

Mascot Masquerade

A Full-Length Murder Mystery Comedy by,

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“You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you.” – Walt Disney

“The only mystery in life is why the kamikaze pilots wore helmets.”
– Al McGuire

For Matthew J. Calvo, a true friend

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Mascot Masquerade

Characters: (In order of appearance. 7 roles: 3 female, 3 male)

Jeeves: A butler in his early 60s. He was born to do this job.

Phil: A man in his 20s. A theme park pirate mascot. Dumb but proud.

Drew: A man in his 20s. A theme park gorilla mascot. Smart, but primitive.

Annie: A woman in her 20s. A theme park penguin mascot. Proud, but to a fault.

Jan: A woman in her 30s. A theme park fairy mascot. Sympathetic, but flawed.

Gina: A woman in her 40s. A theme park cat mascot. A diva, just don't call her one.

Payton Granger: A stereotypically-eccentric billionaire in his 70s. Crazy, but fun.

Setting: The lavish living room and dining room of an old-fashioned mansion.

Time: One bad day and one worse night in the contemporary 21st century.

****Note on the Play:** This play is an homage and a tribute, not only to the wonderful murder mystery plays of Agatha Christie and other writers of that ilk, but to other classic spoofs on the genre, e.g. the movies *Murder by Death* and *Clue*. It should be staged with that in mind.

****Costume Note:** The mascot uniforms should be very loose fitting. They should not be cheap or dirty, shabby or dingy, but still as break-away as possible for the quick-change purposes of the second act. The costumes should also allow the actors to move around, but not too quickly or easily. The actors should all be able to wear one another's costumes with ease. The heads should be elaborate, opulent fiberglass creations or something else along those lines. They should look big, bold and elegant but also conversely silly, hokey and cartoonish. There should be wide open areas for the actors' mouths and big eye holes so they are also able to see and speak very clearly, underneath the masks.

****Sound Cue:** Every time "SOUND CUE" is stated in the stage directions, a melodramatic, yet overly ominous sounding "DUN-DUN-DUUUUN!!!" dramatic bass and timpani sound effect should resonate loudly throughout the Theatre.

****Production Note One:** This play was written with stage directions that indicate a two level set with an upstairs, downstairs and spiral staircase, however, these are not an integral part of the story and therefore a single level set can be used. The only real things necessary for this play are lots of doors for entrances and exits offstage.

****Production Note Two:** The elaborate set pieces detailed in the stage directions, e.g. the glass dining room table, etc. are merely suggestions made in direct correlation to other murder mystery stories, such as the aforementioned ones, however, by no means are these accoutrements required, therefore it is encouraged by the author to change any of them as needed, as a result of limited budget, et al.

Mascot Masquerade

Act One/Scene One

(At rise, in the lavish living room of an old mansion, JEEVES dusts the opulent furniture. He wears white gloves and a stereotypical butler's uniform from the 1940s and carries an elegant feather duster. Both the grand dining room and the living room are visible, as are the doors to the various downstairs rooms and the ornate spiral staircase leading up to the second floor which is lined with even more closed doors. JEEVES looks impatient, yet reserved. He periodically lifts his glove back and checks the time on his wristwatch. Silence. Nothing. Finally, after a long enough and uncomfortable enough period of silence, there are two knocks on the front door. JEEVES quickly goes over and opens it to reveal PHIL, standing there in his full theme park pirate mascot form. He is also wearing his giant-oversized pirate head and cartoonish gloves as well. But he keeps his gloved hands hidden behind his back at the start.)

JEEVES

Oh, I'm sorry sir, but this is a masquerade party. Only guests dressed in costume are welcome. *(A beat. PHIL doesn't know how to respond.)* Really? Nothing?

(A beat. Still no response from PHIL. JEEVES sighs then gestures for PHIL to come inside. PHIL doesn't comply.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*

You know, I'm actually glad you're finally here. I think it was getting a little awkward and weird for everyone with me just wandering around in here, dusting all the furniture by myself.

(A long silence. Then suddenly and with a lot of pomp and pageantry...)

PHIL *(Very piratety)*

Aaarr, matey. *(A beat)* Who be everyone?

(JEEVES looks out at the audience. Then he shakes his head.)

JEEVES

Never mind. Please... come in.

(Reluctantly, PHIL enters and looks around.)

PHIL

Avast! Nice place ye got here, matey!

(JEEVES closes the front door dismissingly.)

JEEVES

Ahhh, it's no big deal. *(A beat)* Mostly IKEA.

PHIL

Ye be lyin' tee me.

JEEVES

Huh? What? *(A beat)* Was that English?

PHIL

I said... Ye be lyin' tee me.

JEEVES

Apparently not. *(A beat)* Dutch?

PHIL *(Points to JEEVES then himself to illustrate)*

Ye... Be... Lying... Tee—

JEEVES *(Sighs)*

You didn't buy that all this is from IKEA, huh?

PHIL *(Scoffs)*

IKEA? Avast, matey! *(A beat)* Ye should've gone with... *Big Lots*.

JEEVES *(Sighs)*

You must be... Phil.

PHIL

Aaarr! Nay landlubber, me name's Captain Van Dreary and me be—

JEEVES *(Sighs)*

You don't need to stay in character. *(A beat)* Phil works fine.

PHIL

Aaarr?

JEEVES

I said... you don't need to stay in character.

PHIL

Aaarr... me do.

JEEVES

No, seriously... knock it off.

PHIL (*At a loss*)

Avast, matey, dere be gold in ‘dem dare—

JEEVES (*Shakes his head*)

Nope. That doesn’t work either.

PHIL

Shiver me timbers?

JEEVES (*Sighs*)

No. Now, just... stop it. (*A beat*) Please don’t make me have to punch you in your big... fat... dumb... head. (*Indicating his gloves*) I just washed these.

(*A beat*)

PHIL

Aaarr... ye be de butler?

(*A beat*)

JEEVES

You know, pirates didn’t really talk like that. (*A beat*) You don’t even sound like a pirate. (*A beat*) You sound like you work at *Long John Silver’s*.

PHIL

Scallywag!

JEEVES (*Waves him off*)

Alright, fine. Stay in character. See if I care. (*A beat. JEEVES extends his hand to shake. PHIL doesn’t reciprocate the gesture.*) Oh, come on, don’t pout. (*A beat*) Fine. I’m sorry, all right? (*A long silence*) Come on, please? I said I was sorry. (*A beat. JEEVES sighs.*) I take it back. You’re a great pirate.

PHIL (*Perks up*)

Aaarrr?!

JEEVES

Oh, yeah, one of the best I’ve ever seen. (*A long pause. Then PHIL finally extends his hand to shake. JEEVES reacts to the sight of the gloves.*) GAAHH! (*A beat*) You know, you might wanna get those checked out. They look infected.

(*PHIL immediately yanks his gloved hand away. JEEVES smiles.*)

JEEVES (*Cont’d*)

By the way... can I get extra hush puppies instead of fries?

PHIL

Aaarrr, me think ye need to walk ‘dee plank.

JEEVES

Okay, sure, it’s right over there.

(JEEVES gestures towards one of the downstairs’ doors. PHIL turns to look and JEEVES slaps him upside his “big, fat, dumb” head. PHIL turns back around as quickly as his costume will allow, which isn’t very.)

JEEVES *(Cont’d)*

Wow! Did you feel that breeze?! These creepy old mansions can get ever so very... very... drafty. *(Biting)* Enough to take your head off, even.

(A long pause. PHIL just stares blankly at JEEVES.)

JEEVES *(Cont’d)*

What?! *(A long pause. No response from PHIL.)* You’re makin’ faces at me under that thing, aren’t you?

(PHIL nods his big pirate head “yes”.)

JEEVES *(Cont’d)*

Yeah, well... *(A beat)* I guess you probably do that to all the little peg-leg-biters when they order their “Fishy Happy Meals,” huh?

(PHIL shakes his big pirate head “no”.)

JEEVES *(Cont’d)*

No? Huh. *(A beat)* Well... what about when they steal your hook?

(PHIL shakes his big pirate head “no”.)

JEEVES *(Cont’d)*

Your parrot?

(PHIL shakes his big pirate head “no”.)

JEEVES *(Cont’d)*

Well, what about when they poke you in your eye patch? *(A long pause. Then PHIL nods his big pirate head “yes”.)* So, that’s why you didn’t wear it today? *(A long pause. Then PHIL nods his big pirate head “yes” again.)* Yeah, that’s what I figured. *(A long pause)* Well, to answer your initial question... yes, I am the butler here at Crestwood Manor. *(A beat)* My name is... Jeeves.

(A long pause)

PHIL
Ye be puttin' me on.

JEEVES
No I'm not.

PHIL
Ye name be... Jeeves?

JEEVES
Yes.

PHIL
What be ye real name?

JEEVES
Jeeves.

PHIL
What be ye name before ye changed it?

JEEVES
Jeeves.

PHIL
Ye parents must have really wanted a butler when they named ye den.

JEEVES (*Nods*)
I get it. You're sayin' only butlers are named Jeeves?

PHIL
Aaarr. Nay, matey. 'Course not.

JEEVES
Thank you.

PHIL
Me be... joshin' ye. (*A beat*) Me mean ye.

JEEVES (*Shakes his head*)
Yo-ho... moron.

PHIL
Aaarr!

JEEVES

Okay fine, you got me. My real name is Bob.

PHIL

Aaarr?

JEEVES

No. It's Jeeves.

(PHIL starts looking all around the mansion. He looks in every nook and cranny he can find while JEEVES watches him. Finally....)

JEEVES *(Sighs, cont'd)*

What are you looking for?

PHIL

Aaarr, matey. X marks de spot.

JEEVES

Sad to say, but there's no buried treasure in here.

PHIL

Aaarr. Me no lookin' for buried treasure.

JEEVES

Okay, now you really don't sound like a pirate. *(A beat)* You sound like the Cookie Monster.

PHIL

Me no think dat's funny.

JEEVES

Me want cookie too.

(PHIL remains silent but stares at JEEVES.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*

Makin' faces again?

(PHIL nods his big pirate head "yes.")

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*

I figured as much. *(A beat. JEEVES sighs.)* Okay, fine, if you weren't lookin' for buried treasure, what were you lookin' for?

PHIL

Me be lookin' for... 'dee hidden cameras.

JEEVES

There aren't any hidden cameras in here either.

PHIL

If ye be 'dee butler and ye name be Jeeves... den dere must be hidden cameras.

JEEVES

No, there's no hidden cameras. And yes, I'm the butler, and yes, my name is Jeeves.

(A beat)

PHIL

Let me see ye driver's license.

(JEEVES sighs, then reluctantly removes his wallet and opens it to show PHIL his driver's license. PHIL gestures for JEEVES to bring it closer to the pirate head's eyeholes and again, JEEVES reluctantly complies. A long silence.)

PHIL

Well, Jeeves... me name be... Davy Jones.

(JEEVES puts his wallet back in his pocket.)

JEEVES *(Sighs)*

No it's not.

PHIL

Could be.

JEEVES

No... your name's... Phil.

PHIL

The Dread Pirate Phi—

JEEVES

No. Just... Phil.

PHIL

Ye have no sense of humor.

JEEVES

'Course I do. Knock, knock.

PHIL
Who be there?

(A long pause)

JEEVES
Okay, fine. I don't know any knock knock jokes.

PHIL
Told ye.

JEEVES
But I do have a sense of humor. I'm the one who told a joke as soon as I opened the front door.

PHIL
Ye did?

(A long pause. JEEVES just glares at PHIL. Then suddenly, there are two more knocks on the door.)

PHIL *(Cont'd)*
Who be there?

JEEVES
Very funny.

PHIL
Very funny who?

(JEEVES shakes his head and goes over and opens the door to find DREW standing there in a full gorilla suit and gorilla head.)

JEEVES
Ah! Welcome! You must be Drew.

DREW *(Very gorilla-like)*
Ouw! Ouw!

JEEVES
OH, FOR THE LOVE OF GOD! *(A beat)* Look, you guys do not need to stay in character for this party.

DREW
Ouw! Ouw!

PHIL

Who ordered the orangutan?

DREW

Ouw! Ouw!

PHIL

Me know ye a gorilla. (*A beat*) Orangutans smell better.

(*DREW smells himself and then JEEVES ushers him inside.*)

JEEVES

He's just kiddin'. Come in Drew, come in.

(*DREW enters and looks around.*)

DREW (*Gestures to the mansion's furnishings*)

Ouw! Ouw!

JEEVES

It's no big deal. Mostly *Big Lots*.

DREW

Ouw! Ouw!

PHIL

Aaarr! He mean he would've said IKEA.

JEEVES

You speak gorilla?

PHIL

No, but neither 'dee he. (*PHIL glares at DREW.*) Me just speak dumb.

JEEVES

No argument here.

DREW

Ouw! Ouw!

JEEVES (*Sighs*)

Look, instead of being Garry the Gorilla, can you just be Drew? (*A beat*) And instead of Captain Van Dreary, you can be Phil and I'll just be the butler... Jeeves.

DREW (*Breaking character*)
You're putting me on.

PHIL
Aaarr! That be what me say.

DREW (*To PHIL*)
I'll take a Super Sampler with extra cole slaw.

JEEVES
Ha! (*To PHIL*) I told... ye.

(A long pause)

DREW
Is your name really—

JEEVES (*Sighs*)
Yes, my real name is Jeeves and yes, I also just happen to be the butler.

DREW
Well then I'm King Kong.

JEEVES
No you're not.

DREW
If you get to be Jeeves, why don't I get to be King Kong? Ouw! Ouw!

PHIL
Aaarr! And me be Captain Jack Sparrow.

JEEVES
No, no, no! I get to be Jeeves because Jeeves is my name. (*A beat*) Since birth!

PHIL
Show he ye driver's lice—

JEEVES
SHUT! UP!

DREW
So, Jeeves, I guess your parents always wanted a butler for a son when they named you, huh?

(PHIL holds his gloved hand up for a high-five.)

PHIL

Score!

(DREW holds up his hand. His hand should be in a furry gorilla glove or a part of his complete gorilla mascot uniform.)

DREW

Feces!

(DREW swipes his hand at PHIL'S but PHIL lowers his quickly before DREW connects. A long pause.)

PHIL *(Looking at his own gloved hand)*

Were ye be serious?

DREW

What do you think, shark-bait? Ouw! Ouw! Ouw!

JEEVES

SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP! *(A beat)* Look, your names are Phil and Drew. Not pirate. Not monkey. And that's that.

DREW *(Scoffs)*

Monkey?... I'm a gorill—

JEEVES

SHUT UP!

(A long silence)

PHIL *(Breaking character)*

Okay. Fine. So then tell me, Jeeves...

(DREW snickers. JEEVES glares at him.)

PHIL *(Cont'd)*

What the hell are we doing here?

JEEVES

It should have been on your invitation.

(PHIL pulls an elegant invitation out of the back of his pants and hands it to JEEVES.)

DREW

You have pockets in that thing?

PHIL

No.

DREW

Then where did you keep the invit... Eww! That's disgusting.

(JEEVES immediately drops the invitation on the ground and begins wiping his gloves on his pants and shirt. PHIL picks up the invitation.)

PHIL

Relax, Barkley. I'm just kidding.

JEEVES

Jeeves.

PHIL *(Nods)*

Whatever you say, Carson. *(To DREW)* Of course my outfit has pockets in it. What? Yours doesn't?

(DREW shakes his head.)

PHIL *(Cont'd)*

Then where do you keep your keys?

(DREW lifts up his foot.)

PHIL *(Cont'd)*

Doesn't that hurt?

DREW *(Shrugs)*

Only when I walk. *(A beat)* Or stub my toe.

PHIL

What about that time when you skipped and hopped and twirled around?

DREW *(Gasps)*

You saw me when I did that?!

(A beat)

PHIL

No. *(A beat. Phil picks up the invitation and reads it.)* You are cordially invited to attend a very special, theme park mascot masquerade private party at the majestic and

magnificent Crestwood Manor. (*Stops reading. To JEEVES*) I think your description's just a tad bit too brief, Alfred. (*JEEVES glares at PHIL but remains silent. PHIL goes back to the invitation and continues reading.*) Wear your theme park mascot uniform and show up to this very special, theme park mascot masquerade— (*PHIL stops reading again.*) Seriously, you really thought you needed to mention it twice?!

JEEVES

I didn't write the invitation, your host did. I merely edited it down from—

PHIL

Good God, Hobson! What'd he mention it four times before you cut it to two?

JEEVES

Six.

PHIL

Well then, bang up job with the abridged version! (*Goes back to the invitation again. Takes an overly-exaggerated deep breath and then finishes reading.*) Wear your theme park mascot uniform and show up... *here*... and you could be walking away with \$100,000 dollars by the end of the evening.

(*PHIL looks at DREW and JEEVES. JEEVES smiles and nods.*)

PHIL (*Cont'd*)

So what's the catch?

JEEVES

Your host, a fine gentleman by the name of—

PHIL

Creepy?

JEEVES

Mr. Payton Granger!... will explain everything to you as soon as everyone else arrives.

PHIL

He's gonna be the one to explain things?! Oh great, then I guess I better cancel that vacation I got planned next August.

JEEVES

He's not that bad.

PHIL (*Scoffs*)

Yeah, right! I bet you're only twenty-one but he aged you forty years in one breath.

JEEVES

That's not true at all. *(A long pause)* It wasn't just one breath.

PHIL *(Nods)*

Sure. Fine. Whatever. *(A beat. PHIL looks around the room again.)* So how many others we got coming to this little soiree anyway, Higgins?

JEEVES *(Sighs)*

We're waiting on three more mascots.

DREW

Why us?

JEEVES

Excuse me?

PHIL

Yeah. Why us? Why mascots?

JEEVES

Again, I think that is a question for our host.

PHIL

So I guess you're just totally useless then, huh, Mr. Belvedere?

DREW

That's a little harsh, don't you think?

PHIL *(Shrugs)*

It's an opposable thumb thing. You wouldn't understand.

DREW *(Scoffs)*

You don't even sound like a pirate.

PHIL

That's not what your sister said.

JEEVES

Alright, enough! The both of you. Let's all just sit down and relax for a few moments and wait for the others...

(JEEVES ushers PHIL and DREW over to the posh sofa and all three of them sit down.)

PHIL

Does the butler usually sit down and take a break too?

JEEVES

I'm not taking a break.

PHIL

Then what are you—

JEEVES

I'm watching you.

PHIL

Why?

JEEVES

To make sure you don't steal the cushions.

PHIL

Oh, come on, I only did that once. *(A beat)* And I learned my lesson. I'm certainly not gonna go back to jail. Inmates have an altogether, entirely different definition of... "Yo... Ho!" Besides, why would I—

JEEVES

These sofa cushions are worth six thousand dollars apiece!

PHIL

Good God! What are they made out of? Kittens?

JEEVES

How'd you guess?

(PHIL and DREW stand up quickly.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*

Calm down... they were declawed first.

(JEEVES smiles. DREW and PHIL relax their poses a bit.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*

Lighten up, fellas. Geez. *(A beat)* Besides, I don't think you have to worry, I won't be takin' a break for very long. The other guests should be arriving any moment now so I—

(On cue: there are several more knocks on the door.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*

While you're up, can one of you get the door?

(A beat. PHIL and DREW stare at JEEVES then at each other. JEEVES stands up and points at PHIL.)

JEEVES *(Scoffs, cont'd)*

No sense of humor.

(JEEVES crosses to open the door. PHIL and DREW immediately start grabbing the cushions off the sofa. JEEVES opens the front door to reveal ANNIE. She's dressed in a penguin suit and head.)

JEEVES

Ah, hello. You must be Annie. *(A beat)* Phil... Drew... I'd like to introduce...

(JEEVES turns to look at PHIL and DREW again. They are now both holding sofa cushions under their arms and trying to look innocent and nonchalant.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*

Seriously?

PHIL *(Mockingly)*

No sense of humor.

(PHIL puts the cushion back on the sofa. DREW hesitates.)

JEEVES *(Sighs)*

Put it back and I'll give you a banana.

DREW

Ouw! Ouw!

(DREW quickly puts his cushion back on the sofa as well. Then PHIL finally acknowledges ANNIE.)

PHIL

Who invited the duck?

ANNIE *(To JEEVES)*

Hi, kiddies. My name's Kipper the Penguin. And I'm the kipperest, kippery kipper in the whole kippering, kipper world.

PHIL *(To JEEVES)*

Why'd you invite the mascot for the Special Olympics?

JEEVES

Please ignore the Pirate Black-weird, Annie.

ANNIE (*Way ahead of JEEVES*)

So who's the kipperingest little kipper-birthday boy here today?

JEEVES

No one, Annie. This party is just for you theme park mascots.

ANNIE (*At a loss*)

And how old is the kippery birthday boy?

PHIL (*To JEEVES*)

Send that one back to the factory. She's defective.

JEEVES (*Ignoring PHIL*)

It's nobody's birthday. And you don't have to stay in character, either.

(DREW quickly crosses back over to the front door.)

DREW (*To ANNIE*)

Hey, I know you, don't I?

(PHIL quickly crosses over as well.)

PHIL

Maybe you sat next to her on the short bus.

DREW

That's not even remotely funny, rum-pot. *(A beat)* You know what... I'd actually just prefer it if you stopped speakin' to me altogether.

PHIL

I'd prefer it if you starting takin' showers more regularly.

DREW

That's rich, comin' from fast-food-nation.

PHIL (*Sighs*)

I do not work at *Long John*—

(ANNIE enters to meet DREW. JEEVES closes the front door behind her.)

ANNIE (*Breaking character*)

Drew? Is that you?

DREW

Hey, Annie.

ANNIE

Been a long time.

DREW

Tell me about it. What, like five years?

ANNIE

I think it's been more like seven.

DREW

On that cruise ship, right? (*Chuckles*) You were heavin' over the side and—

ANNIE (*Taps on her mascot head*)

You held my head for me.

PHIL (*To DREW*)

Can one of you hold mine too, 'cause your little high school reunion's makin' me—

ANNIE (*to DREW*)

Who's the gay pirate?

DREW

Annie? I'd like you to meet Long John Moron.

PHIL

Gay?! Gay?! Gay?!

ANNIE

That's it! Wear that pride!

PHIL

I'll have you know, fish-breath, I am not gay!

(*A beat*)

ANNIE

Geez. You don't have to sound so homophobic about it.

PHIL (*Panic-stricken*)

What?! No, I'm not... I don't have anything against homosexuals.

ANNIE (*Nods*)

That sounded very convincing... for a hate monger.

PHIL

Well, I'm sorry. I didn't mean anything... I don't have a problem with them... it's just that... I personally... well... I mean... (*Explodes*) Look, I'm just not a fairy, alright?!

(There are several more knocks on the door. JEEVES opens the door to find JAN who is dressed in a fairy suit and head. Everyone looks at PHIL.)

PHIL (*Nods, cont'd*)

Walked into that one.

JEEVES (*Shrugs*)

At least you finally got your knock knock joke.

(JEEVES ushers JAN inside the mansion and closes the front door behind her. JAN looks at all the other mascots one by one.)

JAN

What's with all the outfits?

PHIL (*To ANNIE*)

She your sister?

ANNIE

What do you mean?

PHIL

Well, you know... Tweedle dum and Tweedle... duh.

ANNIE (*Shrugs*)

I never saw *Star Wars*.

(JEEVES throws a double-take at ANNIE. The others just shake their big dumb heads back and forth. Then JEEVES throws his focus back to JAN.)

JEEVES

Well, if your name's Jan... which I presume it is... then you should have read about all these outfits on your invitation to this special, theme park mascot masquer—

PHIL

JEEVES!

JEEVES

Right. Sorry. (*Back to JAN*) On your party invitation.

JAN

What invitation?

(PHIL waves his invitation around.)

JEEVES

That invitation.

JAN

That thing I got in the mail was an invitation to a party? I thought it was a come-on and a rip-off. Like Ponzi Schemes. Or Publisher's Clearing House. Or health insurance.

JEEVES

If you didn't know about the invitation, then what are you doing here? And why are you dressed in your fairy mascot costume?

JAN

What costume?

JEEVES *(Diverting his eyes)*

Oh... uh... well...

PHIL *(Sotto, to JEEVES)*

I think she OD'ed on some fairy dust.

JAN *(Pointing at the front door)*

She dragged me here. She told me it was for a job interview.

DREW

A job interview where?

ANNIE

Please don't say church. Please don't say church.

PHIL

No, it had to be Fairyland.

ANNIE

You mean Fantasyland.

PHIL

You say tomato, I say tomahto.

ANNIE

No. I say tomato, you say... HATE CRIME!

(A beat)

PHIL (*Sotto, to DREW*)

Whoa! Thar she blows!

(DREW moves away from PHIL. A beat. And then there is another knock on the front door. JEEVES quickly crosses back and opens it to reveal GINA. She enters carrying two suitcases and dressed in a cat suit and head. She drops the suitcases on the ground and JEEVES rushes over and picks them both up.)

JEEVES

Hello. Gina, I presume?

GINA (*Not into it*)

Meow.

PHIL

The hairball has left the building.

GINA (*Even more not into it*)

Purr. Meow. Purr. Meow. Purr. Purr. Purr.

PHIL (*Sotto, to DREW*)

Eat your heart out, Norma Desmond.

DREW

What'd I say about talkin' to me?

PHIL

Careful monkey-brains, I got no problem stickin' a banana so far up your—

JEEVES (*Quickly, to GINA*)

You don't have to do that anymore, Gina. There's no need to stay in character while you're at this party.

GINA (*Breaking character*)

Oh, thank God! (*A beat*) Okay, then, here's what I need. I need Voss water, chilled at exactly 17.4 degrees Celsius. I also need a Swarovski crystal-glass bowl filled-to-the-brim—practically overflowing—but not *actually* overflowing—with Jordan Almonds... but I better not catch a single, solitary, sneaky, nasty, little yellow one in there. I also need a large—

PHIL

I thought you were supposed to be a cat.

GINA

I am a cat.

PHIL

Oh, sorry. For a second I was confused and thought you were a dog. *(A beat)* You know... 'cause a female dog's a—

GINA *(Back to JEEVES)*

I also need a bedroom on the main floor... I am certainly not about to pounce up and down those stairs all night long.

DREW

He said you don't need to stay in character.

GINA

Yeah. And?

PHIL *(Sarcastic, to JAN)*

So glad you decided to bring Chairman Meow with you.

JAN *(Shrugs)*

It's her town car. She just gave me a ride.

PHIL

Surprised you didn't just fly, Tinker—

JAN

Does anyone actually think he's funny?

ALL OTHERS

NO!

(JAN nods and gives PHIL a "well, there you go" gesture.)

PHIL

Aaarr. *(A beat. Quietly)* Me do.

GINA *(Quickly, back to JEEVES)*

Well?! Are any of my requests going to be a problem?

PHIL *(Scoffs)*

Requests? You mean demands.

(GINA throws her best cat screech over towards PHIL.)

JEEVES

No, of course not, Gina... I'll take care of them all and get the rest of your luggage, right after I show you all to your rooms.

GINA (*Overly hostile*)

Well, yeah. Duh. I figured.

JEEVES

Of course.

PHIL

Oh, uh... Cadbury?

JEEVES (*Overly hostile*)

What?!

PHIL

I didn't bring any luggage.

DREW

Neither did I.

ANNIE

Me neither. I thought this was just a one day gig.

JEEVES

It is.

PHIL

Then what's with her and all that—

GINA

I always bring luggage wherever I go, in case for some reason I get stuck there, at least I'll have something to wear.

(A long pause)

PHIL

That's actually a pretty good idea.

DREW

Yeah, it is.

ANNIE

I used to do that until I lost my luggage.

PHIL

You lost your own luggage?

ANNIE

It's not something I'm proud of.

PHIL

I would be! It's gotta take some serious skill to lose your own lug—

GINA

Where's my room?

JEEVES

It's right this way, ma'am.

GINA

Excuse me?! Ma'am?! I am not a ma'am!

PHIL

You're a diva.

GINA

WHAT?!

PHIL

You prefer prima donna?

GINA

You want a prima donna? Oh, I'll show you a prima donna.

(GINA takes her head off and holds it in her hand.)

GINA *(Cont'd)*

Whew! It's like a thousand degrees in that thing!

(The others look at each other and then at JEEVES, who looks blankly back at them. Then they all take their heads off and hold them in their hands.)

PAYTON *(Offstage)*

Put your heads back on.

GINA *(To JEEVES)*

Who invited Simon Cowell?

(A panic-stricken JEEVES vehemently shakes his head.)

PHIL (*Sings, rather poorly*)
Memories... like the corners of my min—

ANNIE (*To JAN*)
Are my ears bleeding?

JAN (*Looking to see*)
A bit.

DREW (*Nods*)
Somebody please stick a banana in his—

PHIL
You'd risk losin' one of your precious bananas just over my singing?

DREW
Deaf people would risk it.

PHIL
I thought you liked bananas.

DREW
I do. (*A beat*) Except Miss Chiquita. She's the spawn of Satan.

PHIL (*Scoffs*)
Yeah, right.

DREW (*Sighs*)
“And I looked, and behold, a blue dress with ruffles on the sleeves: and her name that was in it was Chiquita, and a head o' fruit followed with her.”

ANNIE
Drew? Did you just make that up?

(*DREW nods.*)

ANNIE (*Cont'd*)
Nice. I like it. Color me impresse—

PAYTON (*Offstage*)
PLEASE PUT YOUR HEADS BACK ON!!!

(*All the characters look to see PAYTON enter the stage. He is dressed like a stereotypical circus barker. The mascots quickly put their heads back on.*)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*

Thank you. *(Picturing it)* That... is the way I envision you. That is the way I've always thought about you. That is the way I've always dreamt about you. And so that is the way I always want to see you... as the perfect mascots you are.

(A long pause)

JAN *(Sotto, to GINA)*

He's got a basement. I know he's got a basement. Or an attic. Or a closet. Some kind of room full of all the molested corpses of other theme park masco—

ANNIE

SHHHHHH!

(A beat)

PAYTON *(Chuckles)*

No, no... it's okay, Annie... Jan's right. I do have a closet. And a basement. And an attic. *(A beat)* You all wanna see 'em?

ALL OTHERS SAVE JEEVES

NOOOOOO!

PAYTON *(Chuckles)*

Relax. I'm just kidding. Oh, not about the rooms... they're all here. But I'm kidding about you seeing them all... yet...

(Sound cue. Everyone looks around the room in a panic. A long silence. Then all the mascots bump into each other as they stumble as fast as they can (which isn't very) towards the front door. PAYTON bursts out laughing as he watches them all. Then, finally, just before they all reach the handle of the front door...)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*

Okay, okay... stop... please... I'm just kidding with you all...

(A beat. All the mascots slowly turn their big heads around again, one by one.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*

Or am I?

(Sound cue. The mascots simultaneously and quickly turn back towards the door. PAYTON chuckles harder.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*

Okay, okay. Enough. I'm sorry. Yes, I was totally just kidding. *(A beat. The mascots all fight over who gets to turn the door handle.)* Okay, fine. Go ahead. Feel free to leave. I

understand your trepidation. Maybe I was bein' a little too overly-creepy and child-molesty with all the secret passageway nonsense.

JEEVES (*Sotto*)

Sir! They never mentioned the secret passagewa—

PAYTON

Oh, right. Whoops! I meant all the hidden basement nonsense!

(The mascots try harder to turn the handle, but it's pretty much impossible because their costumes and big cartoonish gloved hands keep getting in the way.)

PAYTON (*Shrugs, cont'd*)

Okay, then... well, Jeeves... I guess that million dollars just isn't really all that important to any of 'em.

(The mascots freeze and stop fumbling with the doorknob. They all slowly turn back around again.)

PHIL

Million?

DREW

I thought it was a hundred thousand.

PAYTON

A hundred thousand? What am I, hosting a reality show on The CW? (*A beat*) No, I specifically indicated on all of your invitations that one of you was going to get...

(A pause. All eyes turn to JEEVES.)

JEEVES

What?

PAYTON

You left off a zero, didn't you?

JEEVES

No, of course not! (*A long pause*) Well, sir, you did tell me to edit them dow—

PAYTON

NOT THAT PART!

JEEVES

I'm sorry, sir. I didn't mean to. It was an accident.

PAYTON
Uh-huh.

JEEVES
I swear!

(A beat)

PAYTON
To God?

(A long silence)

JEEVES *(Sighs)*
Okay, sure. Why not? I swear to—

(A loud thunderclap echoes throughout the Theatre. JEEVES dives to the ground, does the sign of the cross and then covers his head with his hands.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*
I'm sorry! I'm sorry!

(While JEEVES still has his head covered, PAYTON pulls a small recorder out of his pants pocket, then he looks at the mascots and puts his index finger to his lips. They all silently nod their giant mascot heads. PAYTON pushes a button on the recorder and another loud thunderclap echoes throughout the Theatre. PAYTON covers his mouth to keep from laughing out loud.)

JEEVES *(Cont'd)*
I'm sorry, God! I'm sorry! Please forgive me, oh, Lord.

PAYTON *(To the mascots)*
It's okay...

(JEEVES starts to uncover his head.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*
No, not you!

(PAYTON pushes the button and another loud thunderclap is heard. JEEVES quickly covers on the ground and covers his head again. Then PAYTON gestures for the mascots to come back inside the living room again.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*
I meant... you. It's okay. You all can come back. *(A beat)* Just mind your step and watch out for that... *sinner*.

(Slowly, the mascots comply and come back inside the room towards PAYTON. JEEVES remains on the ground, still cowering in fear of the Almighty.)

PAYTON *(Sighs, cont'd)*

Yes, it's true. I promise that one of you is gonna walk out of here in the morning with one million dollars in your pocket.

PHIL

Our pocket? I don't think a million dollars would fit in just one—

PAYTON

But I'm pretty sure it ain't gonna be you, Captain Morgan.

PHIL *(Slightly crestfallen)*

Aaarr.

(The mascots start to either walk around or step over JEEVES' body which is still on the ground in the fetal position.)

PAYTON

That's right. Just climb right over him. Sorry about all that... but I've always had the feeling that good, old Jeeves here has been stealin' from me for years.

(JEEVES quickly uncovers his head and jumps up to his feet.)

JEEVES

Sir, that's not true. I swear to—

(PAYTON discreetly pushes the button on the recorder again. Another loud thunderclap and JEEVES is immediately down on the ground, cowering in fear again. PAYTON covers his mouth again to keep from laughing.)

ANNIE

A million dollars... what exactly do we have to do for that kind of money?

PHIL

Haven't you ever seen *Indecent Proposal*?

JAN

Oh, God!

PAYTON

No, no. It's nothing like that. *(Turns on PHIL)* Personally, I always preferred *Deliverance* more anyway.

(A long silence. Then DREW and PHIL both start backing up towards the front door again.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*

Gotcha!

(A beat. DREW and PHIL stop backing up towards the door, but hold off on stepping forward again. PAYTON shakes his head and turns back to face ANNIE.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*

I was totally kidding... all I want from you all are two simple things.

PHIL

If the first is "squeal"... I already know the second.

PAYTON

No, I'm tellin' you... and I'm being very sincere when I say this... neither thing I want is even remotely close to being dirty or perverted.

(A long pause)

GINA

What, then?

PAYTON

Patience, my dear little minx. I will reveal everything in a very, very short matter of moments.

(A long pause. Then PAYTON approaches JEEVES' body.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd)*

Hey? Heathen?

(JEEVES slowly removes his hands from his head.)

JEEVES

Sir?

PAYTON

Would you please get up off the ground? You look ridiculous.

JEEVES

Is... is it safe?

PAYTON *(Scoffs)*

God doesn't care about you... besides, even if he does, who do you work for, him or me?

JEEVES

Sorry, sir. Of course.

(JEEVES quickly gets to his feet, dusts himself off and awaits a command from PAYTON.)

PAYTON *(Nods)*

It's time.

JEEVES

Yes, of course, sir. Right away. *(A beat)* Ladies and gentlemen, dinner is served.

PHIL

It's 3:30 in the afternoon!

JEEVES

Sir?... Please...

PHIL *(Sighs)*

Whatever you say, Jasper. You guys eat your meals on the old lady clock, fine by me.

JAN

Do we have to eat while we're still wearing our heads, too?

PAYTON

Naturally.

DREW

That's impossible.

PAYTON

Not if you eat your dinner through a straw.

ANNIE

What are we having?

PAYTON

Jeeves?

JEEVES

Lamb.

(A long pause)

GINA

I just became a vegetarian.

JAN (*Nods her big head*)

I've already started my post lamb-shake vomit session in my own head.

PAYTON (*Shakes his head*)

Relax. You can all take your heads off while we eat.

PHIL

What about the bathroom? This thing doesn't have a zipper, you know.

DREW

It has pockets but no zipper?

PHIL

I know, right? I told them a hundred times to put one on it, but do they listen to—

PAYTON

If you don't mind... might we finish this discussion at the dining room table?

JAN

How 'bout we never let them finish that discussion?

(JEEVES takes the two suitcases and heads off into an offstage room. All the other characters slowly make their way over to the glass dining room table. JEEVES reenters the stage, but hurries back off again through a different door leading into the offstage kitchen. All the other mascots sit down around PAYTON, who sits at the head of the table.)

PAYTON

Now then... as I said before... I've called all of you here for two specific reasons. Number one is that you are all theme park mascots and you are all guilty. *(A long pause. The others start looking around at each other.)* And so... that's why I decided to give a million dollars to the mascot who actually confesses to their sins and makes amends before the morning dawns. Now then... tonight is all about repentance. *(PHIL raises his hand)* I know it's still the middle of the afternoon, Phil! *(PHIL puts his hand down)* And you all are here for the same reason. The cash. And let me tell you, it is so real. But before any of you can get your pudgy little fingers on it...

(The mascots all look down at their huge cartoonish hands.)

PAYTON (*Cont'd*)

... You are going to repent for your sins. But first—

PHIL

Well, that takes care of me, but what about the rest of them?

(PHIL laughs, but no one else does.)

PAYTON

Please don't interrupt me again, *me hearty*.

PHIL

Right. Sorry, sir.

PAYTON

So, as Jeeves pointed out before... my name is Payton Granger and I am your crazy, eccentric billionaire for the evening. *(PHIL raises his hand)* I KNOW IT'S ONLY 3:30, CAPTAIN SQUID! *(PHIL puts his hand down. A long pause.)* Now then... I want you all to know that I have always loved theme park mascots. As a child, I wanted to be one myself so badly... but then I grew up and found out how much money you all make and I decided to become an oil tycoon instead.

DREW *(Shakes his big head)*

My guidance counselor sucked.

(PAYTON nods and then looks at the other mascots.)

PAYTON

Oh, please... by all means, the rest of you can feel free to vent your monetary frustrations too.

JAN

Oh, God! It's the worst!

PHIL

Peanuts. They might as well pay us in peanuts.

DREW

If minimum wage were lower, we'd make that.

GINA

It turned me into something I never thought I'd become.

PHIL

A full-fledged—

GINA

Hey! *(A beat. GINA looks back at PAYTON who gestures for her to go on.)* It's because of the salary that I've now become a child-hater.

PHIL

You weren't a child-hater before?

GINA (*Shrugs*)

Not in public.

(A long pause)

ANNIE

Well, for me, it's not about the money.

(PHIL gags and pretends to throw up.)

ANNIE (*Cont'd*)

It's not! It's about making all those children happy.

(PHIL gags and pretends to throw up again.)

PAYTON

Very noble, Annie. But if that's true, why did you flick a little kid on the ear until you made it bleed?

ANNIE (*Gasps*)

How did you know about that?!

PAYTON

I told you, I brought you here for only two reasons. *(A beat)* I know a lot about all of you.

PHIL

Oh yeah, like what?

DREW

Don't dare him like that, Dummy Roger!

PHIL

Why not? *(A beat)* I think he's chicken.

DREW

I think you docked your ship in shallow water.

PAYTON

No, that's not it, Drew... Phil's just tryin' to seem like a tough guy. *(To PHIL)* I bet you thought no one even saw you when you tripped that child and made him fall headfirst into that fountain.

PHIL

He was asking for it.

PAYTON

He was four!

PHIL (*Nods his big head*)

He knows what he did.

PAYTON

And Drew...

DREW

Oh, sweet Lord...

PAYTON

I bet you thought you were in the clear when you pushed that kid out of the way when there was a fire at your theme park.

DREW

I can't believe you saw that!

PHIL

Ha! Just like George Costanza.

DREW

Who?

PHIL (*Shakes his big head*)

That's too funny.

PAYTON

The child's parents didn't think so.

DREW

Neither did their lawyer. (*A beat. Back to PAYTON*) But that's not a secret. Everyone knew about that.

PHIL

I didn't.

ALL OTHERS SAVE PAYTON

Me neither.

(A long pause)

DREW

Read a newspaper.

PHIL

A what? Oh, you mean the Internet.

(PAYTON smiles.)

PAYTON

And Jan... you probably thought you were safe when you sprayed that kid in the face with that water cannon.

JAN

I thought nobody was looking.

PAYTON

But I was. And Gina... you probably thought no one saw you when—

GINA

I know, I know. Pushed that kid's face in the dirt.

PAYTON

No, I was gonna say when you—

GINA

Tripped the girl as she was getting on the magic carpet ride.

PAYTON

No, I was gonna say when you—

GINA

Knocked that kid down after he—

DREW

For God's sake! Stop givin' him more ammunition!

GINA

Fine. *(A beat)* What, then?

PAYTON

I was gonna say when you threw that little girl's stuffed animal she had just won in the toilet.

GINA *(Chuckles)*

Oh yeah. I forgot about that one.

PAYTON

Well I didn't. And neither did she. She's in therapy now.

GINA (*Scoffs*)

Figures... crybaby.

PAYTON

You are all guilty of breaking the number one code of all mascots.

PHIL

You mean the "don't pee in the bushes" code?

PAYTON

No.

GINA

You have a code for that?

PHIL

I do now. (*Gestures down at his mascot uniform*) No zipper.

PAYTON

Well, this is not that code. This is *the* code. The one that states that you all are supposed to be nice to the patrons at all times.

PHIL

We have a code for that?

PAYTON

It's the unspoken code.

JAN

No, they told me about it during my orientation.

ANNIE

Me too.

PHIL

Yeah, but Payton, you left out the part where the kid I pushed in the fountain had just kicked me in the—

PAYTON

At all times.

GINA

But that girl jumped on me and climbed up and grabbed my whiskers and tried to gnaw them—

PAYTON

At. All. Times.

DREW

So... what? You brought us all here so we could apologize for our behavior?

PAYTON

I brought you all here for that and for that second reason.

JAN

And here comes the basement.

PAYTON

No, no... not the basement... not yet. (*Sound cue. The others turn their big heads to look around the mansion again, but PAYTON continues as if nothing's out of the ordinary.*)
But I did pick you five specifically. I see that Annie and Drew already got reacquainted.

DREW

Yeah, but how did you...

PAYTON

I told you. I see things.

ANNIE

You're really kind of creepy, you know that, right?

PAYTON

Yes. I do. And I've got the restraining orders against me to prove it.

ANNIE

Orders? As in plural?

(PHIL leans over to DREW and hums a chord of "Dueling Banjos".)

DREW (*To PAYTON*)

Can I hit him?

PAYTON (*Smiling at PHIL*)

In a sec. But first... I'm just wondering why the rest of you are acting like you don't know each other too.

GINA (*Sighs*)

Whatever. Big deal, it's not like it's some massive secret that mascots bump into other mascots from time to time. (*Overly hostile*) Now are you gonna get to the second reason you dragged us all here or not?

PAYTON (*Smiles*)

The second reason I brought you all here is a reason you all probably forgot about long ago. But I didn't. And it's the one I'm positive you're all going to enjoy.

JAN

Why's that?

PAYTON

Because it's fun! That's the second reason!... FUN! You all remember what fun is, right?

PHIL

Gimme a hint.

PAYTON (*Sighs*)

Of course. Stand up.

GINA

Who eats dinner standing up?

PHIL

Same people who eat dinner at 4 PM.

PAYTON

We can do this first, then we can eat.

JAN

Wonderful.

PAYTON

It's gonna be! I promise. (*A beat. Calling offstage*) OKAY, JEEVES!

(A long pause. Then PAYTON starts things off by standing up first. Then, slowly, the mascots all follow suit and stand up as well. Then JEEVES enters holding a serving tray with a cover on top.)

JEEVES

I was just finishing—

PAYTON

Is it ready? (*He notices the serving tray.*) Is that it?

JEEVES

Yes sir.

PAYTON

Good. Reveal the secret special treat.

JAN

There's a head under there. I know there's a head under—

PHIL

I'm allergic to monkey's brains. *(To DREW)* But you don't have to worry about that.

DREW

Huh?

PHIL

Ouw! Ouw!

DREW *(To PAYTON)*

Can I hit him now?

PAYTON

Sure. If you think it'll help.

(DREW slaps PHIL upside his big pirate head. PHIL doesn't react but does turn to face DREW.)

PAYTON *(Cont'd, to DREW)*

Did it help?

DREW

It felt good.

PAYTON

Good. 'Cause feelin' good is what *(Indicating the tray)* this... is all about!... Jeeves?... If you please...

JEEVES

Yes, sir.

(JEEVES takes the cover off and reveals a folded sheet resting on top of the tray. A long pause.)

ANNIE

That's your idea of fun? You want us to make the bed?

PAYTON

Ha. Ha. *(A beat)* Not exactly.

(A long pause. All the mascots turn their big heads to look at each other, curious but also a bit frightened. PAYTON smiles. And then JEEVES smiles and nods. A long silence.)

PHIL

Did anyone else feel that draft?

(Quick blackout. End of Act One/Scene One.)

Act One/Scene Two

(At rise, DREW and PHIL stand on one side of PAYTON'S lifeless corpse. They are holding onto half of a ripped sheet. ANNIE, JAN and GINA stand on the other side holding the other half of the ripped sheet. The shattered glass dining room table sits just in front of PAYTON'S head, which is stained with blood, as are the floor and other accoutrements all around the stage. JEEVES is no longer onstage. After a few moments of silence, PHIL holds up his portion of the ripped sheet to investigate.)

PHIL

Anybody catch the thread count?

DREW

Shut up, *Treasure Island*.

PHIL

What?! That's a valid question.

ANNIE

Whatever.

PHIL

But that's not a valid answer.

JAN

Just don't start in with some stupid fat joke or anything.

PHIL

I would never! *(A beat)* 'Cause sheets just rip on their own for no good reason all the time.

ANNIE

God! Would you just shut up, Ahab?!

(An awkward silence. Then PHIL looks at the blood on and around PAYTON'S head.)

PHIL

Man... would you look at all that bluuuuuu—

(PHIL immediately passes out and collapses in a heap next to PAYTON'S body. His pirate head could stay on his head or fall off, either way.)

GINA

Oh great, now what'd we do?

DREW *(Sighs)*

Just push his body out of the way.

GINA *(Scoffs)*

Yeah, right! I'm not touchin' him!

(DREW turns to look at JAN.)

JAN *(Sighs)*

Why do we need to move him?

DREW

To give Payton some air.

(JAN nods and approaches PHIL'S body and starts to nudge him with her foot.)

ANNIE *(To DREW)*

Seriously?

DREW

OF COURSE I'M NOT SERIOUS!

(JAN immediately stops pushing PHIL'S body and rejoins the others.)

JAN

But, why not? I mean... there's still a chance Payton might be okay... right?

DREW *(Sarcastic)*

Oh, yeah. His head just split open like a watermelon, but he can just walk it off.

ANNIE

Watermelon?

DREW

Would you prefer cantaloupe?

ANNIE

I'd prefer you stop using stupid fruit analogies.

DREW

I'd prefer you stop wearing so much perfume.

ANNIE

I'm not wearin' too much perfume.

DREW (*Scoffs*)

France just called to say they're out!

JAN (*Sighs*)

I wish you two would just make out already.

ANNIE

JAN?!

DREW

What d'you mean?

JAN

Oh, please. It's like you're both back in grade school with all the ponytail pulling.

ANNIE (*To DREW*)

I don't know what she's talking about.

DREW (*Patting his giant head*)

My fur's not that long, is it?

(PHIL wakes up and slowly stands back up. Then he puts the big pirate head back on, if in fact, it fell off when he passed out.)

GINA

Are you okay?

PHIL

Do you care?

(A beat)

GINA

No.

PHIL

Didn't think so.

(A long silence. They all stare at PAYTON'S body and all the broken glass and blood again. Then DREW starts looking towards the door to the offstage kitchen.)

DREW

Where the hell is that butler anyway?

ANNIE

Probably witness protection by now.

JAN

That's where we'll all be soon enough.

GINA

Yeah. If we're lucky.

PHIL

Just for the record... you all heard me suggest Pictionary, right?

(A beat)

ANNIE *(Shaking her head)*

Why didn't we move the dining room table out of the way first?

PHIL

Yeah, seriously... somebody really should have thought of that beforehand.

ANNIE *(Shaking her head)*

What were we thinkin', throwin' a senior citizen like that up in the air in the first place?

PHIL

He said it would be fun.

ANNIE

Does he look like he's havin' fun?

PHIL

He did before the sheet ripped.

ANNIE (*Shakes her big head*)

We can't know that for sure.

PHIL

'Course we can.

ANNIE

How?

PHIL

'Cause I distinctly heard "WEEEEEE!"... before I heard "RIIIIPPPPP! AAAGGGHH! SMASH! THUD!"

GINA (*Sighs, to DREW*)

What are you gonna do?

DREW

You mean, what are *we* gonna do.

GINA

No I don't.

ANNIE

What do you mean, what are we gonna do? We call the cops. And an ambulance.

PHIL

You mean a hearse.

JAN

Phil?!

PHIL

Oh, sorry... did he wanna be cremated?

GINA

Even if he did, we'd still need a hearse.

PHIL

Urns aren't that heavy.

(The others stare at PHIL, but decide it's futile to answer him. A long pause.)

DREW (*Shaking his big head*)

We can't call the cops.

(The others AD LIB things like "What?" "Why not?" "Are you crazy?")

DREW (*Cont'd*)

Just hear me out.

JAN

No way!

ANNIE

Absolutely not!

PHIL

I'm listening...

DREW

Look, we just killed a billionaire. Sure it was an accident, but we killed him nonetheless. It's that simple. He's dead... because of us.

JAN

But it was his idea to bounce up and down on the sheet.

PHIL

So it's more like assisted suicide, right?

ANNIE

For God's sake, shut up, scurvy-boy!

PHIL (*Shrugs*)

I'm just spit-ballin' here...

ANNIE

Well, stop! I can feel my IQ drop every time you open your mouth.

PHIL

Your what?

DREW

Guys, the cops aren't gonna care whose idea this was. They're only gonna care that we tossed a rich old guy up in the air, the sheet ripped, and he slammed his head into that dining room table.

ANNIE

Well of course it sounds bad when you say it like that.

JAN

But doesn't that mean the dining room table's the killer?

GINA

Either that or the sheet.

PHIL (*Nods*)

It all comes back to the thread count.

DREW

WHO CARES ABOUT THE STINKIN' THREAD COUNT?!

PHIL

Trust me. Once you try a 400-count, you never want to go back to just—

DREW

WHO CARES AT ALL ABOUT THE STUPID, STINKIN', SILLY SHEET?!

PHIL

Seriously, Simian?

(DREW starts advancing on PHIL but ANNIE and JAN hold him back.)

PHIL (*Cont'd*)

Well, I hope it was at least Egyptian blend.

ANNIE (*Exploding*)

SHUT UP, BEFORE I MAKE YOU SWAB THE DECK WITH YOUR TONGUE!

(A long silence)

PHIL (*Sotto, to GINA*)

Whoa. Hell hath no fury like a birdbrain scorned, huh?

(GINA hisses viciously at PHIL and looks like she's a deadly cat for the first time ever. PHIL jumps back a bit. A long silence.)

ANNIE

Look Drew, we need the cops.

DREW

But we killed him.

JAN

Which is precisely why we need the cops here.

DREW

To arrest us?

PHIL

It was an accident.

DREW

I guarantee, if the cops come, we're all getting arrested. *(To PHIL)* Do you want to go to jail?

PHIL

My butt can't handle prison again.

ANNIE

Again?

DREW

It's a long, dull, boring and pointless story.

PHIL

You think it was boring and pointless? Which part?

DREW *(Quickly, to GINA)*

Do you wanna go to jail?!

GINA *(Scoffs)*

People my age don't go to jail.

PHIL

Fifty year olds go to ja—

GINA

Drop dead!

PHIL

Fifty-one?

GINA

I'm fort—I'm thirty-six.

PHIL

Whoa! Old Woman River.

GINA

SHUT UP!

PHIL *(Chuckles)*

I'm just sayin', old people go to jail all the time.

GINA
I'M NOT OLD! AND NO THEY DON'T!

PHIL
What about Bernie Madoff?

GINA (*Panic-stricken, to DREW*)
DON'T CALL THE COPS!

DREW (*To ANNIE*)
Do you want to go to jail?!

ANNIE
No, but Drew... I think you're overreac—

DREW
Then it's settled. No cops.

ANNIE
What do you mean, it's settled, no cops? What are we supposed to do, bury his body in the backyard?

PHIL
I got a shovel in my trunk. (*A beat*) And some lime.

JAN
Lime?

PHIL (*Shrugs*)
For the weeds in my garden.

JAN
Then what's it doin' in your trunk?

PHIL
You should see my garage.

DREW (*Sighs*)
Look, nobody's burying anyone. That's not how mature, grown-up adults should handle this.

GINA
Okay, Mr. Big Shot? How should mature, grown-up adults handle this then?

(*A beat. Then JEEVES enters carrying another covered tray in his hand.*)

JEEVES

Dinner is ser—

(JEEVES looks down and sees PAYTON'S body for the first time.)

JEEVES *(High-pitched squeal)*

AAAAGGGGGGGGHHHHHHH?!

PHIL

Like that mature, grown-up adult.

(JEEVES drops the tray and rushes to PAYTON'S side. The cover pops off the tray and a few lamb chops roll across the stage. PHIL waves at them as they pass.)

PHIL *(Cont'd)*

Bye-bye, black sheep.

(JEEVES checks PAYTON'S pulse. Then he quickly jumps to his feet again.)

JEEVES *(To PHIL)*

SWEET LORD ABOVE, PHIL! WHAT DID YOU DO?!

PHIL

Me?! You're the one who dropped our dinner.

JEEVES

NOT THAT?! *(Indicating PAYTON'S body.)* THAT?!

PHIL

Hey! It was your sheet! It wasn't a fitted one, was it? You know... they bunch up a lot more than—

JEEVES *(To the others)*

What happened?

ANNIE

Jeeves, listen... we threw Payton up in the air, just like he wanted us to do, I might add... and then the sheet ripped.

JEEVES

Oh, my God!

PHIL

That's exactly what Payton said when the sheet ripped.

JEEVES

I can't believe it.

PHIL

Me neither. I can't believe you'll spring six thousand for sofa cushions, but for sheets you settle for The Dollar Store.

(JEEVES starts to advance on PHIL. This time, DREW is the one to hold out his hand and stop JEEVES.)

DREW

Are you sure he's dead, Jeeves?

JEEVES

I just checked. He has no pulse.

PHIL

That doesn't prove anything. Maybe you should check again to be sure.

(JEEVES crosses back over to check PAYTON'S pulse again.)

JEEVES

He's not breathing.

PHIL

Maybe he's just holding his breath. Or maybe he's just—

JEEVES

He's dead!... He's dead! He's dead! He's dead!

PHIL *(Scoffs)*

You don't have to overdo it or anything.

JEEVES *(Screams at PHIL)*

YOU KILLED HIM!

PHIL *(Shrugs)*

HEY! *(A beat)* I had help.

ANNIE

It was an accident, Jeeves.

JAN

Yeah.

JEEVES

How does a sheet accidentally rip in half like that?

PHIL (*Sotto*)

Dollar Store.

JEEVES

It wasn't a stinkin' Dollar Store sheet! It was a 400-thread count, Egyptian blend designer sheet from Nordstrom's!

PHIL (*Euphorically*)

Mmmmm... that's like a cloud from Heaven. Is that the same as the ones on our beds?

JEEVES

HOW?!

(*A beat*)

PHIL (*Shrugs*)

Gravity?

GINA (*Scoffs*)

Gee, thanks Newton.

PHIL

Who?

JAN

Gina, don't be that kind to him.

GINA

I was being sarcastic.

JAN

Not enough.

DREW

Phil's more like Stephen Hawking than Newton anyway.

GINA

But his book's called *A Brief History of Duh*.

PHIL

Aaarr?

JAN (*Scoffs, to GINA*)
You know perfectly well... he's probably illiterate.

(*GINA nods her big cat head in agreement.*)

ANNIE
Jeeves, Drew doesn't think we should call the cops. But we should, right?

(*A long silence*)

JAN
Jeeves?

JEEVES (*Nods*)
I'll make sure to call the proper authorities... first thing, tomorrow morning.

JAN
TOMORROW?!

ANNIE
WHAT?!

JEEVES
Would everyone stop yelling and calm down?

ANNIE
NO!

JEEVES
Why not?

ANNIE
BECAUSE THERE IS A DEAD BODY LYING ON THE FLOOR!

JEEVES (*Shrugs*)
But we know who killed him. There is no mystery. You all did it. And you're all right here. None of you are going anywhere.

GINA
But should we really wait that long?

PHIL
Seriously... he's gonna start to ripen up the place a whole lot sooner than tomorrow morning. (*A beat*) Got any Febreze?

DREW

Yeah, what d'you mean we're gonna wait to call the proper authorities until tomorrow?

JEEVES

Well, I'm afraid we can't do anything about it tonight. All the phone lines have been cut and...

(Everyone pulls their cell phones out of their suits except DREW and holds them in the air.)

PHIL

Nice try, rotary-boy.

ANNIE *(To DREW)*

Where's yours?

DREW

I haven't learned how to dial with my toes yet.

JAN

You don't have pockets?

DREW

I'm a gorilla.

JEEVES

Well, it's all well and good that you have brought your cell phones, but didn't you notice where Crestwood Manor was located when you arrived way out here? We're in the middle of nowhere. There's no reception. Go ahead and check.

(The others all check their cell phones.)

JAN

Man, he's right! I don't even have one bar.

ANNIE

Me neither.

GINA

Mine is still searching for the satellite.

PHIL

Mine thinks I'm ON a satellite!

JEEVES

You see?

GINA

So what? Big deal. So we get out of here and drive to the first town we see and get help there.

JEEVES

I'm afraid we can't leave either.

JAN

What are you talking about?

JEEVES

We're locked in here.

ANNIE

The front door turned to open just fine when we were all tryin' to stay outta the basement.

(PHIL holds up his big, cartoonish hand.)

PHIL

Speak for yourself.

JEEVES *(Still to ANNIE)*

Well then you should have escaped when you had the chance.

JAN

Escaped?!

JEEVES

Left... Escaped... What's the difference?

GINA

Everything in Phil's trunk.

PHIL

No, the chloroform's in the glove compartment.

ANNIE *(Back to JEEVES)*

But the front door wasn't lo—

JEEVES *(Nods)*

Payton had John put a bar up on the front door to lock us all in here before he left for the day.

(A beat)

JAN
Who the hell is John?

JEEVES
The gardener.

ANNIE
So we're locked in here now?

JEEVES (*Nods*)
You can go check.

(The others all fumble over to the front door only to find it locked from the outside now, just as JEEVES said it was. They all return to the living room and slump down on the sofa.)

ANNIE (*To JEEVES*)
Why would Payton cut his own phone line and lock us in here?

JAN
Basement. Basement. Basement.

JEEVES (*Still to ANNIE*)
It was all part of his plan.

JAN
Basement! Basement! Basement!

ANNIE (*Still to JEEVES*)
I doubt his plan involved his own murder.

PHIL
Since when did this become a murder?

GINA
Asked the man with the shovel and lime.

ANNIE
Which is probably next to the rope and duct tape.

PHIL
You been in my trunk?

ANNIE
If you had your way I probably would.

PHIL

Nah, I got no respect for a bird that don't fly.

DREW (*Trying to get back on track*)

Seriously, Jeeves... why would Payton lock us all in here for the night?

JEEVES

Mr. Granger had the whole night planned out for you all. He wanted you to repent and ask forgiveness for hurting those children and then he was going to have you all split the million five ways. (*To PHIL*) What's that break down to?

(*PHIL grabs his head in pain.*)

PHIL

OW!

JEEVES

Priceless. (*Back to the others*) 200,000 dollars a piece is still a lot more than you all make in a year.

ANNIE

It's a lot more than we make our entire careers.

GINA (*Scoffs*)

Being a theme park mascot is sooooooooooooo not my career.

ANNIE

What is then?

GINA (*Nods*)

I wanna get paid to do nothing. Just sit around and take up space. Like the Kardashians.

ANNIE

Dare to dream.

JEEVES

Well, regardless, I still think 200,000 dollars is not too shabby for one little party.

DREW

That was his plan?

JEEVES

Mr. Granger admired all of you very much and he wanted to reward you for your hard work. But first he wanted to make sure you were sorry for what you did to all those poor children. Oh, and he wanted you to have some fun.

PHIL

Oh, yeah... this has turned out to be more fun than a barrel of monkeys. (*To DREW*) No offense.

JAN

You're such a—

PHIL

I was kidding.

ANNIE

We got a dead body lying in front of us. Good time for jokes.

PHIL

It's my defense mechanism. I can't help it. (*A beat*) A man walks into a bar and asks the bartender to get him—

ANNIE

Shut up!

JEEVES

Thank you Annie. Now then, since we are all stuck in here for the night, I suggest we make the best of our situation. But first, I think we should—

JAN (*To herself*)

He's gonna ask us to move the body. I know he's gonna ask us to move the body.

GINA

I'm not going near that body!

PHIL

Why don't we just sweep the dead body under the rug?

JAN

What rug?

PHIL (*To JEEVES*)

Haven't you ever even heard of Fung's sleigh?

GINA

Feng Shui.

PHIL

That's what I said.