL'S hand, dusts the front of her dress off with the feather duster and then returns the glass to her hand.)

Aside from sitting around chugging martinis like a sump pump, might I inquire as to madam's plans for the day?

**CHATTEL**

You might not. Can't you see I'm busy, Pearson?

(CHATTEL takes a sip of her drink.)

**PLANKTON**

The name is 'Plankton', madam.

(PLANKTON waits for CHATTEL to finish her sip.)

Now might I inquire as to madam's plans for the day?

**CHATTEL**

Not yet, Potter. So many martinis, so little time. Busy, busy, busy.

(CHATTEL takes a sip of her drink.)

**PLANKTON**

Madam...

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL up her hand, cutting him off. She takes one more sip from her drink.)



**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON briefly looks away  
in disgust.)

Is madam now sufficiently pickled? If so, please allow me to inquire as to madam's plans for the day?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL saunters around to the front of the couch as she talks and sits in the center. The purse is placed on the coffee table before her.)

I have a very busy schedule, Peppermill. Has the staff been released from their shackles in the basement yet?

**PLANKTON**

Madam, the Department of Labor, the FBI, the CIA, the PTA and several cafeteria organizations made you discontinue the practice of 'shackling' over a year ago. You are lucky that they did not throw your uppity ass in prison, madam.

**CHATTEL**

Busybodies. Always sticking their noses in other people's business.

(sighs heavily)

I do so miss the good old days.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON brings out feather duster and takes a couple swipes over the back of the couch.)

(speaks under his breath)

Yes, madam.

**CHATTEL**

Did you say something, Gangrene?

**PLANKTON**

Will madam be needing me for anything else? Perhaps madam needs to poop?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL gives him a quick  
condescending glance.)

I will call you if I need you, Hoghead.

**PLANKTON**

I look forward to it like the plague, madam.  
(PLANKTON turns to leave.)

**CHATTEL**

(whining childishly)

No, wait. Stay here and read to me, Finster.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON turns back to  
Chattel.)

We have talked about this, madam. I am the butler, not the  
reader. I do not read. I buttle.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL becomes indignant  
while staring straight  
ahead.)

Exactly who works for who, Flotsam? If I ask you to read to me  
then I expect you to read to me.

**PLANKTON**

Madam can blow it out madam's ear.

**CHATTEL**

I shall remember this at Christmastime, Prattle. I would not be  
surprised if you were not to get your usual Christmas bonus this  
year.

**PLANKTON**

Oh, what a shame, madam. I do so look forward to my yearly  
hairball.

(PLANKTON dusts the top of  
her head.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL waves off the  
feather duster.)

Of course you do. I make them myself. It's the little homemade  
gifts that mean so much.

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE enters room, out of breath and looking delighted.)

Miss Chattel! Miss Chattel!

(PTOMAINE spies CHATTEL on the couch and rushes to the left side.)

Thank you so much. I never expected such a generous gift.

**CHATTEL**

(to PLANKTON)

Take notes, Porker. This is how you show gratitude, darling.

(She holds out her left hand to Ptomaine.)

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE takes her hand and kisses it repeatedly.)

I will never forget this act of generosity, Miss Chattel.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL takes her hand back.)

Of course you won't, darling.

(She begins to take a sip of her martini, but suddenly stops and turns to PTOMAINE.)

Wait a moment. I gave you a gift? I must have been...

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON moves down to the right-rear of the couch.)

Soused?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL looks up in thought.)

No.

**PLANKTON**

Potted?

**CHATTEL**

No.

**PLANKTON**

Juiced?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL begins to frown.)

No.

**PLANKTON**

Liquored up?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL is now becoming quite annoyed.)

No.

**PLANKTON**

Stoned? Stewed? Plastered? Crocked?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL turns and glares up at PLANKTON.)

You are enjoying this a little too much, Mink-oil.

(She turns back to Ptomaine on her left.)

I was going to say that I must have been asleep.

**PLANKTON**

Passed out.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL turns to glare at him, then looks back to PTOMAINE.)

What gift are you talking about?

**PTOMAINE**

The body in the kitchen, Miss Chattel.

**CHATTEL**

Body? What body? There is a body in the kitchen?

**PTOMAINE**

Oh, don't worry, I think it's a recent kill so it should still be fresh.

**CHATTEL**

Oh, I see. You are talking about one of the livestock.  
(CHATTEL begins starts to take a drink.)

**PTOMAINE**

No, Miss Chattel. It's a full-grown man. He looks delicious.

**CHATTEL**

(Again CHATTEL's glass is stopped before reaching her lips.)  
Why is there the body of a full-grown man in my kitchen, darling?

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE looks from CHATTEL to PLANKTON then back to CHATTEL, somewhat confused.)  
You mean it wasn't a gift?

**CHATTEL**

I should say not. I receive gifts, I do not give them.

**PTOMAINE**

(hopeful)  
Can I keep it anyway, Miss Chattel?

**CHATTEL**

Absolutely not. I am far too rich to have the dead body of a full-grown man rotting away in my kitchen. Kindly dispose of it.

**PTOMAINE**

But, Miss Chattel, he's a pretty big guy - think of all the leftovers.

**CHATTEL**

Who is the dead man in my kitchen, Roof-rot?

**PLANKTON**

I do not know, madam. I shall look into this.

**CHATTEL**

Yes. You do that, Prime-beef.

**PLANKTON**

(to PTOMAINE.)

This way.

**PLANKTON AND PTOMAINE**

(They both exit UC.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL takes a sip of her martini. She then spies the candy dish on the table. Lifting the bowl she takes a piece and sticks it into her mouth. A moment later she makes a distasteful face and spits it back into the dish. She sets the dish down, leans back and takes another sip of her martini.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER peeks around the corner of the entry.)

Miss Chattel?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL does not look around.)

Who is there, darling?

**GINGER**

(GINGER cautiously steps into the entry fully.)

It's me, Ginger Snap, your gardener. May I come in a moment, please?

**CHATTEL**

My time is very valuable, darling, but I always make plenty of time for my staff. Come in. You have 30 seconds.

**GINGER**

(GINGER glances about the room cautiously.)

Is Tiffani in here?

**CHATTEL**

No, darling.

**GINGER**

(GINGER enters room and quickly walks to the right side of the couch.)

Thank you, Miss Chattel. I was wondering if you knew who owned the camel parked out front. I need for them to move it because it's stepping all over my Periwinkles, eating my Buxus, and I won't even begin to tell you what it did on my Ranunculus.

**CHATTEL**

Darling, I am far too busy, much too important, and infinitely too rich to be bothered with such trivial matters. Go ask Brainbucket about that.

**GINGER**

The butler? Yes, Miss Chattel. Do you know where I can find him? I'm afraid to go wandering around the house because whenever I run across Tiffani she hurts me so.

**CHATTEL**

I believe he is in the kitchen checking out the body, darling.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI enters room UC.)

Like, Miss Chattel, I just finished making up the...

(She spots GINGER and comes to a halt.)

Oh, like, it's you. What are you, like, doing in the main house?

**GINGER**

(Ginger glares at her.)  
(speaks with malice)

*Tiffani*... Wouldn't you like to know?

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI rushes over to the left side of the couch, opposite GINGER.)  
(to CHATTEL)

Miss Chattel, he's, like, in the house again. You want me to, like, get the electric cattle prod?

**GINGER**

Hey! Miss Chattel, you said she couldn't do that to me again. It hurt.

(GINGER rubs his arm.)

**CHATTEL**

The gardener is here to ask a question, Tiffani. He is allowed to be inside.

**GINGER**

(GINGER sticks his tongue out at Tiffani.)  
(to CHATTEL)

What were you saying about a body in the kitchen, Miss Chattel?

**CHATTEL**

I don't know, darling. I guess there is a dead man in there.

**GINGER**

A dead man? Oh! What a waste! Who was he, Miss Chattel? Where did he come from? What color eyes does he have? I just know he was my dream man.

**TIFFANI**

(to GINGER)  
Ohmygod. Like, you are such a Tuh-winkie.  
(to CHATTEL)  
Miss Chattel, please let me, like, get the cattle prod.

**CHATTEL**

Now, Tiffani. I granted the gardener a full 30 seconds. If he is not gone by then, you can zap him.

**GINGER**

Oh! I am not a piece of livestock... although Alfredo told me I was a stallion in the bedroom. Oh! That bitch! Left me for another man.



**TIFFANI**

I think I am going to, like, vomit.

**GINGER**

It could only improve your breath. Bitch.

**TIFFANI**

Like, skank.

**GINGER**

Whore.

**TIFFANI**

Like, bastard.

**GINGER**

Loser.

**TIFFANI**

Like, telephone.

**GINGER AND CHATTEL**

(Both look at TIFFANI in surprise.)

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI looks at them both alternately in confusion.)

Like, what?

**CHATTEL**

(to GINGER)

You have two more seconds, darling.

**GINGER**

Oh! I'll go find the butler now.

(GINGER rushes out the entry UC.)

**CHATTEL**

Tiffani, you really should try to get along with the outside help. They cannot help it if they are inferior.

**TIFFANI**

But, Miss Chattel, like, he is such a fairy. I wanna gag every time I, like, see him. Ohmygod.

**CHATTEL**

Nevertheless, Tiffani, we are all on this planet to tolerate one another... Well, I am on the planet to tolerate everybody else.

(CHATTEL looks up to  
TIFFANI.)

What was it you wanted, darling?

**TIFFANI**

Like, ohmygod. I so forgot. It was, like, all the fairy gardener's fault. He made me forget. Like, can I at least zap him once with the Taser, or some junk?

**CHATTEL**

Now, Tiffani, even though he is one of the lower life forms on the estate, he is still a... Come to think of it, he is the lowest life form on the estate. Very well, you may zap him. But only once.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKDON enters the room  
and approaches the right  
rear of the couch.)

Pardon my intrusion, madam. I am afraid that the chef is correct. There is a body of a dead man in the kitchen. It appears as if he had broken into the house, perhaps to burgle it.

**TIFFANI**

Like, ohmygod. You mean that there is, like, a real live dead body in the house?

**CHATTEL**

(to TIFFANI)

Tiffani, leave this to the grownups. I am sure that you have work to do.

**TIFFANI**

Like, yes, Miss Chattel. Like, where did I put that Taser?  
(TIFFANI exits UC.)

**CHATTEL**

Pinstripe?

**PLANKTON**

'Plankton', madam.

**CHATTEL**

I am far too wealthy to have a dead burglar rotting in my kitchen. Where is he now?

**PLANKTON**

I have taken the liberty of moving the body into the freezer to keep it fresh, madam.

**CHATTEL**

Well, don't keep me in suspense. Who was he?

**PLANKTON**

I do not know, madam.

**CHATTEL**

Well then, bring around the Rolls. I must get to my psychic advisor right away. She can tell me who it was.

**PLANKTON**

I am sorry, madam, but you loaned the Rolls out your sister.

**CHATTEL**

I did? She hasn't returned it yet?

**PLANKTON**

No, madam.

**CHATTEL**

How long has she had it? A day? Two days?

**PLANKTON**

Three years, madam.

**CHATTEL**

No Rolls.. Well then, bring around the Bentley.

**PLANKTON**

The Bentley has four flat tires, a blown head gasket, a bad muffler, no spark plugs, the steering wheel is bent, the leather upholstery has cracked, the oil has congealed, the chassis is up on blocks and the gas cap is missing, madam.

**CHATTEL**

I grow weary of your excuses, Pelter. Just bring the Bentley around.

**PLANKTON**

Madam, I believe that it is time to give some serious consideration to that lobotomy we have been talking about.

**CHATTEL**

Not now, Phonebook. I am not in the mood for jokes.

**PLANKTON**

(to himself)

I was joking?

(to CHATTEL)

Oh, that's right. Madam had her sense of humor surgically removed 25 years ago.

**CHATTEL**

Don't be absurd. That's ridiculous, Corn-chip. It was 27 years ago and you know it. Now go bring around the Bentley.

**PLANKTON**

(sighs)

Madam, the Bentley is not running.

**CHATTEL**

So what are you saying, Upchuck?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON rolls his eyes.)

No Bentley, madam.

**CHATTEL**

No Bentley, Benson?

**PLANKTON**

'Plankton', madam. No, no Bentley.

**CHATTEL**

Very well. I suppose this situation calls for extreme measures. Oh, I do so abhor flying but if this is the way it must be then this is the way it must be. I shall make the supreme sacrifice. You may bring around the helicopter, Rubble.

**PLANKTON**

Madam is truly a pillar of strength in displaying such bravery.

**CHATTEL**

This is true.

**PLANKTON**

Madam is a rock on the shaky ground of life.

**CHATTEL**

Yes, I know.

**PLANKTON**

Madam is a tower of inspiration, a shining example to us all of how one can overcome one's fears through sheer determination and perseverance.

**CHATTEL**

Yes, I am wonderful. You may kiss my feet.

**PLANKTON**

Madam also has the memory of a gin soaked noodle. We do not have a helicopter.

**CHATTEL**

What? No helicopter?

**PLANKTON**

No helicopter, madam.

**CHATTEL**

Then bring around the Lear jet.

**PLANKTON**

There is no Lear jet.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL turns to give  
PLANKTON a glare.)

I swear, Eyedrop. If you lose one more Lear jet...

**PLANKTON**

Madam never had a Lear jet.

**CHATTEL**

That is not true, Freestone, I was flying it just yesterday.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON turns and heads  
back behind the bar.)  
(to himself)

You were flying, madam, but not in a Lear jet. Madam was merely bombed out of her gourd.

**CHATTEL**

What will we do, Nosecone? No Rolls. No Bentley. No helicopter. No Lear jet. How will I reach Oh Great Mystical Sylvia if I have no transportation deserving of my stature and wealth?

**PLANKTON**

(to himself)

Might I saddle up one of the dogs in the kennel for you?

**CHATTEL**

Did you say something, Prostate?

**PLANKTON**

Madam, I have already anticipated your desire to meet with your 'psychic advisor'. A call has been placed and the woman of questionable abilities and lesser moral character is on her way over as we speak.

**CHATTEL**

Very well. You may go now.

**PLANKTON**

As you wish, madam.

(PLANKTON exits.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER pokes his head  
around the entry doorway and  
glances quickly around the  
room.)

Miss Chattel?

**CHATTEL**

Yes? Who's there?

**GINGER**

It's Ginger, again, Miss Chattel. May I come in?

**CHATTEL**

What is it, darling? I am a busy woman. These martinis won't drink themselves, you know.

**GINGER**

Where's Tiffani?

**CHATTEL**

Tiffani has gone back to work. What is it you want?

**GINGER**

(GINGER steps into the room  
and approaches the back-left  
of the couch to the left of  
CHATTEL.)

I just saw the body in the kitchen, Miss Chattel. Oh! It was awful. There he was, laying in the freezer so peacefully, looking like a little cherub. Such a magnificent specimen of male virility. Those lines. Those curves. Those lips. Those nose. Oh! Miss Chattel, what happened to him?

**CHATTEL**

I really do not know and I am quite sure I do not care.

**GINGER**

(GINGER falls to his knees  
behind the couch.)

Miss Chattel, it is such a tragedy. We could have been so happy together. We were meant to be together for a lifetime, and now he's in the freezer.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL ignores him and  
nurses her martini.)

**GINGER**

If only we could have been together in life I would have been the happiest man on earth. Oh! But it's over. In death he is out of my life forever. In death we shall never walk that golden path to

bliss. Think of the stories I could have told my grandchildr... um, no. The stories I could have told my mothe... *oh, hell no*. Well, there's always Alfredo.

(GINGER collapses, draping his arms and head over the back of the couch.)

Oh! Alfredo! I loved him so much and the bitch left me for another man half my age.

(He looks up in thought.)

Half his own age, too, actually.

(He collapses again draped over the couch.)

Oh! Miss Chattel, how long must I suffer? I gave that man the best years of my life and what did I get in return? Heartache and remorse and regret...

(He scratches his left arm.)

...and some kind of rash that I'm still trying to get rid of.

(to CHATTEL)

Who could have killed that man in the freezer? I'll bet you the maid, Tiffany, did it. She has guilt written all over her face. Guilty as the day is long. The bitch.

(GINGER stands.)

(to a distant imaginary figure)

Goodnight sweet Prince. We hardly knew ye but we are better off for having known ye than not knowing ye at all. Fare Thee Well, my brave little soldier boy. Your death is thus for thee and thine and me and thou.

(to CHATTEL)

What will happen to him now, Miss Chattel? Must he stay in the freezer? He'll freeze his little nose off. I know, how about if I take him to my room and...

#### **PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON appears in entry. He stands still, blocking it.)

Madam, your psychic advisor has arrived.

#### **CHATTEL**

Very well, Prattsdorf. Show her in.



**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA appears, carrying a toaster in her left hand.)

Outta my way, penguin. Does anybody know that there's a camel tied up outside?

(She tries to push PLANKTON out of the way with her shoulder but he does not budge. This having failed, she attempts to shove him aside with her right hand, leaning over to throw all her weight into it. He does not move. Finally, she drops down to her knees, pushes the toaster through his legs before crawling under him herself, stands again and heads directly over to the round table CR, placing the toaster in the center.)

So where's the fire, Chattel? I was right in the middle of a strip poker ga...

(to GINGER)

Who the hell are you?

**GINGER**

I'm the gardener.

**SYLVIA**

Get the hell outta here. Important psychic business going on.

**GINGER AND PLANKTON**

(GINGER and PLANKTON both exit UC.)

**SYLVIA**

I'm a busy woman, Chattel. What's this all about?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL stands and approaches the table with her martini. Places the glass on the table.)

Oh Great Mystical Sylvia, thank you so much for coming. You have been my spiritual advisor for so many years. I cannot make a move without you and I am at my wit's end.

**SYLVIA**

Yeah, yeah, whatever. Let's hurry it up, Chattel. I've got a three-of-a-kind and a nearly naked Senator waiting for me back home. Well, take a load off, lady. Let's get this show on the road.

(SYLVIA sits down in right chair.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL sits down in left chair.)

I just cannot tell you how much I appreciate this, Oh Great Mystical Sylvia.

**SYLVIA**

I know, I know. I'm wonderful. Now, what's the problem?

(SYLVIA begins passing her hands over the toaster.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL opens her mouth to speak but SYLVIA interrupts her.)

**SYLVIA**

Hush. Let me look into the Mystical Toaster. I see... yes, I see a dark cloud. It hovers over your aura. The planets of Ford and Mercury are in dangerous alignment with Pluto and Mickey. Chattel, your sacroiliac is about to burst. I suggest you contact your proctologist immediately. Do I bill this to the same credit card as last time?

(SYLVIA stands and plucks up the toaster.)

**CHATTEL**

My 'sacred' what? Oh, no, dear, that is not the problem at all.

**SYLVIA**

(Frustrated, SYLVIA sets the toaster back down on the table and reseats herself.)

No? No, of course not. I must have tuned in to your matching luggage by mistake. Now, wait while I consult the Mystical Toaster again.

(She waves hands over toaster.)

Wait, here it comes... here it comes... I see a menacing dark figure in your future, Chattel. An evil figure. It's a hand and it's got the tattoo of a UFO on it. It's reaching into a red leather purse and taking something. It's a black patent leather wallet. I see the initials C.V.C.

**CHATTEL**

Well, that's certainly strange, darling. I have a red leather purse with a black patent leather wallet in it with the initials C.V.C.; Chattel Von Cash.

**SYLVIA**

(startled)

What? No, Chattel. Wrong wallet. You're not paying attention. I said that...

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL points to SYLVIA's hand.)

(innocently)

And look at that, you have a tattoo with a UFO on it just like the one you said, darling. Isn't that a coincidence?

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA quickly draws her hand away, covering the back of it with the other hand.)

Uh... no, Chattel. Different tattoo entirely. Forget I said that. It wasn't anything important. Chattel, I said nothing about a wallet. Forget it! Chattel, you're fixating on it too much. Let it go, Chattel, let it go! You keep harping on it like this and it will be the death of you! Besides, why would I want to take your wallet?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL looks completely clueless.)

**SYLVIA**

Why are you looking at me like that, lady? I've never taken anything in my life that didn't belong to me after I got my hands on it. What are you trying to say, Chattel? I know that look! It says prison! What are you talking, prison... I've never been to prison and I wasn't in Cell Block 'B' for 7 years, 3 months and 5 days for bribing that cop either.

(SYLVIA suddenly stands,  
reaches across the table,  
grabs CHATTEL by her  
shoulders and begins shaking  
her.)

Seven years, Chattel. Seven long years! Frieda, her name was Frieda. I'll never forget that name... and that voice! "You're all mine now, Sylvia." "You'll do whatever I want you to do, Sylvia." "Tuck me into bed, Sylvia." "Clean my feet with your tongue, Sylvia." "It's time to play with the kitchen utensils, Sylvia!" Oh, why are you doing this to me, Chattel? Why? Why?

**CHATTEL**

Oh Great Mystical Sylvia, darling. You seem a tad upset. Would you like to come back later?

**SYLVIA**

What wallet?

(SYLBIA regains her senses  
and glances quickly about  
the room.)

What? Where am I?

(SYLVIA releases Chattel.)

It's the caffeine. I've got to cut down on the caffeine.

(SYLVIA sits back down.)

Where were we?

**CHATTEL**

You were looking into your Mystical Toaster, Sylvia, darling.

**SYLVIA**

(While she is talking,  
SYLVIA pulls a black wallet  
from her pocket without  
CHATTEL seeing this and  
nonchalantly drops it on the  
floor.)

Well, of course I was. What else would I be doing here? Certainly not anything illegal like taking your wallet or anything. A wallet is a very sacred thing, Chattel. Guard it with your life. Make sure that you never..

(SYLVIA glances down,  
discovers the dropped wallet  
with some surprise and picks  
it up.)

Boy, talk about your basic coincidences. Here.

(SYLVIA hands the wallet to  
CHATTEL.)

You need to be more careful with your things in the future.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL takes the wallet  
and slips it into her  
pocket.)

Thank you, Oh Great Mystical Sylvia. I am always losing something. It is a good thing that I do not carry my Gold Cards in this wallet.

**SYLVIA**

Yeah, I noticed.

**CHATTEL**

What was that?

**SYLVIA**

I was agreeing with you. Geez, Chattel, you have such a suspicious mind. Let it go, Chattel. Just let it go. All right, now, let's take another crack at this.

(SYLVIA waves her hands over  
the toaster a few moments  
before looking up at  
CHATTEL.)

What was the question again?

**CHATTEL**

I have not asked a question yet, Oh Great Mys...

**SYLVIA**

Well, let's get crackin', lady. I have an appointment in an hour with my parole officer... I mean my hair dresser. What is your damned question?

**CHATTEL**

Darling, I wish to know who...

**SYLVIA**

Yeah, yeah. You want to know your future. Who doesn't? Okay, Chattel, we'll go with that.

**CHATTEL**

Well, darling, actually what I wanted to ask was...

**SYLVIA**

One question at a time, Chattel. What do I look like? A miracle psychic? Now, concentrate on the Mystical Toaster.

(SYLVIA waves her left hand  
over the toaster.)

**CHATTEL**

(Stares at SYLVIA in  
silence.)

**SYLVIA**

Coooooncentrate on the Mystical Toaster. Coooooncentrate on...

(SYLVIA looks up to find  
CHATTEL staring at her.)  
(angrily)

Hey! Do I look like a toaster to you, lady?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL immediately diverts  
her eyes to the toaster.)

Oh, no. Sorry, Oh Great...

**SYLVIA**

Keep your eyes on the Mystical Toaster, damn it!

(SYLVIA waves her left hand  
over the toaster while  
discreetly withdrawing a  
magic 8 ball from under her  
robe with her right hand and  
holds it below the table,  
out of CHATTEL's line of  
sight.)

Concentrate, Chattel. Think of nothing but the Mystical Toaster.

(She shakes the 8 ball and waits for a message to appear.)

**CHATTEL**

I think I see something, Oh Great Mystical Sylvia.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA looks at the toaster in surprise.)

Really? Where?

(She looks up to CHATTEL.)

Wait a minute, Chattel. Who's giving this reading? You or me? That's right, I am. So just keep your trap shut. Now, concentrate on the Mystical Toaster.

(She leans over a little to read the 8 ball.)

Wait, here it comes. I see... I see... 'Get a life.'

(She glances out to audience.)

Well, that sucks.

(She shakes the ball.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL looks up from the toaster.)

What was that, darling?

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA looks up to CHATTEL while continuing to shake the 8 ball unobserved.)

Nothing. You obviously weren't concentrating enough, Chattel. Put your mind to it. Concentrate.

(She again waves the left hand over the toaster while steadying the 8-ball and waiting for it to give her an answer.)

(chanting)

Concentrate on the Mystical Toaster... Concentrate Chattel... the Mystical Toaster will tell us everything... the toaster sees all...the toaster tells all..

(She glances suspiciously at  
CHATTEL.)

(still chanting  
uninterrupted)

...the toaster wants to know where you keep your gold cards...

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL looks up from the  
toaster.)

Pardon me, darling?

**SYLVIA**

(surprised)

What? Did I say that out loud? You didn't hear that. Now,  
concentrate, Chattel.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL returns her eyes to  
the toaster.)

Yes, I will.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA leans a bit to read  
the 8 ball.)

I see it. Here it comes. Ah! The answer is 'You are a fraud.'

**CHATTEL**

What?

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA looks up to Chattel  
in surprise.)

What? Oh, um... Nothing. The spirits are playing around. Now, if  
you'll excuse me, Chattel...

(She tucks the 8 ball back  
into her robe. Stands and  
picks up the toaster.)

...I have to go get a bikini wax for my upcoming centerfold shoot  
for Psychics Illustrated.

**CHATTEL**

But, darling, you still have not answered my question.



**SYLVIA**

Well, let's make it quick. My rickshaw is double-parked in your driveway.

(SYLVIA sets the toaster  
back down and sits.)

Well? What is it, Chattel? What's the question?

**CHATTEL**

I would like to know where he came from.

**SYLVIA**

He? He who? What the hell are you talking about Chattel?

**CHATTEL**

The stranger of course, darling.

**SYLVIA**

Stranger? What stranger?

**CHATTEL**

The dead one.

**SYLVIA**

The dead one...

(SYLVIA throws hands up in  
the air as if to indicate  
that CHATTEL somehow  
expected her to know this.)

Sure. Why not? Okay, I'll bite Chattel. What dead stranger are you talking about?

**CHATTEL**

Darling, surely you saw it in your Mystical Toaster.

**SYLVIA**

(Glances at toaster  
briefly.)

I did?

(to SYLVIA)

I mean, of course I saw it. I was just testing you to see if you were paying attention. Now, this woman was probably a...

**CHATTEL**

Actually, darling, it was a man.

**SYLVIA**

Don't correct me, Chattel.

**CHATTEL**

But my butler was here just a few minutes ago and he said it was definitely a man. Didn't you see that in the toaster? Didn't you know it was a man?

**SYLVIA**

Of course I knew.

(SYLVIA pauses a beat to think of a way to explain her mistake.)

Uh... but I saw it... before she had the sex change operation.

**CHATTEL**

Sex change operation? Why, of course. That would explain it. I am so sorry I doubted you, Oh Great Mystical Sylvia.

**SYLVIA**

Yeah, well... don't let it happen again. Now, this body was...?

(SYLVIA pauses for CHATTEL to get the hint and unknowingly offer an answer.)

**CHATTEL**

(Stares back blankly.)

**SYLVIA**

...was...?

(SYLVIA motions her hand to drag out more information from CHATTEL.)

...was...?

**CHATTEL**

(Uncertain of what her response should be, CHATTEL offers her answer hesitantly as if to be afraid that it might be wrong.)

Oooooon... the floor?

**SYLVIA**

Correct. And it was in...?

**CHATTEL**

In the kitchen?

**SYLVIA**

That's right. And it's now...?

**CHATTEL**

In the freezer?

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA smacks both hands  
down on the table in  
triumph.)

And there you have it, Chattel. Once again I have mystified your mind, confounded the cosmos and proven that I know all, see all, smell all.

**CHATTEL**

Why, that is simply amazing, darling. You are seeing it just as if you had put the body there yourself.

**SYLVIA**

(nervously)

What would make you say that I put the body there myself? I had nothing to do with it, Chattel. And it certainly wasn't me last night beside the graveyard at 11:57 feeding him tainted Brandy Alexander's and laughing maniacally! Oh, sure, he was great looking and all but he had that annoying twitch in his nose.

(SYLVIA makes exaggerated  
twitching motions with her  
nose.)

Twitch, twitch, TWITCH! Always with the twitching! Twitching here, twitching there... Stop it! Stop that twitching!

(She stands and starts  
slapping an imaginary face  
before her.)

Maybe this will make you stop twitching! You think you can just come into my life and twitch and twitch and...

(She throws her arms back as  
if having suddenly been  
pushed.)

What? Psycho-Woman is it? I'll show you Psycho-Woman, Mr. Twitch, twitch, twitch. Psycho-Woman this!

(She begins strangling an imaginary neck.)

Having troubles breathing? Ha ha ha!

(All at once exhausted, she slumps back down in her chair.)

Oh, Chattel, he made me do it. Why are you badgering me like this? What have I ever done to you?

**CHATTEL**

Please, Oh Great Mystical Sylvia, I need to know more about the stranger. I need to know...

(CHATTEL happens to glance down to her empty martini glass.)

...why my martini glass is empty. PILLSTON!

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters UC.)

Madam crowed?

**CHATTEL**

Martini!

**PLANKTON**

As you wish, madam.

(PLANKTON walks to the table, pulls a flask from his jacket and fills the glass.)

**CHATTEL**

Oooooolive!

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON pulls an olive on a toothpick from behind his ear and places it in her glass. He then stands still as if anticipating CHATTEL's next command.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL turns back to SYLVIA.)

So, where were we, darling? Oh yes, I remember. Can you please tell me more about the stranger?

**SYLVIA**

Oh, I suppose so.

(SYLVIA glances at her watch.)

I'll never get out of here. All right, Chattel, but only because you're so rich... uh, so badly in need of guidance.

**CHATTEL**

Oh Great Mystical Sylvia, you are a saint!

**SYLVIA**

Yeah, yeah, I'm too good to be true. Now, I must have complete silence while I consult the Mystical Toaster.

(SYLVIA waves both hands over the toaster.)

I see the kitchen.

(She looks up, satisfied.)

There it is, Chattel. He got into your house through the kitchen.

(She grabs the toaster and stands.)

**PLANKTON**

I beg to differ with you.

**SYLVIA**

(Annoyed she addresses PLANKTON without looking directly at him.)

Then don't.

**PLANKTON**

(calmly)

Actually, he broke in through the patio door.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA looks to Plankton with a glare before turning to address CHATTEL.)

Didn't you just tell me that the dead guy got in through the kitchen?

**CHATTEL**

No, darling. What I said was that...

**SYLVIA**

(to CHATTEL)

Your butler obviously wants to play games.

(to PLANKTON)

All right, I'll play along. After he got in through the patio door he then went into the kitchen.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL takes periodic sips off her martini as the conversation between PLANKTON and SYLVIA progresses.)

**PLANKTON**

No, madam. He went into the bathroom. There is a trail of blood leading from the patio door to the bathroom. He apparently cut himself on the broken glass.

**SYLVIA**

That's right. But after that he went into the kitchen.

**PLANKTON**

The trail of blood then led from the bathroom into the bedroom, madam.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA is now thoroughly irritated. She raises up to face PLANKTON.)

And from the bedroom he went to the kitchen.

**PLANKTON**

No, from there he went into the game room.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA rounds the table  
and takes a step closer to  
Plankton.)

And from the game room he went to the kitchen.

**PLANKTON**

No, madam. The trail of blood led from the game room to the  
trophy room.

**SYLVIA**

(annoyed)

Don't you have something to dust? I saw it in the Mystical  
Toaster and the damned thing never lies. Okay, fine, have it your  
way. But after going into the trophy room he went to the kitchen.

**PLANKTON.**

TV room.

**SYLVIA**

Are you through?

**PLANKTON**

Then the bowling alley.

**SYLVIA**

(moaning)

...he isn't through.

(SYLVIA takes another step  
closer to PLANKTON.)

And then the kitchen.

**PLANKTON**

Attic.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA now gets right in  
PLANKTON's face.)

Then the kitchen.

**PLANKTON**

Den.

**SYLVIA**

Kitchen.

Library. **PLANKTON**

Kitchen. **SYLVIA**

Cellar. **PLANKTON**

Kitchen! **SYLVIA**

Guest bedroom. **PLANKTON**

Do you even have a kitchen? **SYLVIA**

Of course we have a kitchen, madam. **PLANKTON**

Where is the body now? **SYLVIA**

In the kitchen. **PLANKTON**

**SYLVIA**  
(SYLVIA throws her hands up  
in triumph and takes a few  
steps away from PLANKTON.  
She then turns to face  
CHATTEL.)

There. See? The stiff is in the kitchen, just like I predicted.  
So...

(She gives PLANKTON a quick  
glare.)

...after he left a 15 mile trail of blood throughout the mansion...

(Looks back to CHATTEL.)

...it's pretty obvious this stranger bled to death.

**PLANKTON**

Or he could have died from the cell phone.



**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA looks back to  
PLANKTON with a glare.)

Are you still here?

**PLANKTON**

Yes, madam.

**SYLVIA**

What's this about a cell phone?

**PLANKTON**

There was a cell phone involved.

**SYLVIA**

So tell me, smart ass; how does one die from a cell phone?

**PLANKTON**

It was sticking out of his mouth.

**SYLVIA**

He died from a cell phone sticking out of his mouth?

**PLANKTON**

Either that or the garden sheers.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA takes a step back.)

Well, make up your mind. Cell phone or garden sheers?

**PLANKTON**

Actually, both, madam.

**SYLVIA**

Are you trying to tell me that a cell phone and garden sheers  
were sticking out of his mouth?

**PLANKTON**

No, only the cell phone. The garden sheers were in his... well,  
his...

(PLANKTON points down to his  
crotch without actually  
looking down.)

...down there.

**SYLVIA**

Ew!

**PLANKTON**

And then there is the kitchen knife.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA looks up to the ceiling.)

Why is there always a kitchen knife?

**PLANKTON**

And the swizzle stick.

**SYLVIA**

(to CHATTEL)

Swizzle stick?

**PLANKTON**

And the feather duster.

**SYLVIA**

(to PLANKTON)

Are you through?

**CHATTEL**

(to SYLVIA)

I don't know about you, darling, but I suspect suicide.

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA glares at CHATTEL in disbelief.)

Your train left the track a long time ago, didn't it? Are you nuts, lady? This man didn't commit suicide. Either he repeatedly tripped and fell in your house and bludgeoned himself to death, or he was flat out murdered.

**CHATTEL**

That would have been my second guess, yes. So what should I do, Oh Great Mystical Sylvia? Have Flagpole call the police?

**PLANKTON**

'Plankton' madam.

**SYLVIA**

(A look of panic comes over SYLVIA's face.)

The police? Why on earth would you want to call those dirty screws? Always lying to you right to your face. "Sure, we'll move you to another cell, Sylvia." "You won't have to stay here with Frieda any longer, Sylvia." "Get you outta there tomorrow, Sylvia." "The Warden says you can rot in hell with Frieda, Sylvia." "Frieda wants to play with you, Sylvia, forever and ever and ever." "Ha ha ha, Sylvia!"

(She suddenly screams and lunges for CHATTEL's throat again.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON quickly pulls SYLVIA off of CHATTEL.)

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA is startled and confused.)

Huh? What? Where am I?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON turns and exits UC.).

**CHATTEL**

Am I to understand that you do not wish me to call the police, darling?

**SYLVIA**

Of course not. You want a scandal on your hands?

**CHATTEL**

Oh no. I am much too rich to have a scandal. But if the burglar committed suicide then wouldn't it...

**SYLVIA**

Would you get off the suicide thing, lady? He's got multiple instruments of destruction hanging out of him like a pincushion. This isn't a suicide. It's murder, Chattel. Murder! Plain old-fashioned, cold-blooded...

(SYLVIA raises an arm and begins to make stabbing motions.)

...mamma's-coming-to-get'cha-Frieda-how's-that-feel-in-your-back-Frieda-I-think-I'll-do-it-again-Frieda-and-twist-the-knife-like-this-Frieda-and-does-that-hurt-Frieda-let's-do-it-one-more-time-Frieda...

(She abruptly stops, pants heavily and takes a beat to calm down. She glances about the room to get her bearings.)

...uh... murder.

**CHATTEL**

Murder? Oh dear. Yes, darling, I see your point. Very well, what should I do?

**SYLVIA**

Just cool your jets while I make a call to a detective friend of mine. He owes me a favor after the whipped cream incident. He'll help you out.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL stands.)

Oh Great Mystical Sylvia, what would I ever do without you?

(She reaches out to hug SYLVIA.)

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA turns away to avoid the hug. She grabs the toaster off the table and tucks it under her arm. She then turns back to CHATTEL.)

Let this be a lesson, Chattel. Learn from your mistakes. Never make a move without consulting me first. Will that be billed to the same credit card?

**CHATTEL**

Of course, darling. But I still do not know who the murder victim was.

**SYLVIA**

You've exhausted the Mystical Toaster. It can't help you any more right now. It needs to rest. Now, if you'll excuse me I have to get back to the nude Jell-O wrestling match with that Chinese pepperoni maker.

(SYLVIA heads for the exit  
UC.)

**CHATTEL**

But, couldn't the Mystical Toaster just give me one more answer, darling?

**SYLVIA**

(SYLVIA answers with a side  
glance, not directly  
addressing CHATTEL.)

Don't bother me now, Chattel. I'm very busy. Things to do, people to see, cops to bribe. Don't think it hasn't been a little slice of heaven, because it hasn't. I'll let myself out.

(She exits UC.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL takes her martini  
over to the couch and sits  
down. She takes a sip.)  
(talks to herself)

Oh dear... "Don't call the police... I'll call a detective friend of mine... avoid a scandal..."

(She then retrieves the  
magazine off the coffee  
table, places it in her lap  
and begins skimming through  
it.)

**PTOMAINNE**

(PTOMAOME enters UC and  
stops just inside the entry,  
gazing quietly about the  
room. He then moves to the  
bar, looking around and  
behind it. From there he  
moves to the round table,

RC, looking under it and the two chairs.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL notices PTOMAINE.)  
What are you doing, darling?

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE looks to CHATTEL and smiles.)  
Nothing. Just... looking.  
(He then crosses in front of the couch, looking beneath the coffee table before moving to the left side of the couch. There, he gets down on all fours and looks under the couch. He then stands and again glances about the room, obviously frustrated.)

**CHATTEL**

Is this a usual behavior for you? And if so, will I need to be spending money on a psychiatrist? And more importantly, will this delay my dinner?

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE faces CHATTEL.)  
You... um... haven't seen anything strange, have you Miss Chattel?

**CHATTEL**

Nothing stranger than usual. Why?

**PTOMAINE**

Nothing. I was just wondering.  
(PTOMAINE glances behind the couch.)

**CHATTEL**

What are you looking for, darling?

**PTOMAINE**

Oh, I seem to have misplaced something, that's all.

**CHATTEL**

What did you misplace? And why are you looking in here? And if it got away under its own power, is it dangerous?

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE continues glancing about the immediate vicinity.)

You wouldn't think that it could get away under its own power, Miss Chattel, but you never know. Stranger things have happened.

**CHATTEL**

But is it dangerous, darling? Am I going to have to bring in one of the staff to stand on a chair, jump up and down in fright and scream for me? I am far too important to do that myself, you know.

**PTOMAINE**

I wouldn't think that that would be necessary.

**CHATTEL**

Exactly what is it that you've lost?

**PTOMAINE**

Well, I'm not so sure that it got lost so much as it might have somehow crawled away on its own.

**CHATTEL**

'Crawled'? Did you say 'crawled', darling?

**PTOMAINE**

That is the only way it could have gotten away, Miss Chattel.

**CHATTEL**

Well, I will not have you chasing after a crawly thing in my house.

(calls out)

Crawdad!

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters UC.)

You bellowed, madam?

**CHATTEL**

Do help the chef find whatever it is that got away from him. I suspect it was tonight's meal. Find it quickly. I will not have dinner crawling around in my house.

**PLANKTON**

Very well, madam.

(PTOMAININE begins searching the room in the exact same pattern as PTOMAININE did only moments before: first on, around and behind the bar, then the round table and chairs, and finally beneath the coffee table.)

**PTOMAININE**

(While PLANKTON searches, PTOMAININE continues his own search, inspecting the floor as he walks before the couch downstage.)

**PLANKTON**

(After having peered beneath the coffee table, PLANKTON moves to the left side of the couch and faces CHATTEL.)

What exactly is it that we are looking for, madam?

Damned if I know, darling. Nobody tells me anything in this house.

**PLANKTON**

(to himself)

...and for good reason, you drunken cow.

(PLANKTON turns to PTOMAININE.)

Might I inquire as to what we are hoping to find?

**PTOMAININE AND PLANKTON**

(PTOMAININE motions for PLANKTON to follow him and together they walk around to



the rear of the couch, out of CHATTEL's sight. PTOMAINÉ whispers something in PLANKTON's ear. PLANKTON then nods and motions for PTOMAINÉ to leave. PTOMAINÉ exits UC. PLANKTON approaches the left side of the couch and faces CHATTEL.)

**CHATTEL**

Well, Crankcase? Did you find it?

**PLANKTON**

I am afraid not, madam. It seems that the chef has misplaced the dead body. Apparently, he went into the freezer to "cut off a slice or two" and found that the victim was missing.

**CHATTEL**

Well, do get on with it, Frenchfry. Find it. I will not have a dead body wandering around my mansion unsupervised.

**PLANKTON**

In spite of the fact that madam has been doing just that for years, I shall endeavor to locate the corpse.  
(PLANKTON turns to leave.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY pokes his head around the corner of the entry UC and looks into the room, cautiously.)

Helloooo? Anybody home?

**CHATTEL**

(Totally unaware of Schenectady's arrival, CHATTEL nurses her martini while continuing to flip through her magazine, occasionally sipping her martini.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON approaches SCHENECTADY, stopping and standing just downstage the entry, blocking SCHENECTADY's ability to get into the room.)

May I help you?

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, yes, I think you can. At least I... I hope you can. Actually, I believe that I might be here to help you.

(to himself)

Is that right?

(to PLANKTON)

Why, I do believe I got it correct, this time. See, I knocked on the door but nobody answered, and it was open so I came right in. Did you know that there's a camel parked outside?

**PLANKTON**

And you are...?"

**SCHENECTADY**

I'm the private detective you called for. Well, actually, my friend Sylvia called me... but on your behalf... I think. I was in the neighborhood so I got here as quickly as I could. I should be expected.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON turns to announce SCHENECTADY, stepping in front of him and completely blocking his ability to enter.)

Madam, the...

**CHATTEL**

Oh, before you leave, Flatulent, I wanted to tell you that we shall be receiving company soon. Oh Great Mystical Sylvia has phoned a private detective to come help us with our little problem... wherever the hell it happens to be at the moment. I want you and the rest of the staff to be on your best behavior when her friend arrives.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY pokes his head around PLANKTON.)

Yes, madam. But...

**CHATTEL**

Very well. Now, keep a close eye on this man, Mineshaft. If he's anything like the dregs of society on TV he'll have greasy hands, probably just finished some slime-burger or something and I do not want him touching any of my valuables and leaving dripping greasy fingerprints behind.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY squeezes past PLANKTON to stand a little ahead and to the right of PLANKTON so that he can be plainly seen. He glances at his hands, inspecting them.)

**PLANKTON**

(to CHATTEL)

Yes, madam, but the detective has already...

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL opens her purse and begins shuffling through it.)

Follow him closely with a rag to wipe off anything he touches. Do you understand me? I will have no greasy fingerprints on my priceless valuables.

**PLANKTON**

Yes, madam, but...

**CHATTEL**

Fine. And another thing, Snigley, make sure he wipes his feet properly before he comes into the mansion.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks down to his feet, lifting each one in order to check the bottoms of his shoes.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON closes his eyes  
and shakes his head.)

Of course, madam.

**CHATTEL**

He has, no doubt, been rummaging through the garbage in the streets looking for his next meal and who knows what he's been stepping in. Whatever it is I will not have it all over my carpets.

**PLANKTON**

As you wish, madam, but...

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL withdraws a compact  
and sits back.)

Now then, see if you can slip him a breath mint of some kind.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY puts his hand  
to his mouth, breathes out  
and smells his own breath.  
He nods that it is okay.)

**CHATTEL**

His breath probably smells like something of a rhinoceros and it will simply take the curl out of my hair. Not to mention what it will do to my expensive wallpaper.

**PLANKTON**

Madam, if you would...

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL opens the compact  
and rubs the pad around in  
it.)

And, Jarvis, for heaven's sake, if he has anything hanging from his nose make sure that he gets rid of it before entering.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY runs his finger  
beneath his nose and then  
inspects the finger.)

**CHATTEL**

There is absolutely nothing more disgusting than some two-inch green object dangling from some low-life's honker.

(CHATTEL lifts the compact to check her face in the mirror.)

Oh, one final thing... be a dear and make sure that he has bathed recently, won't you? I am certain that he lives and sleeps with the dogs and you know how they smell, darling.

(She turns the mirror, catching SCHENECTADY looking back at her. She freezes.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY smiles and waves.)

**CHATTEL**

Orphington, this wouldn't be...

**PLANKTON**

This is the detective, madam.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL calmly closes her compact and places it back in her purse. She then rises, her back kept to PLANKTON and SCHENECTADY.)

Could I see you over here for a moment?

(She moves toward the far wall UL. She folds her arms across her chest.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY walks over to stand beside CHATTEL.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL stares straight ahead with an angry look on her face. She believes that it is PLANKTON to whom she is talking.)

(speaks softly)

How long has he been standing there? Why didn't you tell me he was there? Now he thinks I think he smells, and how grimy he is. Probably just came from a case down in the sewer. How could you let me go on, knowing he was listening to every word I said? Now he'll think I am a raving lunatic! I swear, sometimes I do not know why I keep you around, Mooseberry!

(She turns to shoot a glare to the man beside her. Finding SCHENECTADY standing there instead, she smiles and chuckles nervously.)

Um... wrong person. Excuse me, darling.

#### **CHATTEL & PLANKTON**

(CHATTEL walks back to the entrance, grabs PLANKTON's coat sleeve and drags him over to the other wall RC. CHATTEL stands to PLANKTON's right.)

#### **SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY follows behind CHATTEL, situating himself behind PLANKTON and CHATTEL but in the center once they have stopped.)

#### **CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL does not look at PLANKTON as she is talking, and therefore, does not see SCHENECTADY.)

Now you've done it, Peckinpaw! You've made me look like a goose and I demand you do something. My god, the man has mange written all over his face. I would not be surprised to find that he is wearing a flea collar under that..

(CHATTEL turns to give PLANKTON a glare, then discovers SCHENECTADY. She again smiles and laughs nervously. She grabs PLANKTON's sleeve again and begins to drag him to the

opposite side of the room,  
CL.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY again begins  
following the two.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL glances back  
halfway across the floor and  
spots SCHENECTARY  
following.)

Would you kindly wait here, darling?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stops before  
the coffee table.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL pulls PLANKTON the  
rest of the way to the wall  
LC.)

Now you've done it, Peckinpaw! You've made me look like a goose  
and I demand you do something. My god, the man has mange written  
all over his face. I would not be surprised to find that he is  
wearing a flea collar under that jacket.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY walks around to  
stand behind the coffee  
table. Eyeing the candy  
dish, he picks it up and  
plucks a piece out, placing  
it in his mouth. The  
expression on his face  
changes to one of disgust  
and he spits the candy back  
into the dish. The dish is  
returned to the table.)

**CHATTEL**

Do you suppose he heard everything I said about him?

**PLANKTON**

Most likely.

**CHATTEL**

Do you think he's upset?

**PLANKTON**

Most definitely.

**CHATTEL**

How do you suggest I get out of this, Clifton?

**PLANKTON**

Groveling comes to mind, madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(While this exchange is going on, SCHENECTADY glances about the room. Spotting the bar he heads for it. He picks up the open vodka bottle and gives it a sniff. His eyes roll back in his head and a giant smile crosses his lips.)

**CHATTEL**

Do you think he's the violent type?

**PLANKTON**

I would exercise extreme caution, madam.

**CHATTEL**

But what if I find him stealing from me? If he is as violent as you say he is then I could get hurt, and I am much too rich to get hurt.

**PLANKTON**

I never claimed that the man was violent, madam.

**CHATTEL**

You won't leave me, will you, Bombardier?

**PLANKTON**

Never, madam.

(PLANKTON then turns and walks away, exiting UC.)



**CHATTEL**

(Unaware that PLANKTON has departed.)

Good, because I refuse to be left alone. It has been my experience that when a wealthy widow is left alone with the likes of that type then it is only a matter of time before they overstep their boundaries and take advantage of sweet, innocent women. I have seen it all too often, Bumbershoot. A helpless woman of wealth and a low-down low-life like that are a dangerous mix. Don't you agree with me?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY lifts the vodka bottle to take a drink.)

**CHATTEL**

(Having received no answer from PLANKTON CHATTEL turns.)

I said, don't you agree with me, Gridley?  
(Finding him to be missing, she then spots SCHENECTADY about to take a slug off the bottle.)

Excuse me, darling?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY immediately puts the bottle down and turns toward CHATTEL with an embarrassed smile.)

**CHATTEL**

I do not recall catching your name.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY heads over to CHATTEL.)

Well, that's probably because I didn't throw it.  
(He chuckles at his joke.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL does not find SCHENECTADY's quip humorous and casts him a glare.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY sobers up and clears his throat.)

Yes, well... It used to be funny back in the day...

(He studies CHATTEL's somber face briefly.)

...but not today, apparently. Yeah, I'll admit that it is an outdated joke. Really killed them at the home.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL crosses over to the couch and sits on the right side.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY follows and begins to sit on the left side, but is stopped by CHATTEL halfway down.)

**CHATTEL**

Darling, please do not sit down. This couch is an original Louis DeSnootwell and I will not have it destroyed by...

(CHATTEL gazes at his pants.)

...I would prefer that you remain standing.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, you don't have to worry about me, Mrs...

(SCHENECTADY pauses for an answer. None comes. He straightens up.)

Well, as I was saying, you don't have to worry about me because these pants are fresh from the... the...

(He holds his hand up to his chin in thought.)

You know, the thing that...

(He raises his hand to simulate a washing machine agitator.)

**CHATTEL**

A washing machine, darling?

**SCHENECTADY**

That's it. Yes. They're as clean as a... as a... a bug's ear! Nothing to worry about.

**CHATTEL**

Very well. You may sit. But do sit lightly, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY lowers himself down to the couch gingerly.)

Most generous of you, Mrs...

(He waits a beat for an answer before turning forward and exhaling.)

**CHATTEL**

And just what was it you called yourself?

**SCHENECTADY**

I'm glad you asked that. My name is... um...

(Again SCHENECTADY holds hand up to his chin in thought.)

Isn't that funny? I knew it just this morning.

(He leans back and digs out a wallet from his back pocket.)

Yes, I was just saying to myself this morning how much I enjoyed my name. Kinda have to wouldn't I...

(He leans into her abruptly.)

...seeing as how I'm stuck with it.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL pulls back quickly from SCHENECTADY. She grabs her martini and stands in order to get away from SCHENECTADY. She strolls back to the bar, stopping behind it.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY pulls back,  
opens his wallet and looks  
inside without noticing that  
CHATTEL has departed.)

I mean, I can find my way home every night so how could I forget something as simple as my... Ah, there it is. Yes, of course. How could I forget?

(He folds the wallet up and  
returns it to his pocket.  
Looking up he sees CHATTEL  
missing. Scanning the room  
quickly he finds her  
standing at the bar, so he  
walks over to her while  
speaking.)

So, my friend Sylvia tells me that you have a dead burglar on your hands. Mighty awful thing being robbed. Even worse when the robber turns up a little... you know... um...

(He shoots his head with his  
hand.)

...dead! That's it. So tell me, where is this body? I would sure like to get a look at it. That might, you know, help in the... um... oh, the... the finding out of what happened. Investigation! I knew that it would come to me in time.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL inspects the bar as  
if trying to find  
something.)

I will ask you again, darling. What is your name?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stops to the  
left of the bar.)

What? Oh, didn't I tell you? I could have sworn that I... Wait, I know what happened. I guess that when I looked in my wallet and saw it I subconsciously told you what it was. Obviously I didn't, but thinking that I already told you I pushed it out of my mind. Isn't it amazing how we do that? Just push things the heck out of our... um... our... um...

(He points to his head.)

...you know.

**CHATTEL**

You do have a name, don't you, darling?

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, of course I do. Parents would have been negligent not to give me one, don't you think? Yep, they'd be pretty darn...

(He again suddenly leans  
into CHATTEL.)

Be kinda difficult to call me for dinner if they didn't, huh?"

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL pulls back abruptly  
with a sour look on her  
face.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY straightens up.  
He thinks for a beat.)

Oh, of course; it's 'Detective Schenectady'. See, there I went and almost forgot again. I swear, sometimes my mind is running in so many different directions at once that it's difficult to capture a single thought.

(He reaches out to grab  
something in thin air.)

Oops, there goes one right now.

(He laughs at his joke.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL is not amused and  
gives SCHENECTADY a brief  
but sour look.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(Seeing that CHATTEL is not  
laughing, SCHENECTADY  
quickly stops laughing.)

**CHATTEL**

You may call me Mrs. Von Cash.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY withdraws a  
writing pad and pencil from  
his jacket and jots this  
down.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL takes a sip of her martini.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY's eyes follow the glass closely, moving his whole head along with the movement of the glass.)

Well, anyway, I suppose we should get down to business. I understand that there's been a burglar related death in this house and I'm here... I'm here to... Say, is that a martini? Boy, I'll bet it's good. I haven't had a martini in... well, it's been so long that I can't remember when it was I last had a martini. I'll bet it really hits the ol' spot, eh?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL sets the drink on the bar, then turns her head to SCHENECTADY.)

Darling, about the body?

**SCHENECTADY**

The martini? Well, it's best served chilled with just a dash of... What? Oh, the body. Of course. Silly me. Kinda had my mind stuck on your... Yes, well, I think the first thing to do would be to get a good look at the victim and see what we can see.

**CHATTEL**

We cannot do that right now, darling. The body seems to have gotten up and walked away.

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... just exactly how many of those martinis have you had today? In all the years that I've been... um... well, that I've been... well, detecting, it's been my experience that dead bodies don't generally get up and walk away. Are you sure you even had a dead burglar? I mean, maybe he was just momentarily stunned and he came out of it and went back home.

**CHATTEL**

Quite sure, darling. You told me that his camel was still parked outside.

**SCHENECTADY**

You mean that's his camel? I was wondering why you had that out there. Interesting that a burglar would come to do their thing on a camel. Hard to carry a television set on a... Well then, is anybody... you know... looking for the... the... thief-guy?

**CHATTEL**

Of course we are, darling. At least I think we are. Maybe not. I do not know. I am far too rich to care about looking for dead burglars, darling. That is your job. Get busy.

**SCHENECTADY**

I guess you're right. Now, you're sure there was a body?

**CHATTEL**

Yes.

**SCHENECTADY**

And that he was dead?

**CHATTEL**

As a doornail, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

You know, that is an expression that I've never understood. First off, what's the story behind the doornail? Was it murdered? Did it commit suicide? Fall off a cliff? And how can a doornail be dead? I mean, it was never a living being to begin with. Why not 'dead as a porcupine', or 'dead as an acrobat', or 'dead as a cement truck motor'?

**CHATTEL**

Darling, you are boring me. Do get to your point.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, the point... yes. Well, I guess we should first establish where it was that the dead burglar was last seen?

**CHATTEL**

He was in the freezer, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

The freezer, you say?...

(SCHENECTADY jots this down  
on the pad.)

Well now, that's... that's a new one.

**CHATTEL**

My butler thought it would stay fresher that way.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, yes, that's good thinking. Probably shouldn't have moved it from the crime scene, but what's done is... um... what's done is... probably overcooked.

(to himself)

Is that right? Hmm.

(to CHATTEL)

Does anybody have any idea how the man died?

**CHATTEL**

According to my butler, he died from either a cell phone or a feather duster or a pair of garden sheers or a swizzle stick or a kitchen knife.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY writes this down.)

Oh, I see. Any one of those.

**CHATTEL**

No, all of those.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks up, flabbergasted.)

Um... he died from... you mean all the... every one of those was... he died from all the things you mentioned?

(He makes quick notes on the pad.)

**CHATTEL**

I assume so, darling. Apparently they were all sticking out of him. Probably not a pretty sight, but who cares? As long as it wasn't me.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY thinks about this for a few moments.)

Well now, that's quite the... quite the... thing, there.

(to himself)



All of the above. That's rich.

(to CHATTEL)

But then again, so are you.

(He emphasized this with a  
glance about the room.)

I think I will need to speak with a few people to... to get some  
information. Um, who was the first one to see the dead... dead...  
thingy? I mean, who found it in the first place?

**CHATTEL**

That would be my chef.

**SCHENECTADY**

Then I should... I'd like to... is there a way that I could talk to  
your chef?

**CHATTEL**

Fishbait!

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY abruptly Jumps  
back, startled. He then  
places his hand over his  
heart.)

Holy mackerel! You really should warn somebody when you're about  
to... Wow. That could give somebody a... Have you ever considered  
being a yodeler?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters UC and  
comes to a halt at the bar  
behind SCHENECTADY).

Madam roared?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY jumps at the  
unexpected voice. He quickly  
turns to face PLANKTON.)

Whoa! Geez... Where the heck did you come from?

**CHATTEL**

The Inspector wishes to question the chef.

**PLANKTON**

I anticipated the request, madam, and have alerted Chef Ptomaine. He should be here directly.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)

You really should put a bell around his neck.

(He places the notebook and pencil on the end of the bar, then gives PLANKTON a quick glance before turning back to CHATTEL.)

Wait a moment... 'Ptomaine'? Your chef's name is 'Ptomaine'?

**CHATTEL**

(to PLANKTON)

Have you found the body yet, Paperclip?

**PLANKTON**

The search continues, madam.

**CHATTEL**

Do get on with it.

**PLANKTON**

Yes, madam.

(PLANKTON turns and heads to the exit.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL looks down to her empty glass. She then silently thrusts it toward PLANKTON. She remains in this position until it is eventually filled by PLANKTON.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON Stops in his tracks without having seen CHATTEL's gesture. He turns and walks behind the bar.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL moves to the right end of the bar to make way for PLANKTON.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON begins mixing a martini in the shaker. When done he pours it into CHATTEL's extended glass.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY gives PLANKTON periodic glances as the butler is mixing the martini.)

Well now, I see that we are probably on the right... um... the right... the thing that a train rides on... Track! That's it, we are on the right track. Once your chef comes in here, I can ask him a couple questions and..

(He glances at his watch, then the entry briefly.)  
(to CHATTEL)

Kinda slow in getting here, wouldn't you say? You know, time is very important in trying to solve a case like this. Interestingly enough, I have found through the years that gathering all the facts is generally quite useful. Well, sometimes it's rather difficult getting all the facts, of course... unless the victim gets up and tells me everything.

(He thinks about this a moment.)

Never really had that happen, though. Wonder why that is? Well, I suppose their being... um... you know...

(He shoots his heart with his finger.)

...has a lot to do with that.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON pours CHATTEL's martini.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY's eyes follow, very closely, the pouring of the martini.)

Never had the occasion to question a... a martini that was... I mean, a body! Never had the occasion to question a dead... Gosh, that looks refreshing.

**PLANKTON**

It is delicious.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, of course it is. A martini is always... um... it's like they say; a martini is the breakfast of champions...

(SCHENECTADY briefly glances up in thought.)

...or would that be a Bloody Mary? Well, anyway, everybody knows that the three most important things to a healthy life are food, sunshine and martinis.

(to PLANKTON)

I notice how quickly you made that. I imagine it would take you no time at all to whip up another one if, say, somebody else wanted one.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON places the bottles and shaker beneath the counter.)

Yes, madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY's eyes follow the items as they disappear, showing great disappointment.)

Yes... no time at all, I... I imagine. And it's delicious, you say?

(He looks longingly at Chattel's drink.)

I certainly couldn't argue with you on that point. I mean, I haven't tasted one but it sure does appear to be... Um... You certainly make a handsome martini, there.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON glances to CHATTEL.)

I have had plenty of practice, madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, I must say, you should certainly be given a... um... one of those things... where your employer gives you more money... oh... On the other hand, a gold star wouldn't be out of the question. I'm really impressed...

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE enters UC and comes to a halt behind Schenectady.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Yes, indeed. All I can say is that if I had somebody around my house like you, I'd certainly never be without...

(focuses on PLANKTON)

Did you just call me 'madam'?

**PTOMAINE**

Did you send for me, Miss Chattel?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY throws his arms in the air and jumps, turning to face PTOMAINE.)

Son of a...! What is it with you people and sneaking up on a guy like that? I feel like a cat in a room full of... of those... you know, the tilting chairs...

(He makes hand gestures to indicate a rocking chair.)

**CHATTEL**

(to PTOMAINE)

The constable wishes to ask you some questions.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to PTOMAINE)

Actually, it's 'detective'. Won't you come over to the couch and have a... a... well, have a couch.

(SCHENECTADY chuckles at his joke, turning to glance at CHATTEL who is not laughing.)

No, I guess that one was marginal. Funny, these things usually kill them at the hospital.

(He heads to the couch and seats himself on the left.)

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE seats himself in the middle of the couch.)

**CHATTEL**

(to SCHENECTADY)

Sergeant, darling, you will have to excuse us. Pillbox has to go hunt down the body and I must tend to some livestock in the north wing.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)

Sergeant? It's 'Detective', actually.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL heads for the entry UC.)

(to PLANKTON)

Are the branding irons hot?

**PLANKTON**

As always, madam.

**CHATTEL AND PLANKTON**

(CHATTEL and PLANKTON exit UL.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY turns to PTOMAINE.)

Livestock? She keeps livestock in the north wing? What is it, a stable?

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE shakes his head.)

Oh no. Miss Chattel has to brand some of the new help.

**SCHENECTADY**

(surprised)

You mean she brands people?

**PTOMAINE**

Oh yes.

(PTOMAINE rubs his left  
hip.)

Hurts like hell.

**SCHENECTADY**

I can imagine. Wow. She's quite the... Why would she do a thing  
like that?

**PTOMAINE**

How else can she protect her property?

**SCHENECTADY**

She considers her staff property?

**PTOMAINE**

What was it that you wanted to ask me?

**SCHENECTADY**

Ask you? Was I going to ask you something?

(SCHENECTADY thinks for a  
beat.)

Does she know that's illegal? Shouldn't she be reported?

**PTOMAINE**

Miss Chattel is very possessive of her things.

**SCHENECTADY**

Wow... I guess so.

(SCHENECTADY looks ahead and  
pauses to think, then looks  
to PTOMAINE.)

Who are you again?

**PTOMAINE**

I am Miss Chattel's chef.

**SCHENECTADY**

Ah, yes, that's right. And what is your full name?

**PTOMAINE**

I am Count Pedigree Romaine Sauerbraten Goulash Ptomaine... the  
third.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks at him in surprise.)

All that for one... You're a Count?

**PTOMAINE**

Of course I'm a Count. I come from a long line of Counts. My father was a Count. My uncle was a Count. My mother was a Count.

**SCHENECTADY**

Your mother? You mean that she was a 'Countess'.

**PTOMAINE**

Countess? Ah, no. That would be my brother, Reginald.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, I see. He was one of... um... he kind of had a... Yes, I understand.

**PTOMAINE**

I come from an old country. We were peasant farmers, tilling the soil, day after day, year after year, planting peasants for the spring harvest.

**SCHENECTADY**

Excuse me? You planted peasants? Isn't that kind of... well... disgusting?

**PTOMAINE**

Not if they're planted early. With the right amount of water and fertilizer they can be very juicy and tender.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY's mouth is hanging open and he stares at PTOMAINE in silent shock.)

**PTOMAINE**

What? The village was too poor to afford food so we used the next best thing. Nobody liked the peasants anyway, especially the Meisterschmidts. Besides, nothing went to waste. You should have tasted the soup from the leftovers. Melted in your mouth.



**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY's continues to stare in wide-eyed disbelief.)

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE takes SCHENECTADY's arm and raises it, looking it over.)

Come to think of it, you sort of resemble a Meisterschmidt I once had for dinner. You wouldn't be related, would you?

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... What are you doing?

(SCHENECTADY pulls his arm away abruptly.)

Um... I really don't think I taste all that good. You wouldn't like... I've been told I'm... um... bitter. I'm awfully bitter. Always have been. Matter of fact, that was my nickname in College. Yep, everybody would say; "There goes good ol' bitter...", um... Well, what do you know? I forgot my name again.

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE pokes SCHENECTADY's shoulder gently.)

Mighty tender, those April Meisterschmidts. Are you sure you're not related? You look like you would really be juicy and delicious.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stands abruptly and moves to far left end of the couch.)

My whole family's been... you know... tough. Yep, a tough bunch of people in my... you know... my brood.

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE slowly stands.)

A little salt and a good tenderizer would do the trick.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY is beginning to panic.)

No, I've always been resistant to... Salt makes me sneeze and nobody likes their main course sneezing. Ruins the best of dinner parties, don't you think?

(He glances back to the entry UC.)

(calls out in a purposely controlled yet desperate voice.)

Mrs., uh...

(He casts a quick look to PTOMAINÉ, then again looks back to the entry UC.)

Mrs... Ohhhh...

(to himself desperately)

What was her name?

#### **PTOMAINÉ**

(PTOMAINÉ takes a step closer.)

How about if I use a little lemon butter and serve you on a soft bed of brown rice?

#### **SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY is now more panicky than before.)

Brown? Did you say brown rice? Oh, I think I'm allergic to brown... to brown... um... what you just said. That brown stuff.

(He now trots nervously over to the entry UC and peeks around both corners.)

(calling out)

Mrs... um... Yoo hoo! Hello? Anybody home?

(He glances quickly to PTOMAINÉ and holds up a finger.)

I'll be right with, um... with, um...

(He turns back to the entry.)

(calling out)

Mrs...

(He lowers his head in thought and begins snapping his fingers in an attempt to recall her name.)

Doggone it! What the heck is her name?

(He thrusts a finger in the air triumphantly.)

Von! That's it!

(Again SCHENECTADY peers around the corners of the entry.)  
(calling out)

Mrs. Von... Von...

(Again he lowers his head in thought.)  
(to himself)

Von what? Von Trapp? No, it doesn't sound quite right. Von... Von... Von pickle?

(He chuckles briefly but stops abruptly.)

No, that can't be it.

(He turns back to PTOMAINÉ briefly.)  
(to PTOMAINÉ)

Don't, um... don't go... um... You might want to sit down, this could take a little... um... some time.

(He again looks around the entry corner.)  
(calling out)

Mrs. Von... I've got a bit of a... You out there anywhere? Anybody? There might be a...

(Suddenly he remembers that he had previously written the name down in his notepad. Again he thrusts a triumphant finger in the air.)

The book!

(SCHENECTADY eyes the book sitting on the end of the bar.)

#### **PTOMAINÉ**

(PTOMAINÉ rounds the couch, effectively cutting off PTOMAINÉ's clear path to the notepad.)

No, I think you're right. You look more like a cream cheese and diced vegetable entrée.

(He begins to approach  
SCHENECTADY.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY now panics  
completely. He turns to the  
entry briefly.)

Mrs... Help! Anybody?

(Glancing back at the  
approaching PTOMAINÉ.)

Ohhhh dear!

(He scurries over to the  
opposite end of the couch  
and then turns to face  
PTOMAINÉ.)

You know the old saying; 'Friends don't let friends eat friends',  
right? Sound advice. I've always lived by it. You should... uh...  
too.

**PTOMAINÉ**

(PTOMAINÉ stops and  
considers this for a few  
beats. He then nods a silent  
agreement and begins walking  
around SCHENECTADY's end of  
the couch. He passes rather  
closely to SCHENECTADY.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY, who is facing  
the couch, gets as close to  
the couch as he can in order  
to let PTOMAINÉ pass him  
without touching.)

**PTOMAINÉ**

(PTOMAINÉ stops behind  
SCHENECTADY and pauses a few  
beats while looking him up  
and down. He then leans in  
to SCHENECTADY's left ear.)  
(softly)

Boo.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY cries out in horrified surprise, whips around and falls back on the couch.)

Whoah!

(He quickly rights himself and rapidly scoots over to the far right hand side of the couch.)

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE seats himself on the couch, in the center.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Boo... that was... that was quite... um... your humor is...

(As PTOMAINE sits down, SCHENECTADY gets as close to the edge of the couch as he can.)

Well now, you just stay there and I'll stay here and we can get on with the grilling... I didn't mean that in a cooking sense. I mean that I just have a couple more... um... a couple... You know, those things that... Questions! I have a couple more questions to ask you. First, I understand that it was you that found the... the dead... oh, you know...

**PTOMAINE**

The body?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY snaps his fingers and points to PTOMAINE as if to be giving him a silent "That's it".)

**PTOMAINE**

I had just come in from checking the traps, and when I rounded the refrigerator...

**SCHENECTADY**

Hold on, there. You were 'checking the traps' for dinner? You have to trap the food? Isn't the... um... the cold thing in the

kitchen... you know, it keeps... the freezer! Isn't the freezer stocked?

**PTOMAINE**

Of course it is, but I prefer the neighbors to be fresh.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh. Yes, I can see how you would want... did you say the... the 'neighbors'?

**PTOMAINE**

Relax, detective. It's only the ones that sneak onto the property illegally. But most of the time we just trap them and then set them free. Anyway, I rounded the refrigerator and found the body there on the floor beside the guillotine.

**SCHENECTADY**

Can... can we get back to this 'trapping the neighbors' thing? Something just doesn't quite... you know... sound right, here. What do you mean that you set them free 'most of the time'?

**PTOMAINE**

Well, after all, we can't eat them all at once you know.

**SCHENECTADY**

Yes... yes, I can see that. Of course. Everybody has to... um... has to... moderation...

(SCHENECTADY gives PTOMAINE a peculiar look, then shakes his head.)

Please, go on. You were talking about finding the... dead... thing.

**PTOMAINE**

So after that I looked for Miss Chattel to tell...

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY holds his hand up to halt PTOMAINE.)

Wait! Wait! Did you say 'guillotine'? You have a guillotine in your kitchen?

**PTOMAINE**

Yes, right next to the meat grinder.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, I see. Sure, where else would one put a guillotine... thingy? Uh huh. Have... have you given much thought to a food processor?

**PTOMAINE**

Oh no. There's too much screaming when you put them in the food processor.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY gives PATOMAINE a brief, silent look of disbelief.)

Well... yes, I could see how that might be a problem... the... the... the screaming and all.

**PTOMAINE**

So I found Miss Chattel and told her about the body and she sent the butler in and he put the body in the freezer.

**SCHENECTADY**

Freezer? Oh yes, that's right. The... the freezer.

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE scoots a little closer to SCHENECTADY.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(Schenectady quickly weasels out of his seat.)

I... need to get my notepad. It's right back there at the... over here.

(He goes to the bar and picks up the notepad and pencil, then begins writing.)

Let's see, that was 'neighbors' and 'traps' and... um... oh, let's not forget the 'guillotine'.

(He then takes a seat on the arm of the chair, facing downstage.)

So, were you in the kitchen earlier today?

**PTOMAINE**

Of course. I was preparing somebody for breakfast.

**SCHENECTADY**

Okay. And while you were doing that did you happen to hear... Wait, you didn't say that...

(to himself)

No, I'd better not ask. You probably *did*.

(to PTOMAINÉ)

Never mind. Um, anyway, while you were doing that did you happen to hear anything suspicious? Perhaps a scream or somebody yelling out in pain?

**PTOMAINÉ**

Of course not. If I had heard the painful, agonizingly blood curdling scream of somebody in trouble I would have been right there with a frying pan. The key to delicious meals is freshness, you know.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL enters UC and slowly walks to the back of the couch, stopping behind SCHENECTADY. She is holding her usual filled martini glass.)

**SCHENECTADY**

With a frying pan, you say? Yes, I understand. But maybe...

(PTOMAINÉ pauses and looks off to the side.)

(to himself)

Freshness?

(He considers this a few beats, then shakes his head.)

I don't get it.

(Looks back to PTOMAINÉ and opens his mouth as if about to speak.)

**CHATTEL**

Beandip!

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY yelps in fright and drops to the floor. He then rapidly crawls in front



of the coffee table before  
the couch. He then looks up  
over the top, spies Chattel,  
and slowly, weakly, stands.)

My word!

(to PTOMAINÉ)

You could use that woman as a national air raid siren...

(He walks back to stand  
beside CHATTEL with his back  
to the entry.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters UC,  
stopping in the entry.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)

I do wish that you would warn a person when you're about to do  
something like that. Good grief. I just saw my life pass in front  
of my... my...

(SCHENECTADY points to his  
eyes.)

...my see-thingys.

**PLANKTON**

Yes, madam?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY Jerks suddenly,  
throws his hand over his  
heart and glances briefly  
back at PLANKTON.)

(to CHATTEL)

Where did he come from? How does he get here so fast?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL does not look  
around to PLANKTON behind  
her.)

Spiffington, I have found the body. It is up in my bedroom. Do  
put it back in the freezer.

**PLANKTON**

I live to serve, madam. May I also open the fourth floor window  
so that I might push you out later?

**CHATTEL**

That will be all, Chinchilla.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON turns and exits  
UC.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL saunters  
nonchalantly around the  
right end of the couch,  
sitting down beside Ptomaine  
to his right.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(Schenectady is still trying  
to recover from his two  
scares.)

You... you found the body? In your bedroom? That's... well, that's...  
And he's still dead?

**CHATTEL**

That is correct, darling. Still dead. Dead, dead, dead. Are you  
through with the chef?

**SCHENECTADY**

Hmm?

(to PTOMAINE)

Oh, yes, you can go. Thank you for your... your...

(to CHATTEL)

What was the body doing in your bedroom?

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE stands and exits  
UC, walking closely by  
Schenectady as he goes.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY quickly slides  
across to the left end of  
the couch to avoid  
PTOMAINE.)

**CHATTEL**

I'm sure I do not know.

**SCHENECTADY**

But how did he get there if he was... you know, still dead?

**CHATTEL**

Don't know, don't care, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, I had better get upstairs and see the body.

**CHATTEL**

Not yet, Sergeant. Wait until Pewter puts the man back into the freezer. He is not a pretty sight right now, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY casts periodic glances back to the entry, wondering if he should stay or go inspect the body. He finally acquiesces to CHATTEL's demand and slowly takes a seat at the opposite (left) end of the couch.)

Well, I suppose a few extra minutes won't matter that much. So, tell me about what you found upstairs?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL suddenly breaks down, emotionally, sinking down farther into the couch. Her hand on her forehead.)

So many questions! And under these hot lights. I do not know how much longer I can hold out. The way you keep grilling me and grilling me it's a wonder I haven't fainted from sheer exhaustion.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY is totally taken aback and terribly confused by this outburst. He studies her with great interest.)

Um... well... that wasn't quite the answer that I was looking for, but I guess it's better than nothing. Let's try a different approach. Can you tell me, Mrs. Von... um... Von...

(He quickly thumbs through his notebook.)

Von Cash.

(to himself)

Why couldn't I remember that before?

(to CHATTEL)

Can you tell me about what time you first heard about the... Wait a minute... Von Cash... Von Cash. Say, aren't you related to the guy who made a fortune selling gourmet food to fancy restaurants?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL is now once again composed. She takes a sip of her martini.)

This is correct. Reginald was my late husband, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(Again SCENECTADY's eyes follow the martinis travel.)  
(sadly)

Your late martini... I mean, late husband. That's... that's a shame.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL stands and walks to the left end of the couch.)

Yes, the man was always late for everything. Dinner, meetings, luncheons, cocktail hour, pin-the-tail-on-the-homeless-person...

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY moves over to the right end of the couch and sits on the arm. He begins writing on the pad as she talks.)

**CHATTEL**

Couldn't show up on time to save his life. So, he lost it.

**SCHENECTADY**

Ah. If memory serves me, I seem to recall reading about the guy disappearing mysteriously.

**CHATTEL**

Oh no. Guy did not disappear mysteriously. He drowned in a vat of horse entrails.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well now, I guess that would be rather... Excuse me? What was a gourmet food maker doing around a vat of horse entrails? You're not suggesting that Reginald's gourmet food was made of...

**CHATTEL**

Oh, don't be ridiculous. Reginald was not around a vat of horse entrails. Guy was. You asked about Guy, did you not?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY is now very confused but not really wanting to admit it.)

Um... I did? Well, I guess maybe I did, yes.  
(He begins writing again.)

**CHATTEL**

Guy was my first late husband. He used to process horse entrails for some jam and jelly conglomerate up north. Accidentally fell into one of the vats and drowned.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY shakes his head sympathetically.)

Wow. Drowned in a vat of horse entrails. Must have been an awful way to go.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL walks slowly in front of the couch to the round table CR, causing SCHENECTADY to have to put his feet up on the couch in order to allow her to pass unobstructed.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL does not look back at him.)

No feet on the couch, darling. I doubt if you could afford the cleaning bill, being destitute and all.

(Reaching the round table,  
she runs her finger over the  
back of one of the chairs  
and then inspects the finger  
for dust.)

What were you saying, darling?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY abruptly takes  
his feet off the couch.)

I was saying that it must have been an awful way to die... drowning  
in a vat of... you know... entrails and all.

**CHATTEL**

Well, yes it might have been. I don't know. I was not there.  
Doesn't matter, anyway, since it didn't happen to me. Guy  
eventually ended up in a jar of grape preserves in Florida. It  
was tragic.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY slowly slides  
down the arm to sit on the  
cushion. He writes on the  
pad.)

Grape preserves. I see.

**CHATTEL**

No, darling. I.C. was filleted to death by a gang of rogue banana  
threshers.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY nods knowingly  
as he writes.)

Ah.

(He then stops writing,  
cocks his head to the side  
and thinks it over a moment  
before looking up to  
CHATTEL.)

What?"

**CHATTEL**

I.C. Stuffington, my third late husband. Invented the banana  
thresher.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY nods slowly,  
then begins writing again.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL moves around behind  
the couch.)

One day I.C. was in the warehouse getting the machines ready to ship out the following morning when something went horribly wrong and the threshers turned on him, surrounded him and... well... threshed him to death. Horrible way to die, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks up from  
his pad, searching the room  
before him for Chattel.  
Finally, craning his neck,  
he spots her behind him.)

Oh, there you are. Doesn't that thresher death sound rather suspicious to you? It sure sounds suspicious to me.

(He does not write anything  
down during the next story  
as he is so confused and  
fascinated by it.)

**CHATTEL**

Oh no, darling. Toomy had nothing to do with that.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, that's certainly a good..

(Pauses a beat.)

Huh?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL slowly walks to the  
left end of the couch. She  
speaks facing downstage.)

Toomy, my 7<sup>th</sup> late husband, passed away from malnutrition. I always told him he was working too hard, that it would eventually kill him. Well, I was right. Always in his laboratory into the early hours with his beakers and Bunsen burners and test tubes and chemicals and rats and things. I always said, "Toomy, darling, at least come out for something to eat. You need your nourishment." But he would not listen to me. He said he was on

the verge of something great... some sort of formula for a non-volatile breakfast cereal.

**SCHENECTADY**

You don't say?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL turns to face  
SCHENECTADY.)

No, no, no. Doan Sey choked to death, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY glances out to  
the audience in confusion  
for a few beats, before  
turning back to CHATTEL.)

Come again?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL sits down on the  
left end of the couch.)

Doan Sey Wang, my 12<sup>th</sup> late husband. He was a Regurgitated Rice Broker. Come to think about it he looked a lot like you. Got a piece of his rice and bird-dung omelet caught in his throat and choked.

**SCHENECTADY**

Mrs. Von Cash, exactly how many times have you been married?

**CHATTEL**

Counting the seven hour marriage to Hansel?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY shrugs.)

Sure. Why not?

**CHATTEL**

I have been married twenty-seven times, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(amazed)

You've been married twenty-seven times?

**CHATTEL**

Twenty-eight if you count the man I...



**SCHENECTADY**

Twenty-eight... Wow. It's a wonder that your ring... um...

(SCHENECTADY runs the fingers of his right hand over his left hand ring finger a couple times, then points to it.)

...you know, the ring... thingy... hasn't been worn down to a nub. Well, anyway, seeing as how we've been brought together for another purpose, maybe we should try to get back on track for... um...

(He looks up in confusion before turning to CHATTEL.)

Why were we brought together?

**CHATTEL**

Because of the burglar, darling.

(CHATTEL takes another sip off the martini.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY watches every movement of the glass before speaking.)

I have to ask; is that your first martini today? You know, I've always found that the second martini of the day tastes even better than the first. I would be more than happy to test that theory for you right now. If you could show me where the glasses are... I've already found the vodka over there on the...

(He points over his shoulder to the bar.)

Of course, this is not to discount the cool, frosty goodness of the first drink that...

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL takes another sip.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY again follows the glass as CHATTEL sips before continuing.)

...the first drink that really quenches the thirst.

**CHATTEL**

About the burglar, darling.

(CHATTEL sets the glass down  
on the coffee table.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(Again SCHENECTADY's eyes  
follow the glass.)

You don't suppose I could maybe... you know...

(He points to the glass.)

...smell it?

**CHATTEL**

Darling, the burglar?

**SCHENECTADY**

Hmm? Oh, yes. Of course. The... the thing about the corpse. Yes.  
All right, let us jump back into the facts with earnest.

**CHATTEL**

Fifteen.

**SCHENECTADY**

I would say that... Hmm? What was that? Fifteen? Fifteen what?

**CHATTEL**

Earnest. He was my 15<sup>th</sup> late husband.

**SCHENECTADY**

Now, you stop that. We have got to concentrate on this. Where  
were you when the body was discovered?

**CHATTEL**

I was in my bedroom, darling, showing Tiffani the proper way to  
slice soap.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY quickly writes  
this down.)

Slice soap?

**CHATTEL**

That is correct. If we do not divide each bar of soap into  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch  
cubes the staff only ends up wasting it. I am not made of money,  
you know. I have got scads of it but I am not made of it.

**SCHENECTADY**

You only give your staff  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch cubes of soap each day?

**CHATTEL**

Each day? Oh, do not be ridiculous, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, I should say not. That would be awful.

**CHATTEL**

Of course it would. They get a  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch cube of soap each month.

**SCHENECTADY**

Each month?

**CHATTEL**

Waste not, want not.

**SCHENECTADY**

But how does one person stay clean on one small cube of soap a month?

**CHATTEL**

One person? You are not paying attention, darling. Each monthly cube is for the entire staff. I just toss it in and let them fight it out.

(CHATTEL lays her eyes on the candy dish, then hands it to Schenectady.)

Oh, pardon my manners. Candy?

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh hell no! I mean... no, thank you.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL returns the dish to the table.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Can you tell me who else was in the house just before the body was discovered?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters the room and walks to the back of the couch.)

**CHATTEL**

Just the usual staff; my butler, maid, chef.

**SCHENECTADY**

Ah, you might say...

(SCHENECTADY leans in closely, quickly.)

...that the whole gang was here. Huh?

(He chuckles at his joke.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL bobs away from him, then stands to avoid any further instances.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stands.)

Yes, well...

**PLANKTON**

Madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY yelps, his hands fly out and the notepad and pencil go flying out in front of him. He clutches his chest with both hands and closes his eyes.)

It's still beating... Yes, it's... it's... it's still beating.

**CHATTEL**

What is it, Inkstain?

**PLANKTON**

The body has been successfully returned to the freezer, madam.

**CHATTEL**

Very well.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY retrieves the notepad and pencil.)  
(to himself)

One more time. One more time should do it. A heart can only take so much. I had such a healthy heart when I first came in here. I'm beginning to think that the victim wasn't murdered, it was frightened to death.

(After picking up the notepad and pencil, he goes to the back of the couch to talk with PLANKTON.)

So, you found the body in Mrs. Von Cash's bedroom?

**PLANKTON**

That is correct, madam.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL reseats herself on the left end of the couch.)

**SCHENECTADY**

There we go with the 'madam' again.

(SCHENECTADY checks his wrist for a pulse.)  
(to himself)

Yup, still... still... still beating.

(to PLANKTON)

So tell me, how did you find the body?

(He raises the notepad to write.)

**PLANKTON**

I looked down.

**SCHENECTADY**

No... that's not... not quite what I meant. I mean, how was the body when you found it?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON looks at SCHENECTADY for a couple

beats as if the man were  
insane.)  
It was quite dead, madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... see, we... we have a case of miscommunication here. I mean, I know we're both speaking English, and yet we're talking a different language. How do I put this so that it...? I know; in what position was the body?

**PLANKTON**

The body was lying down.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY writes this  
down.)

All right, now we're getting somewhere. The body was...  
(looks up)

Well, see, I kind of assumed that the body would be lying down. After all, it takes a special kind of dead body to be standing up or playing polo.

(glances off in thought)

Do they even know how to play polo?

(to PLANKTON)

What I'm trying to find out is where the body was.

**PLANKTON**

I believe I have already answered that. The body was in Madam's bedroom.

**SCHENECTADY**

Yes... yes, you did answer that. I clearly remember hearing that. But was the body on the floor? On the bed? On the dresser? The... the...

(SCHENECTADY makes an  
overhead gesture to indicate  
a ceiling fan.)

...thingy twirling on the upper part of the... the room?

**PLANKTON**

The body was draped over the bed.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY writes this  
down.)

...over the bed. That's better.

(to CHATTEL)

So, when you found the body draped over the bed, you...

**CHATTEL**

No, darling. The body was sitting on the Ambrosia Bench at the foot of my bed.

**SCHENECTADY**

Ah, I see.

(SCHENECTADY begins to write this down, but suddenly stops.)

(to CHATTEL)

No, I... I don't see. You found the body sitting on the bench?

(to PLANKTON)

And you found it afterward lying on the bed?

(He considers this a moment while absent mindedly sucking on the end of the pencil. Suddenly realizing that this thing is in his mouth, he removes it while flicking his tongue to indicate a bad taste.)

(to CHATTEL)

Oh, I see. You moved it from the bench to the bed before you came down here.

**CHATTEL**

Don't be silly, Colonel. I would never touch a dead body. That is what the help is for.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)

Um... 'detective', actually.

(to PLANKTON)

Then you must have moved the body. Yes?

**PLANKTON**

That is incorrect. I found the body draped over madam's bed. I did not move it until carrying it back to the freezer.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY rounds the couch on the right, scratching his head with the pencil.)

But if neither one of you moved it from the floor to the bed, then how did it get there?

(to PLANKTON)

You're absolutely certain that the victim was... was... you know, no blood moving around or thinking or moving or...dead! That's it. You're absolutely certain that the victim was dead?

**PLANKTON**

Yes, madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(mumbling)

...'madam' again.

(SCHENECTADY slowly lowers himself down to the couch on the right side.)

(to CHATTEL)

And you know for certain that the body was dead, too?

**CHATTEL**

Of course it was dead, darling. Don't you know what a dead body looks like?

**PTOMAIN**

(PTOMAIN enters the room and begins searching around as before - first the bar, then the round table and chairs. He is unobserved.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh yes, I've seen a dead body or two in my line of... in my line of... of... you know, doing what I do. I'm just trying to figure out how your dead body keeps moving around. Yep, that's a head-scratcher. Well, anyway, now that we know where the body is, this will give me a chance to inspect it.

(to PLANKTON)

If you could show me to the freezer, I would be more than happy to give it my expert...



(SCHENECTADY suddenly notices PTOMAININE and stops talking.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL notices PTOMAININE.)  
What are you doing, darling?

**PTOMAININE**

(PTOMAININE looks up.)  
Nobody panic. It's nothing serious.

**SCHENECTADY AND CHATTEL**

(SCHENECTADY and CHATTEL exchange a glance between one another before both turning back to watch PTOMAININE.)

**PTOMAININE**

(PTOMAININE crosses in front of the coffee table, bending over to look beneath it.)  
Nothing to worry about. It happens all the time.  
(He then looks beneath the left end of the couch, then stands and faces the two seated - SCHENECTADY and CHATTEL.)  
Really. There is absolutely no need to panic.

**CHATTEL**

(to PTOMAININE)  
Darling, what are you talking about? And why are you in my living room without an invitation? You know the rules. Do we need to have take you down to the basement again?

**PTOMAININE**

I was just leaving, Miss Chattel. I had to check this room before I checked the rest of the mansion.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to PTOMAININE)  
Did... did you lose something?

**PTOMAINE**

Just a body. Nothing important.

**CHATTEL**

Do not tell me that you lost it again, darling.

**PTOMAINE**

I don't know how it keeps getting away from me, Miss Chattel. One minute it's there, the next I'm going into the freezer to grab a hunk for tonight's rump roast and it's gone.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to PTOMAINE)

Wait... you were going to grab a hunk of... you mean off the...

(Looks away.)

Nah. I must have heard it wrong.

**CHATTEL**

Go find it again, darling. I want no dead men traipsing around on my highly-polished, imported, expensive hardwood floors.

**PTOMAINE**

Yes, Miss Chattel. Right away.

(PTOMAINE turns to exit but is stopped by Schenectady.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Now, hold on a minute.

(SCHENECTADY stands and crosses over to stand to PTOMAINE's left on the left end of the couch.)

**PTOMAINE**

Is there a problem?

**SCHENECTADY**

No, not... well, yes. Yes, there is a problem. Quite a number of problems, actually. Let us briefly get back to what you were saying about cutting off a piece of... of the... you know; the rump... rump roast.

**PTOMAINE**

Oh, it's delicious.

**SCHENECTADY**

Yes... yes, I'm sure it is. But what I... I mean, when you... You are aware that eating people is kind of a no-no in this country, right?

**PTOMAINE**

Of course I am.

(PTOMAINE begins closely examining Schenectady's head, visually.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, well now, that's a good thing because the way you were...

(SCHENECTADY notices the inspection with some concern.)

...um... the way you were... you know, talking... I was beginning to think that... that... Why are you looking at me like that?

**PTOMAINE**

My, what a big head you have. I'll bet you have a really big brain.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, I don't know about...

**PTOMAINE**

Have you ever had fried brains?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY hesitates a moment.)

Now, we've gone through this before, and I...

**PTOMAINE**

You really should stick around. We would love to have you for... *dinner*.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY takes a step back.)

Well, that's... that's nice of you to... to... to invite... Um...

**PTOMAINE**

...a little wine vinegar. Some parsley. Lemon, flour...

**SCHENECTADY**

(flustered)

Where was I?

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE begins feeling  
Schenectady's arm.)

Would you prefer scrambled brains?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY pulls his arm  
away and takes another step  
back.)

Um... so what you're saying is that somehow the dead body got away  
from you... again. Isn't that... um... impossible?

**PTOMAINE**

Oh, you win some, you lose some. The good thing is that there's  
always more where that came from.

(PTOMAINE once more kneads  
SCHENECTADY's arm.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY again pulls his  
arm out of PTOMAINE's grasp  
and steps back.)

(to CHATTEL)

Mrs... um... Mrs...

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE steps up and feels  
the arm again.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY pulls his arm  
away.)

(to CHATTEL)

II could use a little help, here.

**CHATTEL**

(to PTOMAINE)

Go find the body, darling.

**PTOMAINE**

(to CHATTEL)

Yes, Miss Chattel.

(to SCHENECTADY)

Don't go away. I'll be right back.

(PTOMAINE gives one final  
glance to SCHENECTADY's  
butt, rubbing his chin.)

Hmmm... should be tender enough.

(He exits UC.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)

Now, I know he wasn't really serious about...? I mean, certainly he  
didn't mean that he would cook my...

(to himself)

No, that's ridiculous. I must have misunderstood.

(to CHATTEL)

Would he really take my... and with vinegar... um...

**CHATTEL**

You're boring me, darling. Now, where were we?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY gives the entry  
UC a final glance, shakes  
his head and retakes his  
seat on the right-end of the  
couch.)

(to himself)

Damned if I know. This place is like a... like a... well, I'm not  
sure what it's like, but it sure is! What with the people  
suddenly appearing and dead bodies disappearing and the cook  
wanting to...

**GINGER**

(GINGER pokes his head  
around the entry UC.)

Miss Chattel?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL does not look  
around.)

Who's there?

**GINGER**

It's Ginger, Miss Chattel.

**CHATTEL**

What is it, darling? I'm very busy.

**GINGER**

(GINGER slowly inches into  
the room, peering around.)

Is Tiffani in here?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON crosses over to  
stand to the left of the  
bar.)

**CHATTEL**

Tiffani is working. Shouldn't you be outside planting or digging  
or growing whatever it is you grow, darling? I do not pay you to  
loungue around inside the house all day.

**GINGER**

But Miss Chattel, I wasn't lounging around inside the house. I  
came to tell you something important.

**CHATTEL**

Very well. What is it? You have 20 seconds.

**GINGER**

(GINGER steps to the left  
end of the couch, facing  
CHATTEL.)

Miss Chattel, I just saw the dead burglar's body.

**CHATTEL**

Of course you did, darling. We've all seen it.

**GINGER**

In the tool shed?

**SCHENECTADY**

(to GINGER)

The... the tool shed?

**GINGER**

(to SCHENECTADY)

That's right. I just went into the tool shed to get my spade and the body was in there.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stands and moves across to stand to GINGER's left.)

When did you see this?

**GINGER**

Just now. Why?

**SCHENECTADY**

You're sure it was the same body?

**GINGER**

Pretty sure... unless there's another body around here with a cell phone, kitchen knife, swizzle stick, garden sheers and a feather duster sticking out of it.

**SCHENECTADY**

No, no, that would probably be the same... um... same body. My goodness, that thing travels around more than I do.

**CHATTEL**

Grandfunk, you know what to do.

**PLANKTON**

Yes, madam.

(PLANKTON exits UC.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks anxiously at the entry. UC.)

Um, I really should go with Plankton so that I could have a look at the body, myself.

(to GINGER)

I think that you should stay here until I get back. I have some more... um... oh, you know... more goodies to ask.

**GINGER**

But I only have 20 seconds before Miss Chattel calls Tiffani in to zap me with the electric cattle prod.

**CHATTEL**

(calmly)  
Ten seconds, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)  
Now, now, let's not have any of that. One... one death is enough,  
thank you.

**CHATTEL**

Rules are rules, Sergeant.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY glances  
frantically between the  
entry, CHATTEL and GINGER,  
wanting to go but afraid to  
leave GINGER alone.)  
(to CHATTEL)  
It's 'detective', but...  
(He gives the entry one  
final, frantic glance before  
turning back to GINGER.)  
Well, I suppose I'd better stay here and keep an eye on you.  
(He leans in to GINGER.)  
She really has the maid zap you with an electric... um... one of  
those... heifer zapper thingy's?

**GINGER**

Yes, detective. And it hurts.

**SCHENECTADY**

I imagine it would.  
(to CHATTEL)  
You... you do know that electrocuting your employees is illegal,  
don't you?

**CHATTEL**

Discipline is essential, Private. One must run a tight ship or  
the help will walk all over you. There is a reason that the  
inside help is called 'inside help' and the outside help is  
called 'outside help'. And if one crosses over to the other then  
they are to be punished.  
(CHATTEL sips her martini.)



**SCHENECTADY**

Now, see, you really can't do that, Mrs. Von... um...  
(SCHENECTADY turns to GINGER  
for help.)

**GINGER**

'Cash'.

**SCHENECTADY**

Thank you; Mrs. Von Cash.  
(to himself)  
I don't know why that name eludes me all the time.  
(to GINGER)  
Why don't you have a seat on the...  
(SCHENECTADY points to the  
couch.)  
...on the... long chair gizmo there. I need to ask you a few more  
questions.

**GINGER**

(GINGER sits on the couch on  
the right-end, opposite  
CHATTEL.)

**CHATTEL**

Five more seconds, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY waves a  
cautionary finger at  
CHATTEL.)  
Ah ah ah... There will be no more counting. No zapping, no  
counting, nothing like that. I'm conducting an investigation  
here, Mrs... um...  
(SCHENECTADY Looks to GINGER  
for help.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER silently mouths 'Von  
Cash'.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)

...Mrs. Von Cash, and I need everybody's full cooperation - including your own. So, let us have an end to all this silly nonsense of counting and hurting and all that.

(SCHENECTADY crosses over and takes a backwards seat in the chair nearest the couch by the round table stage right, facing GINGER.)  
(to GINGER)

So, you say you found the body in the tool shed?

**GINGER**

(GINGER gazes longingly at SCHENECTADY.)

Did you know that, up close, you look just like Rock Hudson, detective?

**SCHENECTADY**

Married! Um... to a woman, I mean. Well, that is to say, I'm not actually married right now but if I were married it would be to a... you know... a... one of...

(SCHENECTADY uses his hands to indicate the curves of a woman.)

...those.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL finishes her martini, stands and heads around the couch and over behind the bar to make a new one.)

**GINGER**

Oh! You're single. Why don't you have a seat next to me, handsome.

(GINGER pats the cushion beside him. He then leans over the couch arm toward SCHENECTADY.)

It'll be coooooozier.

(He again pats the seat beside him.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... no... no thank you. I'm safer over... I mean, I'm quite comfortable where I am. Now, where were we?

(SCHENECTADY looks at his notepad.)

Oh yes, the... the body... thingy. You said you found him in the tool shed. Where was he?

**GINGER**

He was laying on the floor with the lawnmower on top of him.

**SCHENECTADY**

The lawn mower?

**GINGER**

That's right, detective.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY writes this down.)

Do you have any idea how it got there?

**GINGER**

Well, maybe somebody was going to mow him.

**SCHENECTADY**

What? No, I mean do you have any idea how the body got into the tool shed?

**GINGER**

No, detective.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY makes a note on his pad.)

Well, while I've got you here, I might just as well ask you a couple other questions.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL lifts a closed vodka bottle and is inspecting the bottom of it, searching for a way to get it out.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER runs a finger over Schenectady's leg.)

Do you work out?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY nervously stands and walks to the opposite side of the couch (left) as he talks.)

Now, where... where were you when the body was discovered? That is... earlier today.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL is now attempting to shake the vodka out of the bottle with the capon. She does so quite violently before giving up and setting the bottle down. She then inspects it carefully, trying to find a hole in it through which to get it out.)

**GINGER**

I was out pruning the roses. Oh! The news broke my fragile little heart.

**SCHENECTADY**

And how did you first hear about... you know... about the death?

**GINGER**

I heard about it from Hydrangea.

**SCHENECTADY**

I see.

(SCHENECTADY begins to write this down, then looks up abruptly.)

Wait... You heard about the death from a plant?

**GINGER**

Oh, no, silly. Hydrangea is Miss Chattel's downstairs maid in the west wing of the mansion.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, I see.

(SCHENECTADY makes a note on  
the pad.)

And how did she hear about the death?

**GINGER**

He.

**SCHENECTADY**

Pardon?

**GINGER**

Hydrangea is a he, not a she.

**SCHENECTADY**

But you just said that it was the downstairs maid.

**GINGER**

That's right.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY considers this  
a moment before a look of  
enlightenment comes over  
him.)

Oh... I see. He's one of... he's like...

(He points to Ginger briefly  
before quickly withdrawing  
his hand.)

...Um... I get it now. Yes. Well, now, how do you suppose he heard  
about the death?

**GINGER**

Oh, please, detective. When something this big happens on the  
estate it's impossible to keep it quiet. Everybody knows almost  
instantly.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh... grapevine... Yeah, I get it.

**GINGER**

I remember thinking that the wrong person had died.

**SCHENECTADY**

Now, that's good. It's good to get your thoughts out when something like... What? The wrong person?

**GINGER**

That's right, detective. I was thinking that it should have been Alfredo lying there on the floor bleeding to death... a slow, painful death. That bitch!

**SCHENECTADY**

Alfredo? Should I know that name?

(SCHENECTADY slowly lowers himself onto the couch, left end.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL begins inspecting the drink shaker.)

**GINGER**

Oh! Don't even speak his name! We lived together for seventeen years. Seventeen years of cooking and cleaning and caring for him... nursing him back to health when he was sick, reading to him, feeding him by hand, putting away the chains... Oh! This is just too much. I can't possibly go on!

(GINGER flings himself over the arm of the couch, moaning. All at once he straightens up and turns to SCHENECTADY.)

And then I caught him with that little slut! Oh, who could blame my little Alfredo... the way that slut swung those hips of his, and the way he did that little cheer with those pom-poms made of bacon, and... Oh! It's all too painful to talk about!

(Again he throws himself over the arm of the couch.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Well... yes... that would be... pom-poms made of bacon, you say? Well now, that's all very interesting but I think that we should get back to the body of...

**GINGER**

(GINGER straightens up and again turns to SCHENECTADY.)

Oh! Alfredo had a body! Those cute little... Roarrrrrrr.

(He gestures as if to be squeezing Alfredo's buns, then turns back to SCHENECTADY, grabbing the front of his jacket.)

I loved him, don't you understand? I'd do anything for him. My poor little fettuccini Alfredo... the bitch!

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY pries himself loose from GINGER's grasp.)

Yeeees... I can see how you've been through the...

**GINGER**

Carl! The slut's name was Carl!

(GINGER points to an imaginary spot in the room.)

I caught them together that night when I got home.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks to the corner for a moment before turning back to GINGER.)

**GINGER**

There they were in front of the video camera, all alone, painting each other red. Oh! Why do torture myself like this? I just wish that I could find that little slut, Carl. I'd scratch his slutty eyes out.

(GINGER makes scratching motions.)

No, no... I could never harm another human being.

(He reaches for a piece of candy on the coffee table.)

I need a piece of candy to calm my nerves.

(He pops the candy in his mouth.)

They left me that night. Packed up Alfredo's bags, called a taxi and left...

(He makes a distasteful face. Takes the candy out and places it back in the dish.)

**SCHENECTADY**

They left?

**GINGER**

Oh! Yes, they took everything. The Waterford crystal, the Ming vase, the leather gag...

(GINGER leans against the couch arm pitifully.)

...the pom-poms... Everything. If it hadn't been for Scallops I never would have survived.

(He places his head in his hand, the palm and fingers covering his eyes.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL places her glass upside down on the top of the upright vodka bottle with the cap still on. She then turns the whole thing upside down and begins trying to shake the vodka out.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Scallops? Who is Scallops?

**GINGER**

(GINGER opens his fingers to peer out to SCHENECTADY with one eye.)

My Siamese Pomeranian French.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, I see. That was your... your... you know; four legs, long pink tongue... dog! That's it, your dog.

**GINGER**

Dog? Oh, heavens no.

(GINGER inches himself to the center of the couch.)

Scallops was our houseboy.

**SCHENECTADY**

You had a houseboy with four legs and a long pink tongue?



**GINGER**

(GINGER scoots a little closer to SCHENECTADY.)

Oh, don't be silly. Scallops didn't have four legs.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL places the upright glass on the bar and begins wringing the bottle in an attempt to squeeze the vodka out of the bottle.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY scoots away from GINGER a little.)

This is all very... um... but mostly, it's...

(He grimaces with a shudder.)

...but we've gotten off the track. I still need to know what...

(He suddenly turns back to GINGER.)

Scallops? Who would name their kid...

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters UC.)

Madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(Yelps and jumps up, swiveling around to face PLANKTON.)

I swear! Could you two at least tie bells around your necks to warn somebody when you're coming?

**PLANKTON**

The body is back in the freezer as requested.

(Plankton glances to CHATTEL.)

Martini time again, madam?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL looks exasperated. Moving over to the right end of the bar she extends her

glass and waits for it to be filled. She stares out beyond the audience.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON steps behind the bar and makes her a martini.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Martini time, you say? Well, now...

(SCHENECTADY takes a step toward the back of the couch on his way over to the bar.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER rapidly scoots the rest of the way to the left of the couch and grabs SCHENECTADY's pants leg, stopping him beside the couch.)

Here's an idea, detective. Why don't you and me melt on over to my room and you could strip-search me. I know I'm guilty of something.

(He then runs a finger up the outside of SCHENECTADY's leg.)

I have a dunnnnn-geonnnnn.

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... I'll just... over there.

(SCHENECTADY nervously points to the bar. With a panicked look on his face he hurries over to the bar, standing opposite Chattel at the left end. He watches with great interest as PLANKTON makes the drink.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER faces forward, looking defeated.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Did you know that the martini was said to have been invented in 1863? Well, that's one theory. Another involves a miner during the gold rush in 1849 in Martinez... No vermouth? No, I guess not. Well, who drinks a martini with vermouth, anyway? It's... it's... it's a dry martini or nothing, I always say. I've always found martinis to be very refreshing... kind of the breath of life, you know what I mean?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON pours the drink into CHATTEL's glass.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stops speaking and watches intently as the drink is being poured.)

Yep... the breath of life. Say, I don't suppose that you made enough for... you know... for two... um...

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON places the bottle and shaker beneath the bar.)

**SCHENECTADY**

...no, I... I guess you didn't.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL walks to the right chair at the round table and sits.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON exits the room.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY checks beneath the bar briefly before heading back over to GINGER's side of the couch, left, stopping just outside of GINGER's reach. He studies his notes.)

Okay. As I understand it, Miss Ginger, you were out in the yard working...

(He suddenly realizes what he had said and looks up abruptly.)

Did I just say 'Miss Ginger'? Well, how about that. I certainly didn't mean to infer... it was merely a slip of... you don't think that I would intentionally...

(He quickly saunters across to CHATTEL and leans down to her.)

It really was an honest mistake. He's not the violent type, is he?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL shrugs, then takes a sip of her martini.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY turns back to GINGER, an embarrassed look on his face.)

You know that some of my best friends are...

(He stops and thinks about this a beat.)

Well, that's not entirely true. Actually, I don't have any best friends.

**GINGER**

(GINGER begins to stand slowly.)

Would you like a new best friend?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY points to the couch.)

Sit! ...I mean, please remain on the... on the... thing, there. I have some more questions to ask you.

**GINGER**

(GINGER slowly sits back down.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY begins pacing before the couch as he speaks.)

Now, Ginger, there are still three points that I am not entirely certain.. um... about... or with... or... for... or... Well, we'll just let that be before I hurt myself. One; how did the body happen to end up in your tool shed. Two; how did the lawnmower get on top of the body. And, three...

(He stops to the right of  
GINGER and faces him.)

...did your parents really name you 'Ginger'? Isn't that kind of... well, you know.

**GINGER**

They named me Ginger because my father was in love with Ginger Rogers and my mother was expecting a girl.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY holds a finger  
up in the air as if  
understanding. After a  
moment's hesitation he  
shakes his head and  
continues pacing.)

Do you keep the tool shed locked?

**GINGER**

Yes, I do, but if you want a personal tour I'll gladly unlock it and show you my tools.

**SCHENECTADY**

No... no, that won't be necessary. I've seen tools, and... um... well, not your tools, of course but I've got tools of my own and I've... seen... I know what tools look like. Thank you, anyway. So, about this lawnmower; I take it that the mower had been driven on top of the body?

**GINGER**

Driven? Oh, no, detective. It isn't one of the riding mowers. Miss Chattel will only let me have one of the push mowers. It was probably just lifted onto the body.

**SCHENECTADY**

(surprised)  
(to GINGER)

You mean...

(to CHATTEL)

When I was coming up the drive I saw...

(SCHENECTADY points to one wall.)

(to GINGER)

There must be 20 acres of lawn out there. Do you mean to tell me that you have to mow the... the... mow all that with a push mower?

**GINGER**

Once a week.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to CHATTEL)

You won't let him have a riding mower?

**CHATTEL**

Riding mowers are too expensive, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

But... but as I understand it you have money to burn, so why would you be concerned about one lousy riding mower?

**CHATTEL**

I did not get rich by spending it all on every extravagance on the market, inspector.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY seats himself down on the right end of the couch.)

(to GINGER)

You mean to tell me that you really mow that enormous lawn by hand once a week? How do you do it?

**GINGER**

It isn't easy, detective. Sometimes I get a little help from Fred..

(whispers)

Don't tell Miss Chattel.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, no, I won't. Well, I'm glad to hear that. So, this 'Fred' comes occasionally to help you?

**GINGER**

Sometimes, when I can get him away from Sigmund. They're very close.

**SCHENECTADY**

Sigmund? You mean that Sigmund and Fred are... Oh, I get it. They're like...

(SCHENECTADY points to GINGER.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER runs a finger over SCHENECTADY's outstretched finger.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY withdraws his finger abruptly.)

...that is to say that... Yes, yes, I understand. So Sigmund allows Fred to come out once in a... um... once in a... occasionally to help you mow the lawn.

**GINGER**

That's right, but usually only when Sigmund is with Danny.

**SCHENECTADY**

Yes, well, that makes... um... Danny?

**GINGER**

Oh yes. Sigmund and Danny spend a lot of time together

**SCHENECTADY**

And Fred doesn't mind?

**GINGER**

No, I don't think so. They're all very close.

**SCHENECTADY**

Apparently. But if that's the case, then that would mean...

(SCHENECTADY considers this a beat.)

Ooooooh. It's one of those... um... What do they call it? A *ménage*... um... *ménage*... one of those three-some type things? But doesn't anybody get jealous?

**GINGER**

I think Steve gets a little jealous.

**SCHENECTADY**

Steve... Okay, I'll bite. Who is Steve?

**GINGER**

He sleeps with Bernard.

**SCHENECTADY**

Bernard?

**GINGER**

That's right. And before that, Bernard slept with Harold.

**SCHENECTADY**

Herald?

**GINGER**

Uh huh. And I think that Harold used to sleep with Fred and Sigmund, but that was a long time ago.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks ahead in  
silence. He finally tilts  
his head and nods. He then  
turns back to GINGER.)

Well, that was quite a... um... group of... Wasn't there some confusion  
as to who lived in whose house?

**GINGER**

Oh, no, they all live together.

**SCHENECTADY**

Together? All... all of them?

**GINGER**

Of course. Them and Andy and Jeffrey and DeMond and Timothy and  
Gerald and Samantha.

**SCHENECTADY**

Good grief! Now, I've... I've... I've always considered myself to be  
an open-minded type of... of... guy, but that certainly stretches  
the...

(Pauses a beat.)

Samantha?



**GINGER**

That's right, but she's getting to be an old nag.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY glances at CHATTEL for a beat before turning back to stare at GINGER for a beat. He then stares straight ahead in complete befuddlement.)

**GINGER**

Detective? What's wrong?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY continues to stare ahead in silence as if having blown a mental microchip.)

**GINGER**

Yoo hoo? Anybody in there?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY turns to GINGER.)

I'm... I'm... You know, at first I thought I was starting to understand this whole thing, and how everybody was... you know... with everybody else and living together under one roof and all. And I'm not judging anybody. Far be it for me to judge somebody's life or living arrangement... no matter how strange... but for the life of me I can't figure out where Samantha fits in there.

**GINGER**

Oh, she just sleeps with all the others.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY suddenly looks straight ahead, grabs Ginger's leg with his left hand and the couch arm with his right. His eyes widen and he stares out ahead for a few beats before whipping his eyes left to GINGER.)

Are you trying to tell me that Fred and Sigmund and Samantha and all the others are all... um... sleeping together?

**GINGER**

Of course they are. Why?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stands up and crosses behind the couch to the left end while talking.)

Why? 'Why' he asks. In all my born days I have never heard of such a... Granted, I did some crazy things in my college days, like setting a bag of dog doo on fire on somebody's front porch, and eating goldfish and things like that, but I have never been involved in anything like...

(He turns to GINGER.)

All I can say is that you're very lucky that Mrs. Von... um... Von...

**GINGER**

Von Cash.

**SCHENECTADY**

Yeah, her... that she doesn't know that this sort of thing is going on.

**GINGER**

Of course she knows. It's her estate, after all.

**SCHENECTADY**

And she doesn't have a problem with it?

**GINGER**

No. Why should she? Sometimes she goes over to watch.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY reaches down and grabs the arm of the couch for support. He stares at GINGER in utter disbelief.)

**GINGER**

Sometimes we all go watch. What's wrong with that?

**SCHENECTADY**

Well... um... for starters... I... they... you... um... This is so wrong on so many levels that I don't know where to start.

**GINGER**

Miss Chattel's favorite is Kentucky Joe. Sometimes she'll ride him.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY collapses to the floor beside the couch.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER hurries to his knees on the couch, leaning over the arm and looking down on SCHENECTADY.)

What's wrong, Detective? Are you all right?

**CHATTEL**

(to GINGER)

What is going on over there, darling? Where did the Sergeant go?

**GINGER**

(to CHATTEL)

He's down here, Miss Chattel.

(GINGER points down.)

**CHATTEL**

Well, do tell him to get up. I am too rich to have people sitting on my floor. If the neighbors looked in right now they would think that I didn't allow guests to sit on my fabulous furniture. I do... occasionally.

**GINGER**

(GINGER hops up, scurries around and lifts SCHENECTADY onto the couch, far left. He then sits to SCHENECTADY's right, directly next to him, stroking SCHENECTADY's shoulder.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY appears to be  
in a daze.)

**GINGER**

It's all right, detective. Ginger will take care of you.

(GINGER leans his head on  
SCHENECTADY's shoulder.)

I'll make you all better.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY slowly turns to  
look at GINGER.)

Mrs. Von... and... and Kentucky Joe?

**GINGER**

Mostly, but sometimes she does Bernard, just for a different  
experience.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY's head flips  
back on the back of the  
couch, his eyes closing.)

**GINGER**

Oh!

(GINGER jumps up and rushes  
over to CHATTEL.)

Can I borrow this for a moment, Miss Chattel? I'll bring it right  
back.

(Taking CHATTEL's martini  
glass, he returns to  
SCHENECTADY and runs the rim  
beneath his nose.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY begins to stir,  
his eyes opening and his  
head eventually coming back  
up.)

What? What happened? Where am I?

**GINGER**

(GINGER returns the glass to  
CHATTEL, then returns to  
SCHENECTADY's side.)

Feeling any better, detective?

**SCHENECTADY**

I just had the strangest dream. It was kind of silly, now that I think about it, but I dreamed that there were a bunch of... and one... and Mrs. Von... was... Am I losing my mind?

**GINGER**

Oh, don't be silly, detective. It wasn't a dream. We were just talking about the horses in the stable, that's all.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks up  
abruptly.)  
(to GINGER)

Horses? You mean Danny and Demond and Samantha... they're all horses?

**GINGER**

Of course they are. Why? What did you think they were? Humans?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY feigns a weak  
laugh.)

No, of course not. I... I... knew that they were horses all along.

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters UC.)

Madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(Surprised, SCHENECTADY  
jumps - still seated, his  
hands jutting out before  
him. He brings them up and  
rests them on top of his  
head.)  
(to himself)

This is all a bad dream. It's just a very bad dream. I'll wake up in the morning and it will all be gone.

**CHATTEL**

What is it now, Pondscum?

**PLANKTON**

It is about the body, madam.

**CHATTEL**

What about the body?

**PLANKTON**

I have just returned it to the freezer.

**CHATTEL**

Yes, I am aware of that.

**PLANKTON**

No, madam. I mean, that I have had to return the body to the freezer yet again.

**CHATTEL**

I heard you the first time, Oilcan. There is no need to repeat yourself.

**PLANKTON**

Apparently there is. Clean the cocktail olives out of your ears and listen carefully, madam. I have just had to return the body to the freezer - again.

**SCHENECTADY**

Wait a minute, hold on.

(SCHENECTADY stands and  
walks unsteadily back to  
PLANKTON.)

I think I understand. Are you saying that you had to return the body to the freezer from the tool shed and then you had to return it again after that?

**PLANKTON**

That is correct, madam. I just found the body lying on top of the dining room table.

**CHATTEL**

Do make sure you wash the table top thoroughly before serving dinner tonight, Groundhog.

**PLANKTON**

Of course, madam... all but your side.

**SCHENECTADY**

The body was on the dining room table? How did it get there?

**PLANKTON**

I do not know.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, now this is getting... um... well, in a word; ridiculous. Just how many times can a body disappear and then reappear somewhere else?

**PLANKTON**

I give up, madam. How many?

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... no. See, that was one of those rhetorical... um... things that... don't really mean... Tell you what, why don't you come in here so I can get a little more information. I haven't had the opportunity to question you yet.

(SCHENECTADY begins crossing to the right side of the couch.)

**PLANKTON**

Of course, madam.

(PLANKTON remains perfectly still.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY thinks he is leading the way for PLANKTON to the couch, but halfway there he turns to find PLANKTON standing where he had been left.)

Or, you could just stay there.

(He returns to PLANKTON's right side.)

Yes, that's probably better. Maybe more comfortable for you, too. Huh?

(He leans in to PLANKTON.)  
(quietly)

Are you even allowed to sit down?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON stares straight ahead without comment.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY brings up the notepad and pencil.)

Um... yes. Well. Okay. So, 'Plankton' is it?

**PLANKTON**

Yes, madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY walks over to the bar, turns and places his right arm on it, looking casual.)

Funny thing... some guys would get upset being called 'madam' continually, but I... I think it's... well... sort of... I mean, I'm sure I'll go home tonight and lauuuuugh... Um, anyway, I need to know where you were when the body was... well, when the death took place?

**PLANKTON**

As I recall, I was in the upstairs study polishing the goldfish.

**SCHENECTADY**

That's fine. And who was it that told you that... Did you just say you were polishing the goldfish?

**PLANKTON**

That is correct.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY thinks about this a beat.)

Oh, I see.

(He leans toward PLANKTON quickly.)

You had me there for a moment.

(He leans back.)

They were made of wood or bronze or something and you were... um... polishing them.



**PLANKTON**

No, madam. They were very much alive. Madam likes her goldfish clean and shiny.

**SCHENECTADY**

You have to polish Mrs. Von Cash's goldfish?

**PLANKTON**

That is correct.

**SCHENECTADY**

Wow. Well, all I can say is that it's a good thing that they're not... not silverfish or you'd have to probably use a tarnish remover. Huh?

(SCHENECTADY laughs at his little joke. Realizing that he is the only one laughing, he settles right down.)

Now, see, that... that killed them at Fogey Village. Well, I don't mean that anybody actually died, of course, but they sure had a good sense of humor. Something that seems to be... missing... um...

(He turns his head so as not to be heard by anybody.)  
(to himself)

...missing here.

(He walks around PLANKTON to stand on his left.)

So, you were upstairs polishing... um... polishing the goldfish... in the den, was it?

**PLANKTON**

I was in the study.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY snaps his fingers.)

Oh, that's right. You were in the... in the study. You did say that, didn't you? Yes. Well, so you were in the... up there. How did you hear about the burglar and his... you know... his subsequent... um... well, his... croaking.

**PLANKTON**

I was here with madam when the chef informed us of the man's demise.

**SCHENECTADY**

That's fine. Just... no, that's not really fine at all. Didn't you just tell me that you were in the den?

**PLANKTON**

Study.

**SCHENECTADY**

Yes, yes, the study.

**PLANKTON**

That is correct.

**SCHENECTADY**

But how could you have been in the den...

**PLANKTON**

Study.

**SCHENECTADY**

...study and down here in the living room at the same time?

**PLANKTON**

I was not in both rooms at the same time.

**SCHENECTADY**

But you just said...

**PLANKTON**

Madam asked me where I was when the burglar was first discovered. I was in the study. When I was informed of the body having been found I was in this room with Madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY holds up a finger as if to prove a point, his mouth opening up to speak. He holds this position for a beat in thought, then closes his mouth, lowers his finger, clasps his hands behind his back and walks around to the

front/right of the couch,  
crossing before GINGER.)  
Yes... yes, you did tell me that. I stand corrected. So you were in  
the study..

**PLANKTON**

Study.

**SCHENECTADY**

...that's right. You were there when the burglar was...  
(Turns to Plankton.)

Isn't that what I just... Didn't I just say 'study'? No... I guess  
not. I could have sworn that I said 'study'...

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE enters the room  
angrily with a meat cleaver  
in his raised right hand. He  
looks furious.)

**SCHENECTADY**

At any rate, it appears that everybody was accounted for when...  
(SCHENECTADY spots  
PTOMAINE.)  
...when... Um... that's not a happy face.

**PTOMAINE**

All right, where is he?

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON cautiously walks  
to the left end of the  
couch.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Where is he? He who?

**PTOMAINE**

You know who it is.  
(PTOMAINE proceeds to go  
through his usual ritual of  
trying to find something  
behind the bar, under the  
round table, the coffee

table and beneath the couch  
as he speaks.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL rises quickly and  
heads to the left end of the  
couch.)

**PTOMAINE**

I am getting so tired of this. I slave my fingers to the bone  
three times a day for this household. It isn't bad enough that I  
have to empty traps and stalk the neighbors, now I have to  
continually track down the food inside the mansion. I'm about to  
lose my mind. I slave over a hot stove day in and day out with no  
help whatsoever.

**PLANKTON - CHATTEL - GINGER - PTOMAINE**

(Once PTOMAINE reaches the  
round table, PLANKTON,  
CHATTEL, GINGER and  
SCHENECTADY make their way  
cautiously yet rapidly to  
the opposite side of the  
room, stage left. Once there  
they huddle together while  
frantically jockeying around  
each other to insure that  
they are less vulnerable  
should the chef start  
swinging the knife. They  
continue pushing one-another  
in front of themselves.)

**PTOMAINE**

It would be different if we were in the city and there were  
things walking around outside left and right. I could capture  
anybody at a moment's notice and serve up a delicious meal. But  
out here on the estate it's an entirely different story. I just  
do not have time to keep chasing the same meal around the house.

(After looking under the  
couch PTOMAINE stands and  
turns to the group, the  
knife still held  
threateningly in his hand.)

**PLANKTON - CHATTEL - GINGER - PTOMAINÉ**

(PLANKTON, CHATTEL, GINGER  
and PTOMAINÉ all come to a  
halt with CHATTEL now in  
front. All are huddled  
together closely.)

**PTOMAINÉ**

So where is it? Who took dinner this time?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY raises his head  
above whoever he happens to  
have ended up behind.)

Um... Dinner? Do you mean that the body disappeared again?

**PTOMAINÉ**

(PTOMAINÉ takes a step  
forward.)

Of course that's what I mean.

**PLANKTON - CHATTEL - GINGER - PTOMAINÉ**

(As a GROUP, they all take a  
synchronized step backward.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Now... now... surely you were joking when you inferred that the body  
was dinner... Weren't you? I mean, you wouldn't actually...

**PTOMAINÉ**

(demanding)

Where is it?!

**PLANKTON - CHATTEL - GINGER - PTOMAINÉ**

(ALL scream.)

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI enters UC. She sees  
the group and stops just  
inside the entry.)

Like, ohmygod!

**PLANKTON - CHATTEL - GINGER - PTOMAIN**

(ALL scream a second time,  
all turning their heads  
toward TIFFANI.)

**PTOMAIN**

(PTOMAIN keeps watch over  
the group without moving.)

**TIFFANI**

Like, is this a party? Like, how come nobody told me that we were  
having a party?

**CHATTEL**

Tiffani, darling, stay right where you are.

**TIFFANI**

Like, fun! Is this, like, Hide-and-Seek, and some junk?

**GINGER**

This isn't a game, you human wind shear.

**TIFFANI**

Miss Chattel! He's, like, inside the house again. I'm going to  
get, like, the cattle prod.

**CHATTEL**

There is no time for that now, Tiffani.

**TIFFANI**

Ohmygod, I know. There's, like, some icky body thing upstairs in  
my linen closet. Like, it needs to totally go away.

**PTOMAIN**

(PTOMAIN turns to TIFFANI.)

Did you say the body was in your linen closet?

**TIFFANI**

Like, yeah, and it's totally wrinkling my sheets.

**PTOMAIN**

(PTOMAIN quickly exits the  
room UC.)

**PLANKTON - CHATTEL - GINGER - PTOMAIN**

(They ALL slowly break up,  
all greatly relieved to have  
PTOMAIN gone.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL heads for the bar,  
picking her abandoned  
martini glass up off the  
round table as she passes.)

**PLANKTON**

Madam, I shall assist the chef.  
(PLANKTON exits.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY walks slowly  
toward the couch.)  
(to CHATTEL)

Is it safe for him to be alone with the chef, right now?

**CHATTEL**

He will be fine, darling.  
(CHATTEL walks behind the  
bar and leans on it for  
support.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER follows closely  
behind SCHENECTADY.)

Oh! My little life flashed right before my eyes. I just knew that  
it was the end. Thank goodness I had a big strong detective to  
protect me.

(He tickles the back of  
SCHENECTADY's neck.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY turns abruptly  
and steps back.)

Now... let's not... let's just... you keep your... I'm not much  
protection. I'm more like a... you know... running-away kind of guy.  
You need to be with somebody strong like... like...

(He looks around the room  
desperately, suddenly  
spotting TIFFANI.)

(to TIFFANI)

Hey, why don't you come over here and sit down so I can have a little... um... a little chat with you.

(to GINGER)

I'm sure you won't mind if I...

(He points to TIFFANI.)

...you know, have a little... um... questions and that sort of thing. You and I can... um... we'll...

(He uses his hands to simulate a conversation.)

...talk! That's it. We'll talk later.

**GINGER**

I'm looking forward to it, you great big handsome detective you. Did I mention that my house has a fireplace and a sauna?

(GINGER runs a finger down SCHENECTADY's arm.)

...and a trap-ease?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY pulls his arm back slowly, a pained expression mixing with his smile.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER seats himself on the left end of the couch.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY motions to TIFFANI.)

Please, come have a seat.

**TIFFANI**

Like, okay.

(TIFFANI walks around the left end of the couch.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER looks up to her as she passes in front of him, great dislike on his face.)

Bitch.



**TIFFANI**

Like, tuh-winkie.

(TIFFANI sits down in the center of the couch, near GINGER.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER scoots as far left as he can to get away from TIFFANI.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY takes a seat on the right arm of the couch and faces TIFFANI.)

My name is Detective Schenectady. I have a few questions to ask you about the... um... the...

**GINGER**

The crime?

**SCHENECTADY**

That's it.

(to TIFFANI)

Where you were when the body was...

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI spies the candy dish.)

Oh look. Like, candy.

(She pops a candy in her mouth.)

Mmm. Like, yummy.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY gives TIFFANI a look of disbelief over her finding the awful candy to be good.)

Yes, well now, could you please tell me where you were earlier today when the burglar was found in the...

(He brings the notepad up and quickly thumbs through it.)

...in the kitchen?

**TIFFANI**

Ohmygod. Am I, like, in the kitchen?

(TIFFANI glances around the room.)

Like, don't tell Miss Chattel. Mostly, I'm not supposed to be in the kitchen.

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... no. You're not in the kitchen.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI glances about again.)

Like, did I leave the kitchen? This room looks so like the kitchen. How do you, like, tell them apart?

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stares at TIFFANI, not entirely sure what to think or say.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER watches SCHENECTADY for a few beats.)

I know that look, detective. Don't worry, it's not you. That's about as intelligent a conversation as you're going to get out of her.

**TIFFANI**

(to GINGER)

Oh, like, shut up.

(TIFFANI glares at GINGER briefly then turns her eyes straight ahead and looks out blankly with a satisfied smile on her lips.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON enters UC.)

Madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY screams and jumps to his feet. He turns to PLANKTON.)

You know, I'm beginning to think that you enjoy doing that.

**PLANKTON**

Doing what, madam?

**SCHENECTADY**

Scaring the living daylights out of me.

(to GINGER)

Does he do that to anybody else or is it just me?

**GINGER**

He is kind of creepy.

**PLANKTON**

(to CHATTEL)

The body is once more in the freezer, madam. The chef is watching over it so that it will not get away again.

**CHATTEL**

Very well, Potpie.

(to SCHENECTADY)

If you need me, I will be upstairs powdering something, darling.

(CHATTEL exits UC.)

**PLANKTON**

(PLANKTON exits UC.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, that is certainly a relief. I mean, we can't keep chasing a dead body around the mansion all night.

(SCHENECTADY sits back down on the arm of the couch.)

(to TIFFANI)

Makes you wonder if the body gets tired from all that running around?

(to himself)

Does it run? Maybe it just rolls?

**TIFFANI**

(to SCHENECTADY)

Oh, mostly, I don't like rolls.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to TIFFANI)

Yes, that's fine. Now, I was... What?

**TIFFANI**

I don't like rolls because they have, like, those little seed thingies that get caught between my teeth.

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... oookay.

**GINGER**

Detective, she still thinks that she's in the kitchen and you mentioned the word 'rolls' so she thought you were offering her a roll. Don't try to figure it out, just go with it. It's less painful that way.

**TIFFANI**

(to GINGER)

Like, ew!

**SCHENECTADY**

Yes... well... Moving along. Miss Tiffani, can you tell me...

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI turns to  
SCHENECTADY abruptly.)

Like, no! You said my name wrong, totally! Hel-lo! It's, like, spelled with a 'I' not a 'y'.

**SCHENECTADY**

Excuse me?

**TIFFANI**

I mean, like, really. You said it wrong.

**SCHENECTADY**

I did? Well, isn't that just like me to go and mangle a... What did I say wrong?

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI says her name  
exactly the same way.)

Like, you totally said, like, "Tiffani" instead of "Tiffani". I mean, anybody with a brain can tell the difference.

**GINGER**

That pretty much leaves you out.

**TIFFANI**

(to GINGER)

Oh, like, you be quiet.

(to SCHENECTADY)

So, okay, just listen again..

(TIFFANI lifts her left hand, palm up.)

..Tiffani..

(She lifts her right hand, palm up, repeating the name exactly as it was last spoken so that there is no difference between the two.)

..Tiffani. I mean, like, there is a world of difference. Like, duh!

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh... um... yeah, I think I see now.

**TIFFANI**

So, like, try it again. Only this time try to say it 'Tiffani', you know, like with a 'I'.

**SCHENECTADY**

Um... okay, let's see if I can do this. 'Tiffani'.

**TIFFANI**

Like, ohmygod! You, like, did it again.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, I think I hear it now. How's this? "Tiffani".

**TIFFANI**

Like, no. Say it again.

**SCHENECTADY**

"Tiffani."

**TIFFANI**

Like, ohmygod, no!

**GINGER**

It's no use, Detective. You can knock all you want but there's nobody home.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI again glares at GINGER.)

Ohmygod! Like, shut up.

(She pulls a cell phone out of her apron and starts dialing.)

Like, okay, I'll call my friend, Buffy, fer sher, and you can hear how she says 'Tiffani' with a 'I'.

**GINGER**

Oh, Mary, puh-leez!

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI turns abruptly to GINGER.)

Hel-lo? I believe I was talking to the detective, or some junk. I mean, like, get a cuh-lue!

(She holds the phone up to her ear.)

**SCHENECTADY**

No, no. no. This is going to take too long.

(SCHENECTADY lowers her arm down to her side.)

Miss Ti... um... Miss, I need to know where you were when the body was found.

**TIFFANI**

Like, I've got it, fer sher. You can just call me 'Tiff'. Like, wow. All my friends call me 'Tiff'. Like, just the other day at the mall, like, I was saying to Buffy, like, "that Brian is way total hotness", and she looked me totally in the eyes and was, like, "Ohmygod, Tiff, fer sher".

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh. Okay, that's... that's a good idea. A lot of people have a nickname. Even my friends have a nickname for me. Whenever we're together they call me...

(grimaces)

Well, they're more passing acquaintances than actual friends. So, what I...

**GINGER**

Hold on, detective. Painful as it is, she's not through yet.

**TIFFANI**

And then I said, "Buffy, have you seen that, like, jacket that Amanda was wearing?" And she said, "Oh, fer sher, Tiff. Ohmygod! Like, it was so totally, like, yesterday," and I said, "Fer sher, Buffy. I mean, like, I wouldn't be caught dead wearing something like that. Ohmygod!"

**SCHENECTADY**

(to GINGER)

How long can she do this?

**GINGER**

(GINGER rolls his eyes.)

For-ever.

**TIFFANI**

And then Buffy said, "Tiff, I wouldn't be seen with Amanda, like, dressed like that. So totally grody. I mean, hel-lo?" And I said, "Fer sher, Buffy" and she said, like, "Fer sher, Tiff."

**SCHENECTADY**

Miss... um... I appreciate your...

**TIFFANI**

And, like, Buffy then said, "Tiff, have you texted, like, Deanna? Ohmygod! It, like, takes her forever to, like, text back" and I said, "Fer sher, Buffy. I texted her just this morning and it took her, like, two whole minutes to text me back" and Buffy said, "Like, ohmygod!" and I said "Ohmygod," and then I said, "I think I heard Miss Chattel calling me. I have to go."

**GINGER**

(to SCHENECTADY)

I think she's finally coming in for a landing, detective.

**TIFFANI**

And Buffy's, like, "O-kay, Tiff" and I was, like, "Like, text me" and Buffy's, like, "Bye, Tiff" and I was, like, "Bye Buffy.."

(TIFFANI pretends like she's hanging up the phone.)

(to SCHENECTADY)

...and, like, that's how to say 'Tiff'.

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, that was quite a... um... quite a lesson. So, Miss Tiff, can you tell me where you were this morning when the body was found?

**TIFFANI**

Body? Oh, gag me with a spoon! A dead body is, like, totally grody to the max!

**SCHENECTADY**

Grody?

(to GINGER)

Grody?

**GINGER**

Grody.

**TIFFANI**

I mean, like, ohmygod. A dead body! Hel-lo.

**SCHENECTADY.**

Yes, I think I understand, Miss Tiff. Perhaps you could tell me where you were this morning.

**GINGER**

*This morning?* Oh, please, detective. Let's be fair. She doesn't know where she is now.

**TIFFANI**

That is, like, so untrue. I know exactly where I am right now.

**GINGER**

(to TIFFANI)

All right. Where are you?



**TIFFANI**

I already told you. I'm, like, in the kitchen.

**GINGER**

No, you're not.

**TIFFANI**

Like, Okay. I'm sitting on this chair-thingy.

**GINGER**

What room are you in, Einstein?

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI glances about the room.)

I'm in the, like, the bedroom.

**GINGER**

Wrong.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI glances about a second time.)

Then, like, I'm in the bathroom.

**GINGER**

Want to go three for three?

**TIFFANI**

The garage?

(TIFFANI gives the room one final glance before turning to GINGER.)

I, like, so totally don't like you! I have half a mind to come over there and..

**GINGER**

If you had half a mind then you'd be able to come over here. It's a miracle in itself how you continue breathing. If it wasn't automatic you'd forget how to do it.

**TIFFANI**

Like, ohmygod. That is so not true.

No it isn't.

**GINGER**

Yes it is.

**TIFFANI**

Is not.

**GINGER**

Is too.

**TIFFANI**

Not!

**GINGER**

Too!

**TIFFANI**

Then, go ahead. Show us how to breathe.

**GINGER**

Oh, like, I am so sure. You just want me to be the only one, like, in the room breathing. Maybe I, like, don't want to.

**TIFFANI**

Don't want to? Or don't know how to?

**GINGER**

I do so know how to breathe.

**TIFFANI**

Then tell us how.

**GINGER**

Don't have to.

**TIFFANI**

Have to.

**GINGER**

**GINGER - TIFFANI**  
(Both TIFFANI and GINGER  
slowly raise to their feet  
and they continue the 'Don't  
have to' 'Have to')

challenge, each time getting nastier and closer to one another until they are standing face to face.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY jumps to his feet and separates the two.)

Whoa, whoa! Now, just hold on, you two. I have every faith that Miss Tiff knows how to breathe...

(to TIFFANI)

You do know how to breathe, right?

**TIFFANY**

(TIFFANI sticks her tongue out at GINGER, turns abruptly and plops back down on the couch in a huff, her arms folded across her chest.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(to GINGER)

And Miss Ginger, you really shouldn't taunt Miss Tiff like that. Wait, I did it again, didn't I? I just called you...

(Chuckles nervously.)

Well, how about that. I guess I made that mistake again because you're such a... um...

**GINGER**

(GINGER places his hands on his hips.)

Yes?

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, because you're such a... handsome guy, and when you two were...

(SCHENECTADY makes a couple boxing gestures.)

...um... well, you know. Now, how about... Arguing! That's it, you two were arguing and I got caught up in the moment and got confused. Now, how about if you both go to neutral corners. Here, let's just put you two on opposite ends of the couch so that this won't... so that... I think it'll be safer this way.

(He directs TIFFANI to sit on the right side of the couch, GINGER on the left. He then takes a seat between them.)

(to TIFFANI)

There now, isn't that better?

**GINGER**

(GINGER takes this opportunity to move in extremely close to SCHENECTADY, placing his face about an inch away from SCHENECTADY's head.)

**SCHENECTADY**

I've always said that it takes two to fight, but it only takes one to... um... well, not fight.

(SCHENECTADY turns to GINGER.)

In the long run...

(SCHENECTADY finds their faces almost together and jerks back.)

Whoa! Well, there you are, big fella. Right up close and personal-like. Imagine my surprise when I turned around and... well, I guess you already saw that. Why don't you go over.. over there somewhere.

(He points to the wall CL.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER stands and walks to stand before the wall.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(to TIFFANI)

All right. Now, where were we?

**GINGER**

(Speaks under his breath.)

Bitch!

**TIFFANI**

Like, Quh-ween!

**SCHENECTADY**

Now, now. Let's... let's all act like grownups here. Besides, what would you do if the other was gone some day?

**TIFFANI**

Well, I for one would, like, breathe easier.

**GINGER**

(condescendingly)

Yeah, if you could, like, remember how.

**TIFFANI**

I am so not giving you a Christmas present this year.

**SCHENECTADY**

Now, now. Everybody calm now. Let's all take a deep breath.

**GINGER**

(GINGER turns and opens his mouth to say something.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY sees this and points a finger to GINGER.)

Ah ah! Let's behave.

(to TIFFANI)

Now, Miss Tiff, I would really like to know where you were when the body was found.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL enters UC.)

She was with me, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY jumps, resting his forehead against his palm.)

(to himself)

Now, I know... I know they're all are doing this to me on purpose. I wonder if my hair has turned gray since I've been here. I hope I remembered to take my blood pressure medicine this morning.

**CHATTEL**

We were in the pool room. Right, Tiffani?  
(CHATTEL saunters over to  
the left chair at the round  
table and sits.)

**TIFFANI**

That is so, like, totally yes. Like, ohmygod, I remember now.

**GINGER**

Watch out, she's up to half a watt. Don't get hit by the sparks.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI glares at GINGER.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Miss Tiff, just ignore her...  
(SCHENECTADY quickly glances  
up to GINGER.)  
Him! Sorry... honest mistake.

**GINGER**

I know a way that you can make it up to me.

**SCHENECTADY**

(to TIFFANI)

Now, think, Miss Tiff. What were you doing when the body was  
found?

**TIFFANI**

I was, like, on my hands and knees, like, cleaning the bottom of  
the pool.

**SCHENECTADY**

Ah. So, you were inside cleaning an empty pool.

**TIFFANI**

Like, you are so not listening. Ohmygod. The water was totally  
there.

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, I see. Yes, that makes sense.  
(SCHENECTADY begins to write  
this down on his pad, but  
then looks up.)

Um... no, not really. How was it that you were able to clean the bottom of the pool if it had water in it?

**TIFFANI**

Hel-lo? I can hold my breath, like, a really long time.

**GINGER**

That's right, detective. She has a built-in unlimited supply of air in her head.

(GINGER fans his ears.)

**TIFFANI**

That is, like, so totally untrue, you... you...

**GINGER**

Careful, you'll hurt yourself.

**SCHENECTADY**

Miss Tiffani, perhaps you...

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI turns abruptly and opens her mouth to speak.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Sorry, sorry. I forgot: *Miss Tiff*. Perhaps you could tell me how long you've... um... how long you've...

(Makes circular motions as if cleaning a window.)

...worked, that's it. Heh heh,

(Leans in to TIFFANY quickly.)

Got it.

**TIFFANI**

(startled, she screams)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stands quickly and glances about the room.)

What happened? Who did it? Don't worry, I'll get to the bottom of this!

**GINGER**

No, detective. You just scared the airhead, that's all.

**SCHENECTADY**

The airhead?

**GINGER**

(Points to TIFFANI.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Oh, you mean Miss...

(Glances to TIFFANI.)

I see.

(Looks alternately to  
TIFFANI and GINGER.)

Well now, that's a horse of a different... of a different... of a...  
um... Okay, everybody, false alarm. Everybody be calm. Nobody was  
hurt.

(He sits again.)

So tell me, Miss Tiff; how long have you worked for Mrs... um...  
Mrs...

(Scans his notes quickly.)

Von Cash. That's right. I don't know why I keep forgetting that.  
So how long have you worked for Mrs. Von Cash?

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI looks panicky.)

Is that, like, a trick question?

(to CHATTEL)

Like, ohmygod! Miss Chattel, you didn't tell me there would be  
totally hard questions.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL shrugs and sips her  
drink.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Now, now, let's not panic here. It doesn't have to be an exact  
number.

**TIFFANI**

(to SCHENECTADY)

You mean there's, like, math, too?

(to CHATTEL)

Miss Chattel, you didn't tell me there would, like, be questions  
and math, too. Like, ohmygod! This is so hard. I didn't even get  
a chance to study.



**SCHENECTADY**

No, Miss Tiff. Just give me a general idea of how long you think you've worked here.

**GINGER**

Get ready to count the number of times she stomps it out with her hoof.

**CHATTEL**

Tiffani came to work for me three years ago, darling. The Agency sent her to work for me after I lost my previous maid in the forest fire.

(CHATTEL glances back down to her glass briefly before looking back up to SCHENECTADY.)

Don't ask.

(She looks up in thought.)

What was that girl's name, anyway? Primrose? Pumpernickel? Plunger?

(She shrugs.)

Oh, who cares. Anyway, Tiffani has been with me ever since.

**GINGER**

Unfortunately, when the Agency sent her over they forgot to include her brain.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI looks to GINGER sharply.)

Like, what's that supposed to mean?

(to SCHENECTADY)

I don't, like, get it.

**GINGER**

The prosecution rests its case.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks at GINGER and TIFFANI alternately.)

Boy, one would think that you're both related. You two argue as much as I did with my brother.

**GINGER**

You have a brother? Ew, could you introduce us sometime?

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI abruptly stands.)

Ohmygod! That is, like, so sick, and some junk.

(She marches over to him.)

I am, like, so leaving.

(She turns to leave.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER walks around in front of her to prevent her from leaving.)

It is not sick, feather-duster-for-brains. How else can somebody meet men around here? I can't just pick them up off the street willy-nilly...

(Pauses a beat to think.)

Well there was Alan.

**TIFFANI**

Like, stay away from me, you fruit.

(TIFFANI pushes GINGER's shoulder.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER pushes TIFFANI's shoulder right back.)

And Peter.

**TIFFANI**

Like, icky.

(TIFFANI pushes GINGER's shoulder.)

**GINGER**

And George.

(GINGER pushes TIFFANI's shoulder.)

**TIFFANI**

Ohmygod!

(TIFFANI pushes GINGER's shoulder.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER pushes TIFFANI's shoulder four times; once with every syllable.)

And Le-o-nar-do.

**TIFFANY**

(TIFFANI moves around GINGER to stand directly in front of him, facing SCHENECTADY.)

Detective, like, tell him that he is so gross.

**GINGER**

(GINGER scurries around TIFFANI and places himself directly in front of her.)

And you tell her that what's gross is walking around without a brain.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI scurries around GINGER to stand in front of him.)

And tell him that, like, he makes me want to totally vomit.

**GINGER**

(GINGER scurries around TIFFANI to stand in front of her.)

And tell her that she is too stupid to know how to vomit.

**TIFFANI**

Like, ohmygod!

(TIFFANI scurries around GINGER to stand in front of him.)

**GINGER**

(GINGER scurries around TIFFANI to stand in front of her.)

Helium-head.

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI scurries around GINGER to stand in front of him.)

Like, fruitcake.

**GINGER & TIFFANI**

(The Two now silently keep this up, one insinuation themselves in front of the other until being stopped by SCHENECTADY.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY steps out before the two, raising a hand to stop them. He then glances back to speak to CHATTEL.)

Mrs. Von Cash... Help.

**CHATTEL**

Tiffani, Ginger; back to work.

**TIFFANI - GINGER**

Yes, Miss Chattel.

(BOTH head to the back of the room simultaneously, each reaching the entry UC at the same time. They then engage in a little shoving match, pushing the other aside in an attempt to exit first. Finally, they both squeeze through together and disappear.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY stuffs the notepad and pencil inside his jacket and then walks over to CHATTEL at the round table, standing behind Chair 2.)

Are they always like this?

**CHATTEL**

It's an 'inside help' 'outside help' rivalry.

**SCHENECTADY**

I see. Yes, well, I guess that about does it for now. We know where everybody was at the time of the victim's death, so now we need to know how he died.

**CHATTEL**

How will you know that, Sergeant?

**SCHENECTADY**

'Detective'. I will examine the body, of course. If necessary, I will have to perform an... um... it's where you cut up the... autopsy! I'll perform an autopsy on the body. Oh, did I tell you that I used to be licensed mortician? We'll need to get the body downtown and...

**CHATTEL**

Darling, you can perform your autopsy in the hospital wing of the mansion.

**SCHENECTADY**

You have a hospital wing? Holy mackerel. I knew the place was big, but I never dreamed that you'd have a hospital.

**CHATTEL**

Yes, darling. It is near the museum.

**SCHENECTADY**

Museum? You have your own museum?

**CHATTEL**

Right next to the casino.

**SCHENECTADY**

Casino? You mean with slot machines and poker and all those games? You mean that kind of a casino?

**CHATTEL**

Of course, darling.

**PLANKTON**

I guess you knew that it was kind of illegal to... Well, anyway, I would like everybody to be present during the autopsy. Could you have your butler bring the body to the hospital room and then assemble the employees?

**CHATTEL**

Of course, darling.

(CHATTEL stands and heads for the entry UC, holding the martini glass high enough so that SCHENECTADY can easily lean forward and smell it as she walks by.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY smells the glass as it goes by.)

Boy, oh boy, that sure smells good.

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL stops and turns to him.)

Oh, did you want a martini, darling?

**SCHENECTADY**

Well, now that you ask, I would very much enjoy a...

**CHATTEL**

I am sorry, Colonel, but if you're going to perform your autopsy we will have no time to make a martini. Come along.

(CHATTEL exits UC.)

**SCHENECTADY**

No time... um... Damn. I was this close.

(SCHENEDTADY holds his fingers up to indicate a short distance. Now alone, he saunters over to the bar, glances around the empty room and then reaches for the bottle beneath the counter.)

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL calls from off  
stage.)

Come alone, darling.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY jerks himself  
away in surprise and quickly  
exits UC.)

(CURTAIN)

(END OF ACT ONE)

ACT TWO

SETTING: Operating Room. A table sits in the middle of the room horizontally with a body upon it, face up, the head on the right end. The body is covered with a sheet which is raised by the underlying murder weapons as follows:

- Cell phone in his mouth
- Knife in his chest
- Swizzle stick in his stomach
- Feather duster in his ear
- Garden sheers in his crotch

To left-center of the room is a table with a pile of white towels on it.

AT OPEN: Plankton is standing at the right end of the table, Ptomaine at the left end. Standing behind the table are (from right to left) Chattel, Schenectady, Ginger and Tiffany. All members of the cast are wearing surgical masks over their mouths, with the exception of Tiffani who has hers covering her eyes. She is facing away from the audience. Schenectady is wearing latex gloves.

**SCHENECTADY**

All right, I think I'm ready to perform the autopsy. Now, is everybody present?

(SCHENECTADY glances about those gathered around the table.)

Very well. Let us begin.



**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI turns around,  
slowly, as if trying to  
locate everybody.)

Like, ohmygod. I can't see what's totally happening.

**GINGER**

(GINGER pulls Tiffani's mask  
down to her mouth, shaking  
his head the whole time.)

**TIFFANI**

Oh, like, wow. So, like, what happened while I was out?

**SCHENECTADY**

Now, first I want you all to notice that the victim appears to be  
40, 42 years of age with...

**GINGER**

(GINGER leans in for a  
closer look at the victim's  
face.)

Ew, look at that dreamy body. So fit, so slender; he's 32, tops.

**TIFFANI**

Nuh uh. He's, like, 37.

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY lifts the sheet  
just enough to expose the  
face to the cast but not the  
audience.)

But look at the mouth and forehead.

**TIFFANI - GINGER - PLANKTON - PTOMAIN - CHATTEL**

(ALL lean in, in order to  
take a peek at the face.)

**SCHENECTADY**

Classic wrinkles of an older man. The victim has to be in his... in  
his... Um, what were we talking about?

**PLANKTON**

I believe that you were speaking of the victim's age, madam.

**SCHENECTADY**

I was? How about that. I could have sworn we were talking about... well, I forget what we were talking about.

(SCHENECTADY leans quickly to CHATTEL.)

That's why I asked. Right?

**CHATTEL**

(CHATTEL jerks away quickly, surprised.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY looks back at the body's face once more before lowering the sheet.)

His age, you say? Well, I'd say that he was in his mid-40's.

**GINGER**

I should have looked that good in my 40's. I say he's 32.

**TIFFANI**

Ohmygod. He's, like, 37.

**SCHENECTADY**

No, there's a scar right here under the jaw that looks at least three decades old.

**GINGER**

Couldn't be that old. Just look at those eyes. Ew, he sends shivers up and down my little spine. He's 32.

**SCHENECTADY**

No, I think I'll have to disagree. It's a medical fact that when a body has this...

**TIFFANI**

Like, hel-lo? Is anybody listening? He's, like, totally 37.

**SCHENECTADY**

What makes you so sure, Miss Tiff?

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI holds up a driver's license.)

Like, duh! It's right here on his license.

**SCHENECTADY**

License? The victim's license? Now, where did you get that?

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI holds up a wallet.)

It was, like, in this wallet.

**SCHENECTADY**

Where did you get his wallet?

**TIFFANI**

Like, it was sitting on the floor.

(TIFFANI points to the floor  
behind her.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY walks around  
the table to inspect the  
spot that TIFFANI pointed  
out.)

I wonder what the wallet was doing there on the... on the... the  
ground, there. It should have been in his pocket.

**GINGER**

That would probably be my fault, detective. It might have fallen  
out of his pocket when I... uh... well, I was...

**TIFFANI**

Like, ohmygod! He was so doing things...

(TIFFANI points to the lower  
half of the victim.)

...down there. Gag me with a turkey.

**GINGER**

(GINGER casts TIFFANI a  
quick glare.)

You got one handy?

(to Chattel)

I swear, Miss Chattel. I was not doing things. My hand just ever-  
so-lightly grazed his...

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY returns to his place at the table between GINGER and CHATTEL.)

**TIFFANI**

Like, mondo liar! You had your hands, like, all over his pants.

**GINGER**

(GINGER looks at TIFFANI with a burning glare.)

**CHATTEL**

Ginger, why did you have your hands all over the dead man's pants?

**GINGER**

(to CHATTEL)

Miss Chattel. I didn't. I swear I didn't. Tiffani's lying.

**CHATTEL**

That was very bad, Ginger.

**GINGER**

But Miss Chattel... it was an accident. I swear I didn't touch...

**CHATTEL**

We will have no more of that. Do go on, Inspector.

**TIFFANI**

(singing)

Like, you got in trou-ble.

**GINGER**

Bitch.

**SCHENECTADY**

Would you please let me see the license, Miss Tiff?

(SCHENECTADY stretches his left hand out in front of GINGER and takes the license from TIFFANI. He reads it.)

Well now, isn't this interesting. Mandrice J. O'Pettifogger. He has a Florida address.

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE takes the wallet from TIFFANI and opens it up.)

**SCHENECTADY**

(SCHENECTADY catches PTOMAINE's movements.)

What are you doing?

**PTOMAINE**

I was just looking for the organ donor card. I make this spectacular kidney and liver pie that must melts in your...

**PTOMAINE - GINGER - CHATTEL - PLANKTON**

(ALL stare at him in horrified disgust, mouths wide open.)

**TIFFANI**

(TIFFANI stares straight ahead, unaffected.)

**PTOMAINE**

(PTOMAINE glances about at all the faces.)

Really. It's delicious.

**SCHENECTADY**

Please give me the... um... the... what you have in your hand, there.

(SCHENECTADY reaches out, retrieving the wallet. This he lays on the table before him, along with the license.)

Now that we know who the victim is, let's get this operation under way, shall we? We need to try to find out what killed Mr. O'Pettifogger. As you can all see, the victim has a feather duster shoved in his left ear, a cell phone lodged in his mouth, a knife stuck in his... um... chest tingle, a swizzle stick poking up out of his stomach and garden sheers sticking out of his... well, right there.

(He points to the body's crotch.)

But in order to know which object actually caused the death, we must remove all the items, one by one. After that, we will go inside.