

**If on a Stormy Night,
a Tortoise Is Crossing the Road**

Full length play
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SNOPSIS: Jack is a faithful husband, and a dutiful and responsible computer programmer who has followed the program for all his 33 years. He is the 'everyman' sleepwalking through life until one fateful day when events occur that turn his program upside down and hurl him into a Dantesque world of pimps, prostitutes, drunks and gamblers. His detour into the inferno will have an unexpected exit.

CHARACTERS:

Jack: 30 something year old computer programmer

Jane: his wife

John: his co-worker, 60 years old

Norm: Jack and John's boss

Paramedic 1

Paramedic 2

Angel: prostitute

Amber: a prostitute

Tiny Tim: their pimp

Detective

The innkeeper

Hairdresser

Store clerk

Store mgr.

Waitress

Jimmy the drunk

Leon

Casino owner

Pit boss

Extras/Minor Characters: the coroner, the policeman, the innkeeper, Ginger, four girls at the casino, 4-5 random craps players, two casino security men at the casino

ACT 1- At Work

Scene 1-Wednesday am

Scene 2- Thursday am

Scene 3- Friday am

Scene 4- Friday noon

Scene 5- Friday, a few minutes after noon

Scene 6- Friday, mid afternoon

ACT 2- The Crash

Scene 1- Friday night, A road at the edge of town

Scene 2&3 – Saturday am, A room at The Moonwinx Hotel

ACT 3- Haircut, New Suit and Steak Dinner

Scene 1- Barber shop

Scene 2- Men's fine clothing store

Scene 3- The diner

ACT 4- Skid Row

ACT 5- The Casino

Scene 1- At the craps table

Scene 2- The presidential suite

Scene 3- Angel visits the suite

ACT 1, SCENE 1

Wednesday am

ACME Computer Programming Offices. Set includes a kitchen/breakroom area, cubicles for office spaces and a manager's office to one side.

JOHN: *(taking sip of coffee, gags, spits it out)*. Goddamn shitty coffee.

JACK: *(chuckling, folds paper and reaches for his own coffee)*

JOHN: You ever get the feeling of Déjà vu? *(pause)* Like you've lived the same day over and over again? 30 years I've been coming here. Same shitty coffee. *(beat)* Same job, same house, same wife. Same ol same ol same ol. Just sameness all day every day.

JACK: Hmmm.

JOHN: 30 years. You know what 30 years is?

JACK: Three decades.

JOHN: No! It's a life sentence. *(pause)* Do you love your wife?

JACK: Yes, of course.

JOHN: How long you been married?

JACK: 7 years.

JOHN: Do you have sex?

JACK: What?

JOHN: I asked if you have sex?

JACK: What the hell?

JOHN: Just answer the question.

JACK: *(irritated)* Of course we have sex. Don't you?

JOHN: No.

JACK: I'm sorry.

JOHN: Don't be.

JACK: Ok.

JOHN: Do you love your wife?

JACK: You asked me the same thing a minute ago.

JOHN: Well, do you?

JACK: Yes! Yes I do.

JOHN: Does she love you?

JACK: I don't know. I guess she does.

JOHN: How often do you have sex?

JACK: Look man-

JOHN: HOW often do you have sex?

JACK: What- what are you?—Penthouse Forum?

JOHN: How often?

JACK: I don't know, 2-3 times a week.

JOHN: That's good. If you have sex that often, that means she loves you.

JACK: That's nice to know. Thanks.

JOHN: You're welcome. (*pause*) Do me a favor, will you?

JACK: I don't know. I'm not inclined after all these stupid questions.

JOHN: I want you to go home tonight and make love to your wife.

JACK: Jesus Christ. (*chuckles*) You want me to film it?

JOHN: No.

JACK: No?

JOHN: No. Hell no. What are you a pervert? *(pause)* Just make love to her. And tell her you love her. *(pause)* And take her some flowers once in a while. It's important. All these things are important. And if you don't do them then you're marriage becomes lost in the shuffle of life. It becomes like a habit. Or a job. And you wake up one morning after 30 years of neglecting those things and you look at the woman laying next to you in bed and you say to yourself 'Who is this stranger?' And that's not good, right? You have to keep the spark in the marriage. Are you listening to me?

JACK: Yes yes of course. Whatever you say.

(THE TOUPEED HEAD OF THEIR MANAGER NORM IS SEEN BOBBING AROUND THE CUBICLES LOOKING FOR JACK. HE COMES INTO THE BREAKROOM.)

NORM: Jack, hey, can I see you for a few minutes?

JACK: Yeah, sure.

(THEY WALK TO NORM'S OFFICE.)

NORM: Have a seat.

JACK: Ok, uh, is everything ok?

NORM: Huh?

JACK: Did I do something wrong?

NORM: No, heavens no. It's time for your annual review.

JACK: Oh, ok.

NORM: Let's see,,,(*leaning back in his chair*) You've been here 7 years.

JACK: Yes.

NORM: *(pause. puts on glasses, looks over a report.)* Jack, I prepared your review. There's not one blemish on your report here. Never missed a day. Never disciplined. Projects completed on time. Well liked by co-workers. I went down to HR the other day and pulled your file. It's the same every year. *(handing Jack the file)*

JACK: It is? (*glances at it and hands it back*)

NORM: Yes. Jack I gotta tell ya I've been in management for 20 years and you're the most perfect employee a company could have. Employees like yourself are almost non-existent.

(SILENCE FOR A MOMENT OR TWO)

NORM: Do you remember Mersault?

JACK: No.

NORM: He was in 'systems'.

JACK: Hmm, I don't remember him.

NORM: Quiet fellow, 30 something. Excellent employee. Never missed a day. A lot like you.

JACK: Ok.

NORM: He's not with us anymore.

JACK: Did he quit?

NORM: No.

JACK: Hmm, did he go to SICCC?

NORM: (*shaking head*)

JACK: FUCCS?

NORM: No, nothing like that, he just stopped coming to work.

JACK: Stopped?

NORM: Yes

JACK: How strange.

NORM: Yes, very strange. He took a week of vacation around Labor Day a year ago. And he never came back.

JACK: Did anyone check on him?

NORM: Oh yes. The Monday he was supposed to be back to work and didn't show up, we called his home but there was no answer. Left a message on his machine and called a couple more times. Nothing. Finally, Johnstone, you know Johnstone? He went over to his apartment and knocked on the door. He waited, rang the bell and knocked several times and then he looked and saw a bunch of mail piled up in the mailbox. He called the police. They came and got the property manager to open the door to the apartment. Johnstone was worried they'd find Mersault dead. They went in and nothing. No body, no nothing. I mean there was nothing unusual you know. The apartment was clean, the bed was made, clothes in the closet, food in the fridge.

JACK: What happened to him?

NORM: No one knows.

JACK: Curious.... Did he have any family?

NORM: Apparently not. We Asked some of his co-workers in 'systems' about him. They didn't know a thing about him. He worked there for 10 years and no one knew anything about him. We searched our HR records for an emergency contact and it listed the company as the contact.

JACK: The company? Usually it's a family member right?

NORM: Yes. Its always a spouse, parent or someone in the family.

JACK: Hmmm. So no one knows what happened to him?

NORM: No. The police did some kinda computer search and sent out a missing persons report but they couldn't find him. They even sent the report over a national database but nothing ever turned up. Nothing. It's like he didn't exist.

JACK: Well I hope he's ok.

NORM: Hmmm.

(pause)

JACK: What-- *(pause, puzzled)* Uh,,,, *(pause)*

NORM: What? What is it?

JACK: Something you said.

NORM: Yes?

JACK: You said I reminded you of him,,,of Mersault.

NORM: Oh yes. I did.

JACK: Well I don't see the similarity. He sounds kinda odd. Like a freak.

NORM: I didn't-- .

JACK: Im not a freak. I have a wife. I have family. And friends.

NORM: Of course you do. I didn't mean any offense.

JACK: Well...

NORM: I wasn't implying that you are strange. I just meant that there are some similarities between the two of you. Mersault was about your age. He was the perfect employee. Very quiet. Things like that that reminded me of you. That's all.

JACK: Well I don't care for the comparison Norm. I'm not him and I'm not like him.

NORM: No no of course not. *(pause, they are studying each other. Norm leans back)* Jack?

JACK: Yes

NORM: Are you happy?

JACK: *(thinking)* Happy? No one's ever asked me that. I don't know.

NORM: *(chuckling)* You don't know?

JACK: No. I've never really thought about it.

NORM: Do you have any hobbies?

JACK: Hobbies? Like what?

NORM: I don't know,,,,fishing, woodworking, stamp collecting, you know, stuff like that?

JACK: No, I don't do any of that. *(pause)* I like to go to the park with my wife. We go walking there. Sometimes we go out to dinner and a movie.

NORM: That's nice.

JACK: *(shrugs)*

NORM: Do you like football.

JACK: No

NORM: Basketball

JACK: No

NORM: You don't watch any ball games on TV?

JACK: No *(pause)* It seems a waste of time. *(pause)* And it doesn't interest me. *(pause)* Why do you ask me all these questions?

NORM: *(sighs)* Just trying to get to know you a little better that's all.

JACK: Well, *(pause)* I don't know what to say.

NORM: It's ok. Just want to make sure you're happy here, that's all. Like I said you're a model employee and we don't want to lose you.

JACK: Ok, well thanks for your concern but I'm not going anywhere.

NORM: Hmm, good, yes, that's excellent. That's what we like to hear. *(waiting)*

JACK: *(looking at Norm in silence)*

NORM: *(looking at Jack in silence)*

JACK: *(coughs)* Um, are we done? Can I go back to work now?

NORM: (*chuckles*) Oh, uh yes yes, of course. (*sits forward, standing and claps his hands*) Well now, everything is very good Jack and your review will show excellent marks as always.

JACK: Thanks.

NORM: (*moving forward and shaking hands and putting his hand on Jim's shoulder*) You're welcome, my boy. (*showing him the door*) And remember if you ever have any concerns or you just want to talk, my door is always open, ok?

JACK: Yeah, ok, sure thing. (*walks back to his cubicle*)

(JOHN HEARS HIM AND PEERS OVER THE
EDGE OF HIS ADJOINING CUBICLE.)

JOHN: Heard Norm call you back to his office. Everything ok?

JACK: Yes, everything is ok.

JOHN: (*pause*) Well?

JACK: (*pause*) Huh?

JOHN: What did he want?

JACK: He didn't want anything.

JOHN: He didn't?

JACK: No.

JOHN: So he just called you in to his office and the two of you held hands and prayed?

JACK: Yes.

JOHN: You prayed????

JACK: (*chuckling*) No.

JOHN: Well what the hell did you do?

JACK: He called me in for my review.

JOHN: Oh yeah, I heard they're doing 'em this week. So how'd it go?

JACK: Good.

JOHN: Did you get a raise?

JACK: No.

JOHN: What? Why not?

JACK: I didn't ask for one.

JOHN: You didn't?

JACK: No.

JOHN: What the hell man, why didn't you ask for a raise?

JACK: *(pause)* I don't know.

JOHN: *(shakes his head)* Look Jim, an employer never gives a raise if you don't ask for one, ok?

JACK: Ok.

JOHN: So are you going to ask for one?

JACK: No.

JOHN: *(sighs)* Are you ok?

JACK: Sure, I feel great.

JOHN: And you're not going to ask them for a raise?

JACK: No.

JOHN: Why not?

JACK: Well, I really don't need one.

JOHN: Wow.... That's a first.

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT 1, Scene 2

Thursday am, breakroom

JOHN IS SITTING AT TABLE READING
PAPER. JIM GETS CUP OF COFFEE AND
PULLS UP A CHAIR.

JOHN: (not looking up from paper) Did you?

JACK: Did I what?

JOHN: Did you make love to your wife last night?

JACK: No.

JOHN: Why not?

JACK: I was tired.

JOHN: (chuckles, shakes his head)

JACK: Did you make love to your wife?

JOHN: No.

JACK: Why not?

JOHN: Cause I haven't made love to my wife in years.

JACK: Why?

JOHN: Cause I'm old and tired.

JACK: Tired huh?

JOHN: Yeah.

JACK: Why do you care about my sex life?

JOHN; I don't.

JACK: (tilts his head in confusion)

JOHN: Hey check this out: Headline says "Couple bypasses fertility doctors, uses turkey baster to get pregnant". (*continues reading out loud*) '..the Jones spent over 50,000 dollars on fertility

doctors for 3 years but with no success. Mrs. Jones's best friend told her of an old Tasmanian home remedy involving a turkey baster. With her husband's help, Mrs. Jones placed a sofa cushion on the floor against the wall and stood on her head. Her husband inserted the turkey baster with his semen into his wife's vagina and commenced squeezing the bulb of the baster. Mrs. Jones said they did this every day for a week and six weeks later she learned that she was pregnant.' *(laughing)* Can you imagine? I love it. Headline should read 'I Was Impregnated By A Turkey Baster'. *(laughing harder)* Oh man, don't you know those fertility doctors feel pretty dumb right now? The Jones should demand a refund from those quacks.

JACK: *(chuckles)* Turkey baster? I hope they got a new one before Thanksgiving.

JOHN: *(goes back to reading, and turning pages of paper)*. Oh man, check this one out... "Gay Nightclub Attacked, Patrons Fight Back!" '...The Back Door nightclub was attacked by skinheads Saturday night. At around midnight, a dozen skinheads overwhelmed the doorman/bouncer and entered the club with baseball bats, chains and bottles. They were shouting profanities and smashing things and threatening the patrons. A patron approached the group in an attempt to disarm the situation. A skinhead swung and hit the patron with a baseball bat knocking him to the floor. Immediately a dozen or more club patrons charged the attacker and the other skinheads and overcame them. Police were called to the scene and made arrests. The club patron who was hit with the baseball bat suffered minor injuries and was treated and released at Mercy Hospital. Meanwhile, police reports indicated that all of the skinheads received severe beatings that required hospitalization. None of the club patrons who fought back received injuries. The skinheads were arrested and charged with assault and criminal mischief.' *(chuckling)* Man I love a payback story, don't you? Way to go guys. *(folds the newspaper and lays it on the table)* Nothing like a good fight, huh?

JACK: Hmmm

JOHN: You ever get into a fight?

JACK: No, I don't think so.

JOHN: Had a handful myself. Won a few and lost a few. The best one was back in college. I was at this bar called The Supper Club. I was dancing with a girl I'd met there, a real beauty, tall, thick auburn hair, green eyes, gorgeous from head to toe you

know, and so we're dancing and this guy comes up and tries to pull her away for a dance, hey buddy what the hell do you think you're doing? and then the pushing and shoving starts up and he pushed me over a chair and I jumped up and he came at me and I cocked and loaded and slugged the guy so hard they say it lifted him off his feet. And then, the next thing I know a big nasty barroom brawl starts. So I grabbed the girl and we snuck out the back door. Right on time too cause as we're driving off, the cop cars were swarming up on the place. Anyways, so I took her back to my place, got laid got drunk got laid again and passed out, all in one night and it was the greatest night of my life.

JACK: Hmmm. I'm sure it was.

JOHN: Yeah. I really felt alive. No,, (beat) I felt more than alive, you know what I mean?

JACK: No.

JOHN: Fight get drunk and get laid, all in one night.

JACK: I can't claim that one.

JOHN: You should try it sometime.

JACK: (chuckles) I'll think about it.

JOHN: You're smiling. You think I'm kidding around. I'm dead serious.

JACK: Hmmm, ok, sure thing.

JOHN: Really. (pause) No fun and games here. You (beat) you need to go out. Go out there (pause) and do something. Do you hear me?

JACK: Yeah, sure, whatever you say.

JOHN: Do something Goddamnit!

JACK: Hey. (alarmed) Take it easy.

JOHN; How old are you son?

JACK: 29.

JOHN: You're 29 and you've never gotten into a fight?

JACK: No

JOHN: Have you ever gotten drunk?

JACK: No

JOHN: Laid?

JACK: Yes

JOHN: I'm not talking about your wife.

JACK: What are you talking about?

JOHN: Have you ever been laid by another woman?

JACK: No, of course not, I don't cheat.

JOHN: Ok, hang on, let me spell it out. Were you a virgin before you got married?

JACK: (*embarrassed*) That's none of your Goddamn business.

JOHN: HA! I knew it.

JACK: Look what's this about anyway? Why are you always poking around about my sex life? What the hell is up with that? Do you have some kinda problem?

JOHN: No, no problem.

JACK: Well quit asking me about my personal life.

JOHN: OK, ok take it easy. I'm just trying to light a fire under your ass.

JACK: Light one under your own ass. All you do is sit around here reading the newspaper and complaining about the coffee, the job and your wife.

JOHN: This is true..

JACK: Why?

JOHN: Cause I have regrets. And I hate to see you sitting here in this place. I don't want you to do what I did the last 30 years.

JACK: Why don't you retire? Take up a hobby or something?

JOHN: That's not the point.

JACK: Well I'm not seeing it.

JOHN: The point is you need to do something different ok? Take a detour.

JACK: A detour?

JOHN: You know what I'm talking about.

JACK: No I'm afraid I don't. The road home is fine. There aren't any detours.

JOHN: You sit there mocking. You think I'm being funny, huh? This isn't funny. Life isn't funny. Is life funny?

JACK: Sometimes.

JOHN: NO. NO son, it isn't. It's not funny. You know what life is? You want to know?

JACK: Yeah, sure, I wanna know.

JOHN: LIFE IS SHORT! That's what it is. Remember that. Its short and its even shorter if you don't know how to live it. Do you understand? (*softly, philosophically*) I know what I'm talking about. There's nothing funny about life. Nothing. You sit around here for the next 20-30 years and the funny's on you. (*pause*) There's a great big world out there son, and you need to go and see it. You need to get the hell out of here. Get out. Walk around the world. Don't sit in your little cubicle cell for the next 30 years.

JACK: (*distracted—reaching for the newspaper*) Hmmmm.

JOHN: (*irritated*) Goddamnit! I'm talking to you.

JACK: (*startled*).

JOHN: Put the newspaper down and listen to me.

JACK: (*laying the paper down*)

JOHN: Good. Now-- Listen and listen well. You're young. And healthy. Right? (*beat*) So what Im trying to tell you is you have to

get out there. You have to go out on the razor's edge of life and live that sonofabitch. Make it full. You only have this one. Do it. *(pause)* Now. Or you'll wake up and 30 years has gone by and you're too old and tired to do anything. And then it's all over. *(pause)*. OK? Do you understand what Im trying to tell you?

JACK: Yes, I understand. I do. And you know something---I'd love to take your advice and jump off and go out and see that great big world. The problem is you gotta have money, and a lot of it to do that.

JOHN: *(pause, looking at Jack)* No you don't.

JACK: I think you do.

JOHN: No.

JACK: Yes.

NORM: Ok, so you need money. Then get it. SELL! Sell everything. Sell your cars, your house, your furniture, clothes and all your crap and take that money and go see the world.

JACK: Yeah, well, I tell you what—why don't you do it and tell me how it works out.

JOHN: I've thought about it. Believe me. But I'm too old.

JACK: No you're not.

JOHN: Yes I am. I'm old and tired. It's too late to change course.

JACK: I don't agree.

JACK STARTS TO GET UP. JOHN REACHES
AND GRABS HIS ARM.

JOHN: Think about what I've said, GO OUT AND SEE THE WORLD. Experience it. Live a full life down to the last second.

JACK: OK, uh sure thing John. I'll think about it. *(looks at watch)* But right now, I've got some work here that I need to finish up. *(gets up pours coffee out and makes towards his desk)*.

JOHN: *(talking after him)* Ok Jack. Go on then. Go up the hill and fetch a pail of water. Get to work. Don't listen to me. Just keep on

working for the next 20, 30 years. The world keeps turning. And next thing you know you wake up one morning and you're dead. Dead as a doornail. *(pause, voice lowering as Jack walks off. Folds the paper in front of him and slaps it on the table. Lets out a big sigh.)* Fuck! Nobody listens to an old man.

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT 1, Scene 3:
Friday AM

(JACK ENTERS OFFICES AND TURNS LIGHTS ON. HE WALKS TO HIS CUBICLE AND IS PLACING HIS BRIEFCASE ON THE DESK AND TURNING ON HIS COMPUTER WHEN HE HEARS A LOUD DISTURBANCE COMING FROM THE FRONT DOOR. HE PEERS OVER THE EDGE OF HIS CUBICLE (PRAIRIE DOGGIN') TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON. JOHN HAS COME IN THE DOOR CURSING. HE IS DISHEVELLED AND HIS CLOTHES ARE DIRTY. HE GOES TO THE BREAK ROOM TO GET SOME WATER. JACK COMES OUT TO CHECK ON HIM.)

JACK: Hey! What's going on?

JOHN: (*finishes his glass of water*) Fucking goose.

JACK: What?

JOHN: Damn goose out there attacked me.

JACK: Attacked you? Jesus. How, I mean why did it attack you?

JOHN: Hell I don't know. I didn't do anything. I was minding my own business walking by the pond out there coming in to work and the sonofabitch came out of the bushes charging at me squawking like hell, chomping its beak and flapping its wings.

JACK: Wow.

JOHN: Yeah. Fucker knocked me down and started head butting me.

JACK: The goose head butted you?

JOHN: Uh huh. Scared the hell outta me. I didn't know what to do. Finally I made a fist and started slugging at his head. Missed a couple then landed one and he squawked and kinda staggered back and I kicked the crap out of him.

JACK: Did you kill him?

JOHN: No, but I put some hurt on him. I kicked him in the chest and he screamed or squawked or whatever they do and then he ran off.

JACK: Oh man. *(pause)* Are you ok?

JOHN: Yeah. Fine, I'm fine. Just need to sit down and catch my breath for a minute or two.

JACK: Good idea. Here. *(pulls a chair out for him and refills his glass with some water)*

JOHN: Thanks. *(shaking his head)*. A goose. Attacked by killer goose. Can you believe that? I'll get him. I'll cook his fucking goose.

JACK: *(looking at John)*. Say, uh...?

JOHN: What?

JACK: You're looking kinda pale. I really think you should go to the emergency room. Have 'em check you over? I could take you.

JOHN: No, hell no. *(gets up)* I'm alright.

JACK: Ok. Well call out if you need anything.

JOHN: Ok. *(starts walking away, stops and turns)*. Hey!

JACK: Hey.

JOHN: Did you?

JACK: Did I what?

JOHN: You know.

JACK: No sir, Im afraid I don't.

JOHN: Did you make love to your wife?

JACK: *(chuckles)* Maybe.

JOHN: That means no! Why didn't you make love to her?

JACK: I was tired. (*beat*) She was tired.

JOHN: Tired? Wha--. How old are you?

JACK: 33

JOHN: And too tired for sex. (*shaking his head*) Man when I was your age, my wife and I made love every night and three times on Sunday.

JACK: Congratulations. Sounds like a good time.

JOHN: Listen, today is Friday so you don't have to work tomorrow and there's no excuses. You should make love to your wife tonight, tomorrow morning, tomorrow night and three times on Sunday.

JACK: Ok, I'll try.

JOHN: Don't try. Do it.

JACK: If you insist.

JOHN: I do. And then report back to me on Monday.

JACK: Do you want me to film it?

JOHN. No. Goddamnit.

JACK: John?

JOHN: Yeah?

JACK: Didn't we have this conversation yesterday?

JOHN: What?

JACK: We had the very same conversation. And you know what? You were right. You said something about Déjà vu the other day. Here it is.

SILENCE. JOHN IS PUZZLED.

JOHN: What the hell are you talking about son? Just do what I tell you to do, ok?

JACK: Alright alright! I promise to make love to my wife.

JOHN: Good. Now get to work, son! I'm going to wash up. *(turns and walks away)* Godamighty! These young people. Too tired for sex? You'd think he's been working in the coal mines all day. *(John exits to stage left for restroom. Sounds of toilet flushing water running and towels pulled down from a towel dispenser off to that side of the stage and then we hear John's voice).* What-What the hell? What is this? Goddamn goose shit! Sonofabitch. I'm going to strangle that damn bird. I'll roast his ass. Just like the nursery rhyme—*(starts humming it and then breaks out in song)*. Christmas is coming. The goose is getting fat. I'm going to stick a butcher knife in the big bird's back!

(JOHN ENTERS BACK FROM STAGE LEFT HUMMING THE GOOSE RYHME. SUDDENLY HE BECOMES QUIET AND BEGINS RUBBING HIS SHOULDER. HE GOES TO THE BREAK ROOM TO GET SOME WATER. HE IS LEANING OVER THE SINK AND HE'S KINDA WOBBLY. HE DRINKS SOME WATER AND DROPS THE GLASS. HE GASPS, CLUTCHES AT HIS CHEST AND FALLS TO THE FLOOR. JACK HEARS THE COMMOTION, STANDS AND PEERS OVER THE EDGE OF HIS CUBICLE. HE SEES JOHN AND RUSHES OUT TO HIS SIDE.)

JACK: *(yelling out)* NORM! NORM! Help!

NORM: *(running out)* What? What's going on here?

JACK: It's John, I think he's having a heart attack. *(Jack kneels down at John's side and shakes him a little)* John, John, wake up. *(no response. Jack checks John's vitals. He begins CPR).*

(NORM GOES TO HIS OFFICE TO CALL 911 AND THEN RUSHES BACK TO THE SCENE. AFTER SEVERAL MOMENTS OF TRYING TO REVIVE HIM, JOHN IS NOT COMING AROUND. PARAMEDICS ARRIVE AND TAKE OVER. THEY ATTEMPT TO REVIVE JOHN BUT THEY ARE UNSUCCESSFUL. THE SENIOR PARAMEDIC (PARAMEDIC #1) LOOKS AT THE OTHER PARAMEDIC AND SHAKES HIS HEAD.)

PARAMEDIC #1: *(turns to Norm and Jack)* I'm very sorry.

NORM: Is he dead?

PARAMEDIC #1: (*nods his head*)

NORM: Heart attack?

PARAMEDIC #1: Appears to be a massive myocardial infarction.

NORM: What's that?

PARAMEDIC #1: A heart attack.

NORM: Why didn't you say so?

PARAMEDIC #1: I did.

PARAMEDIC #2: (*walking away a bit*) I'll call the coroner.

PARAMEDIC #1 PUTS BLANKET OVER
JOHN'S HEAD.

NORM: A heart attack? Jesus Christ! He was 14 days from retirement.

LIGHTS DOWN

Act 1, Scene 4

Friday noon.

(NORM AND CORONER PANTOMIME TALKING OVER JOHN'S BODY LAYING ON A GURNEY. CORONER HANDS NORM A CARD AND SHAKES HIS HAND. CORONER MOTIONS TO PARAMEDICS AND THEY WHEEL THE BODY OUT WITH THE CORONER FOLLOWING. AMBULANCE SIREN GOES OFF A FEW MOMENTS LATER.)

NORM: (*standing at door watching them drive off. Shakes his head.*). Strange. Why would they turn on the siren? He's dead. (*pause*) Huh! Hmmm-- I better call his wife. Jesus, I can't believe this. What am I going to tell her? (*pause, shaking his head*) Damn it! Of all places, why'd he have to go and die here?

(NORM TURNS AND BEGINS WALKING TOWARDS HIS OFFICE. HE IS MUMBLING TO HIMSELF AND LOOKING DOWN AS HE WALKS. JACK IS STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OFFICES STARING OFF VACANTLY. NORM BUMPS INTO HIM. HE IS STARTLED AND JUMPS BACK A LITTLE.)

NORM: Jack! What the hell? What are you doing? (*with no response from Jack, Norm calls out louder*). Jack?

JACK: Yes?

NORM: Are you ok?

JACK: Yes.

NORM: Sure?

JACK: Yes.

NORM: What are you doing?

JACK: I was just thinking. (*pause*) Are they gone?

NORM: The paramedics and coroner?

JACK: Yes, them.

NORM: Well yeah, they just left.

JACK: Hmm. (*pause*) It almost seems absurd.

NORM: Huh?

JACK: With John I mean. He was 2 weeks from retirement.

NORM: Yeah it doesn't make sense.

JACK: Guy works for 40 years and his heart explodes days before retirement. Seems some kinda cruel joke.

NORM: Yeah. Life isn't fair sometimes. Hmm, ok, well look, I have to go call John's wife now. If you need me, I'll be in my office.

(*starts walking away*)

JACK: What are you going to tell her?

NORM

I don't know you know? What can I tell her? I'll tell her he died here in the offices this morning. I'll tell her I'm very sorry. I, I, I don't know- Goddamnit. What do I tell her????..... I don't know. I – Goddamn, *This might be* be the shittiest day of my life.

(NORM GOES INTO HIS OFFICE, PICKS UP THE PHONE AND STARTS TO DIAL. HE LOOKS OUT AND SEES JACK IS STILL STANDING IN SAME SPOT. HE STANDS UNDECIDEDLY AND THEN HANGS UP PHONE AND GOES BACK TO JACK'S SIDE.)

NORM: Say, uh Jack?

JACK: Yes.

NORM: Listen, are you sure everything's ok?

JACK: Yes.

NORM: (*beat*) Ok then. Hey, I tell you what, considering all that's happened here this morning, why don't you take off the rest of the day? Go home and get some rest.

JACK: Now.

NORM: Yes, now.

JACK: But I need to finish that job we talked about yesterday.

NORM: It can wait. I promise. Listen, I want you to take off the rest of the day, ok? Out of respect for John. Go home. Take it easy. I'll see you on Monday.

JACK: Ok, if you say so.

NORM: Yes, I say so. In fact, I insist. Here come on. *(he gathers Jack's jacket and briefcase out of the cubicle. Jack is moving towards his computer.)* Forget the computer son, I'll save your work and shut it down.

JACK: Ok, thanks.

NORM: You're welcome. Now then come along. *(leading him to the front door, pauses at door)* Jack?

JACK: Yes?

NORM: You're ok, aren't you?

JACK: Yes, I'm ok. *(pause)* Are you ok?

NORM: Yes I am.

JACK: Please give my condolences to his wife.

NORM: I will.

JACK: 40 years. It's very sad.

NORM: Yes it is.

JACK: Well I'll go now. Goodbye.

NORM: Goodbye. *(as Jack starts out the door, Norm stops him)*
Wait!

JACK: *(turns)*

NORM: Hold up, I want to give you something. *(Norm goes to his*

office and comes back with a gold pen.) The company bought this for John for his retirement. Here, you take it. Something to remember him by.

JACK: (*looking at the pen*) But what about his wife, shouldn't you give it to her?

NORM: We bought him a gold watch too. Of course, I'm going to give her the watch but I don't think she'd care about a pen. And John would have been ok with me giving it to you. You worked with him the closest. You were probably the only friend he had here. I never saw him talk with anyone else.

JACK: Yeah I guess you're right. He was kind of a loner.

NORM: Here.

JACK: (*takes pen and looks at it*) Thank you. You know John was cranky but I'm going to miss him.

NORM: Me too.

JACK: Hmm, well I'll see you later.

NORM: Ok, bye.

JACK: Bye.

(JACK EXITS THROUGH FRONT DOOR.
NORM GOES TO OFFICE TO MAKE CALL.
DOOR OPENS AND JACK RUSHES BACK IN.
NORM IS DIALING THE PHONE AND JACK
CALLS OUT)

JACK: Norm. Wait!

NORM: (*hanging up phone*)

JACK: Wait. Maybe you shouldn't call. You should go to their house to tell her. This isn't the kinda news to give over the phone you know.

NORM: Hmmm, yes. Yes. You're absolutely right. Someone should be there.

JACK: I can go with you if you want.

NORM: Ok ok...wait- no. I mean that's not necessary. I'll tell my wife and have her go with me. Yes. That's how we will do it. My wife will know how to console her. Ah yes this is it. Thank you Jack. Thank you my boy. I was shaking like a leaf when I started dialing his home.

JACK: Much better like this.

NORM: Definitely. Ok very good. Now run along and go home and rest. I'll contact you with the funeral arrangements.

JACK: Ok. (pause,,looking around). So long.

NORM: So long.

(JACK EXITS. NORM PREPARES TO CLOSE
UP THE OFFICES.)

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT 1, Scene 5:

Friday- a few minutes later

(LIGHTS COME UP AT FRONT OF STAGE AS JACK COMES OUT OF OFFICES. REST OF STAGE IS DARK. JACK TAKES A FEW STEPS AND THEN STOPS TO ADMIRE HIS NEW GOLD PEN. SUDDENLY THE GOOSE THAT HAS GONE BERZERK COMES RUSHING OUT FROM STAGE RIGHT AND RUNS AT JACK. JACK STANDS STILL. THE GOOSE JUMPS UP AND FLYS INTO HIM KNOCKING HIM DOWN. THE GOOSE IS FLAPPING ITS WINGS VIOLENTLY AND STRIKING JACK WITH ITS BEAK. JACK STRUGGLES WITH IT UNTIL HE FINALLY MANAGES TO GRAB THE GOOSE BY THE NECK. THE GOOSE IS SQUAWKING AND FLAPPING ITS WINGS VIOLENTLY. JACK IS FRANTICALLY REACHING AROUND WITH HIS FREE HAND UNTIL HE FEELS THE GOLD PEN. HE GRABS IT IN HIS HAND AND PROCEEDS TO STAB IT IN THE GOOSE'S HEAD OVER AND OVER UNTIL THE PEN IS STUCK THERE. JACK RELEASES THE GOOSE WHICH PROCEEDS TO RUNNING AROUND CHAOTICALLY LIKE THE PROVERBIAL CHICKEN WITH ITS HEAD CUT OFF. FINALLY IT FALLS TO FLOOR IN DEATH THROES AND DIES. JACK HAS RECOVERED AND HE WALKS OVER AND STANDS OVER IT BRIEFLY. HE KICKS IT. THEN HE REACHES DOWN AND PULLS THE PEN OUT OF ITS HEAD. HE WIPES THE PEN OFF ON HIS PANTS AND EXITS TO STAGE RIGHT.)

(**NOTE:** THE GOOSE COULD BE PLAYED BY A SMALL CHILD IN A GOOSE OUTFIT. THE NECK AND HEAD OF THE GOOSE COULD BE A RUBBERY THING WITH A SPONGE ON THE END. PRECAUTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE CHILD PLAYING THE GOOSE)

LIGHTS OUT

ACT 1, Scene 6

Friday – mid afternoon

(JACK IS WALKING UP TO HIS FRONT DOOR. PULLS OUT KEYS AND DROPS THEM. HEARS MOANING NOISES AND FOLLOWS IT TO THE WINDOW OF HIS BEDROOM. PEEKS OVER THE WINDOW SILL AND BECOMES ENRAGED. FINDS A BIG ROCK AND HURLS IT AT THE WINDOW. SHREIKING AND SCREAMS COME FROM INSIDE. JACK PULLS UP THE WINDOW AND CLIMBS IN. A MAN IN UNDERWEAR IS SEEN RUNNING OUT THE BACK DOOR CLUTCHING HIS CLOTHES. JACK PURSUES.)

LIGHTS DOWN, CURTAINS

ACT 2, Scene 1

Friday- night; a road at the edge of town

(CURTAINS UP TO DARKENED STAGE. SOUNDS OF STORM-- WIND, THUNDER AND LIGHTNING. CAR HEADLAMPS ZIGZAG ACROSS STAGE AND AUDIENCE, SOUND OF SCREAMING TIRES AND CAR CRASHING. A FIGURE STAGGERS IN FROM STAGE LEFT AND COLLAPSES.)

(A FEW SECONDS LATER ANOTHER CAR IS COMING {IMPLIED FROM STAGE RIGHT}, LIGHTS REVEAL A TORTOISE IN ROAD. THE SECOND CAR SLOWS DOWN AND PULLS OVER TO STOP, DOORS OPENING AND SLAMMING. ANGEL AND AMBER EMERGE FROM STAGE RIGHT. ANGEL LOOKS BOTH WAYS, RETRIEVES THE TORTOISE AND CARRIES HIM TO SAFETY AS AMBER WATCHES.)

ANGEL: There you go big guy. You'll be alright now.

(CARS ARE COMING, SOUNDS OF TRAFFIC, CAR HORN HONKS. AMBER SCREAMS AND JUMPS AWAY FROM THE ROAD.)

AMBER: (*flipping a bird*) Asshole! (*pause, looks around*) Come on, let's get outta here. (*she turns to walk back towards car-stage right- and trips over Jack*). What the! Woo Hoo,,,What have we here?

ANGEL: What is it?

AMBER: It's a fella. (*she kneels down, quickly rummages around and pulls his wallet out of his pants pocket, looks in it and puts it down her pants*). Oooh ya, a looker too,,, prime rib and top shelf. Lookie lookie!

ANGEL: Oh my, he IS a hunk. (*kneels down to take a closer look*). Poor baby, he's all banged up.

AMBER: (*kneels down beside him*) Jesus! (*waving a hand and making a face of disgust, she turns away*) Stinks of whiskey and vomit.

ANGEL: He's hurt.

AMBER: Yeah, well he's all yours. (*looks him over and takes off his wedding ring*)

ANGEL: (*seeing her*) Hey, hey, hey--

AMBER: He won't miss it.

ANGEL: You are so dumb. Put it back!

AMBER: Go to hell!

ANGEL: You got a head full o' rocks and a heart o' stone.

AMBER: Shut the hell up. I'll give you a stone. (*reaches up to JACK's shoulder*)

ANGEL: (*pushes her hand back*) Back off.

AMBER: Bitch.

ANGEL: (*ignoring her, holds JACK's head to her breast as he stirs. Brushes his hair with her hand. Rubbing him*) There we go baby doll. There now... take it easy.

JACK: (*regains consciousness*) Where—where am I?

ANGEL: You ran off the road.

AMBER: (*taking flask out of purse*) Here ya go handsome, take a little snort.

JACK: (*takes a swig*)

AMBER: That's good. There now, that's a good boy, take another.

JACK: (*another swig*) God, my head is pounding...

ANGEL: You got banged up a little but you'll be ok. Here ya go, come along, we're gonna take care of you.

JACK: (*groans as they help him up*)

AMBER: Wait up now, one more to get your sea legs back. (*puts flask to his mouth*)

JACK: (*as he takes a swig, she tilts it up and up and holds it there*)

AMBER: Yes, there ya go, that's good my lovely. Sweet brandy to warm your cockles.

ANGEL: (*pushing flask away brusquely*) That's enough.

(THEY ALL WALK OFF STAGE RIGHT TO THE PROSTITUTES' CAR. THE GIRLS ARE ON EITHER SIDE OF JACK HELPING HIM ALONG.)

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT 2, Scene 2

Saturday AM - early

(LIGHTS UP TO REVEAL A GRIMY HOTEL ROOM.
JACK IN BED WITH THE TWO GIRLS.
ANGEL IS HOLDING HIS HEAD IN HER
LAP. JOAN IS LIGHTING A CIGARETTE
AND PLAYING WITH THE REMOTE.)

ANGEL: What's your name handsome?

JACK: My name?

ANGEL: Yeah

JACK: Hmm.. I,,uh,,,,,my God, this is crazy. I can't remember.
I mean I don't know my own name.

ANGEL: (*pauses, looks at him*) Well you need a name. (*pause*).
You're quite handsome you know. And you were good. I'll call
you Romeo.

JACK: I don't understand. I can't remember my own name. This
is crazy. (*jumps up to look through his pants*) Give me a second.
I'll get my wallet.

ANGEL: Don't worry about it Romeo, this one's on the house.

AMBER: Speak for your self.

ANGEL: You got yours.

JACK: Where's my wallet? I need my wallet, my driver's license
and credit cards you know. (*pause*). Jesus, I can't believe this.
Uhhn, (*collapsing on bed rubbing his head*), Im not feeling right.

ANGEL: (*stroking him*) There there, take it easy. Lay back a
minute.

JACK: I can't remember my name. I don't know how I got here. I
can't remember anything.

AMBER: You ran off the road and wrapped your little car around a
tree.

JACK: I did?

ANGEL: Yeah and we pulled over and found you.

JACK: Oh yeah, (pause), and, uh, there was something in the road that made me run off.

ANGEL: It was a big tortoise. He was huge. You must have swerved to miss him.

JACK: Yes. Yes, ok. But how did I end up here.

ANGEL: We brought you here. You were hurt.

(AMBER IS UP AND PUTTING HER DRESS ON. SHE LIGHTS ANOTHER CIGARETTE AND TOSSES THE PACK TO ANGEL. ANGEL LIGHTS ONE AND HANDS IT TO JACK.)

JACK: No thanks.

(AMBER REACHES FOR HER FLASK AND TURNS IT UP TO HER MOUTH. ITS EMPTY. SHE SHAKES IT.)

AMBER: (*pause, looks around for keys*) Ok, well I'm going to make a liquor run. Anybody want anything?

ANGEL: Get another pack of cigarettes. (*pause*) Romeo, you want anything?

JACK: Yeah, some aspirin.

AMBER: (*grabbing keys*) Back in a jiffy.

JACK: (*struggling to get out of bed*) This is crazy.

ANGEL: (*stroking him*) Don't worry. It'll come back to you.

JACK: I feel like I've been hit by a freight train.

ANGEL: Have you ever been hit by a train?

JACK: No, of course not.

ANGEL: (*smiles*) So how do you know what it feels like?

JACK: Huh?

ANGEL: How can you say you feel like you've been hit by a freight train if you've never been hit by a freight train and you really don't know what it feels like to be hit by a freight train?

JACK: I don't know. *(gets out of bed and goes to restroom)*

ANGEL: You took a pretty nasty goose egg on your noggin. You should take it easy you know? I tell you what, we'll all clean up and me and Lucy and me will take you to the hospital to have 'em check you over.

(FRONT DOOR IS THROWN OPEN. AMBER RUSHES IN, SLAMS DOOR SHUT, LOCKS ALL THE LOCKS, AND TURNS OUT THE LIGHTS. CROUCHES DOWN AT THE SIDE OF THE DOOR.)

ANGEL: *(whispers)* Hey, what's going on?

AMBER: *(holding finger to her lips)*

(A SECOND LATER, THE PIMP NAMED TINY KICKS THE DOOR IN.)

TINY: Here's TINY!

(THE GIRLS SCREAM. JACK COMES TO THE BATHROOM DOOR.)

JACK: Who are you?

TINY: I'm Tiny Tim! *(pause)* Who the fuck are you?

JACK: I,,I,,I-

TINY: *(stutters)* Wh—wh-- What's your name Johnny?

JACK: I don't know.

TINY: *(chuckling)* 'I don't know'???

JACK: Look mister, I don't know you.

TINY: No?

JACK: NO!

TINY: No you don't. And that's ok. You don't need to know me. You don't need to know anything. Oh. Wait. I forgot. You do need to know something.

JACK: Like what?

TINY: You must know that it's time.

JACK: Time for what?

TINY: Time to settle up.

JACK: Settle what?

TINY: *(chuckling, lumbering towards easy chair, sits and pulls out cig, lights it and lets out a big sigh)*

JACK: Get the hell outta here mister. I don't have any business with you.

TINY: *(takes a seat)* Oh but you do Johnny. Let's see now, 2 girls, all night, that's gonna be a grand. And we don't take credit cards. Pay up and me and the girls will be on our merry way.

JACK: Fuck off.

TINY: You had the fuck. You had the fun. Now you have to pay. You should know by now- No fuck is for free, son. There's always a price.

JACK: *(quiet)*

TINY: *(blows out a smoke ring, looking straight ahead)* Now Johnny,, *(pause, looking at watch)*. I'll give you exactly 10 seconds to hand over one thousand dollars.

JACK: *(reaching for phone)*

TINY: TEN! *(gets up)* NINE! *(walking towards Jack)* EIGHT! SEVEN- ONE! *(jerks the phone out of the wall)*

JACK: *(slams the phone receiver against Tiny's head)*

TINY: *(grabs Jack's hand and taking the phone receiver out)*. That's not nice! *(throws Jack against the wall. picks him up and slugs him. Jack falls to the floor. Jack sputters and gasps for breath.)*

ANGEL: (*screams*) STOP. Leave him alone.

TINY: Shut your pie-hole sweets.

ANGEL: He doesn't have any money Tiny. (*pause*) We picked him up.

TINY: (*pause, looking at the girls*) What's this?

AMBER: Angel did. She pulled over. I told her to keep going.

ANGEL: He was hurt. He needed help.

TINY: (*looks at Jack*) I'm not buying it.

(JACK IS STARTING TO GET UP, TINY GRABS HIM BY THE HAIR AND SLUGS HIM. ANGEL JUMPS IN TO TRY TO HELP JACK.)

TINY: Back up bitch.

(TINY BACKHANDS HER AND SHE IS THROWN TO THE FLOOR SCREAMING. IN THAT INSTANT JACK SLAMS AN UPPERCUT TO TINY'S BALLS AND TINY DOUBLES OVER AND DROPS TO HIS KNEES. JACK STANDS UP, WOBBLER A LITTLE, STEADIES HIMSELF ON THE CHAIR AND TURNS AND KICKS TINY IN THE ASS. TINY FALLS FACE FIRST TO THE FLOOR. JACK PROCEEDS TO STOMP ON HIS BACK WITH HIS BARE FOOT. HE STANDS OVER HIM. HE STOPS, OUT OF BREATH. HE TURNS TO THE GIRLS.)

JACK: Go! (*pause*). NOW!

AMBER: He'll kill us.

JACK: No he won't. Get dressed and go.

(THE GIRLS GET DRESSED QUICKLY. JACK SITS ON THE EDGE OF THE BED. ANGEL COMES AND SITS BY HIM. SHE RUBS HIS HEAD AND KISSES HIS CHEEK.)

ANGEL: (*smiles and kisses his head*) Here. (*hands him a napkin*) I'm Angel. Here's my phone. Call me sometime.

JACK: *(taking it and turns to her)* I will. *(he brushes her hair down with his hand)*

AMBER: *(waiting at the door)* Angel!!!.

ANGEL: Coming. *(she gets up and goes towards the door. Stops in doorway and comes back, leans over and kisses Jack on the lips)*

(THE GIRLS LEAVE AND JACK GOES INTO BATHROOM. HE PEES AND WASHES UP AND COMES TO DOORWAY OF BATHROOM RUBBING A TOWEL ON HIS FACE. COMES BACK INTO ROOM. DRESSES, PUTS HIS BOOTS ON AND IS STARTING TO LEAVE. TINY GRABS JACK'S ANKLE AND PULLS HIM DOWN. JACK STRUGGLES TO GET LOOSE BUT TINY IS HOLDING ONE OF HIS LEGS WITH BOTH HANDS. FINALLY JACK KICKS HIM IN THE FACE 3-4 TIMES WITH HIS FREE FOOT UNTIL TINY LETS GO. JACK STANDS UP. HE LEANS OVER AND ROLLS TINY OVER ON HIS BACK.)

JACK: You shouldn't have come here.

TINY: *(gurgling)* Mutherfucker. I'll kill you.

JACK: Lights out fatso!

(JACK LIFTS HIS FOOT UP AND STOMPS ON TINY'S FACE. HE LOOKS DOWN AT HIM AND HE DOES IT AGAIN AND AGAIN. (THIS ACTION SHOULD BE DONE BEHIND A CHAIR OR SOMETHING TO ALLOW FOR THE ILLUSION OF JACK STOMPING TINY'S HEAD IN.) JACK CONTINUES STOMPING UNTIL HE IS OUT OF BREATH. HE GOES TO THE CHAIR TO REST. HE STARES AT THE DEAD BODY OF TINY. HE CROUCHES DOWN AND TAKES CIGARETTES OUT OF TINY'S SHIRT POCKET AND REMOVES TINY'S WALLET AND CHAIN. HE SITS BACK DOWN AND PULLS A CIGARETTE OUT. HE LOOKS AT IT AND LIGHTS IT. HE TAKES A PUFF. HE TAKES ANOTHER LONGER ONE AND COUGHS. HE PULLS TINY'S DRIVER'S LICENSE OUT AND EXAMINES IT AND THROWS IT ON THE FLOOR. HE PULLS OTHER CARDS OUT AND THROWS THEM OUT. HE OPENS THE WALLET AND PULLS OUT

\$10,000. HE TAKES \$9,000, PUTS \$1000 BACK IN AND THROWS THE WALLET AT TINY. THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. JACK'S HEAD JERKS IN THAT DIRECTION.)

VOICE: Housekeeping!

JACK: *(pause)* Come back in an hour please.

VOICE: Si.

JACK: *(finishes cigarette, starts to get up, notices blood all over his shoe, retrieves wet towel from bathroom, cleans blood off of boot and tosses towel on Tiny's face)* Housekeeping, fatso!

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT 2, Scene 3:

Saturday AM – late morning

(DETECTIVE AND 2 POLICEMEN ARE IN THE HOTEL ROOM. THE INN-KEEPER IS STANDING IN THE DOORWAY. THE DETECTIVE IS LOOKING AROUND. HE PICKS UP TINY TIM'S DRIVERS LICENSE FROM FLOOR.)

DETECTIVE: Johnny Fisch, aka Tiny Tim. (*kicks him*) Hey Tiny, wake up buddy. (*chuckling*) Poor Tiny... Looks like karma finally caught up with you, eh?

INNKEEPER: You know him.

DETECTIVE: Knew him. (*pause*) Johnny Fisch aka Tiny Tim, pimp, drug dealer, hitman, wife beater. He beat a murder rap a couple years back. I had him, all the evidence in the world, gave it to the DA on a silver platter and Tiny slipped away on some bullshit technicality.

INNKEEPER: What are you going to do?

DETECTIVE: Nothing.

INNKEEPER: Nothing? What? You must do something. Look at this mess. Who's going to pay for this?

DETECTIVE: (*leans over and looks in Tiny's wallet, pulls out all the cash and hands it to the innkeeper*) Tiny is.

INNKEEPER: (*takes cash and leaves room*)

DETECTIVE: All right guys, take this sonofabitch down to the morgue and call in the clean up people.

POLICEMAN: Don't you want to get some prints and stuff.

DETECTIVE: No, not this time. This one's open and shut.

POLICEMAN: I don't understand.

DETECTIVE: You know who this was?

POLICEMAN: Yeah, Tiny Tim.

DETECTIVE: Right and so the way I see it this sonofabitch got what he deserved. And some pilgrim out there did us a great big favor. In fact he did humanity a favor.

POLICEMAN: But look at his face. What's the coroner gonna say?

DETECTIVE: *(pause)* Wait a minute.

POLICEMAN: What?

DETECTIVE: How many floors in this fleabag?

POLICEMAN: Four

DETECTIVE: Four, huh? *(goes out the door, looks up, comes back in)* You know if I didn't know any better, I'd say Tiny here took a swan dive off the fourth floor balcony. *(pause)* And landed on his face.

POLICEMAN: He did?

DETECTIVE: Yeah.

POLICEMAN: Why'd he do that?

DETECTIVE: On accounta his girlfriend left him and he was so heartbroken.

POLICEMAN: Poor guy.

DETECTIVE: Yes, it's a terrible tragedy. Tiny died of a broken heart. *(pause-looking down at him)* And a broken face.

POLICEMAN: *(looks at him vacantly)* How are we going to make it look like a suicide?

DETECTIVE: Drag him out there on the pavement, pour some Sirachi sauce out by whatever's left of his head and take some pictures. Go up to that fourth floor room right up there the one directly above with the balcony. Open the door to the balcony and leave it open and then take some pictures of the open balcony door.

POLICEMAN: Huh?

DETECTIVE: You heard me.

POLICEMAN: Where am I gonna get Sirachi sauce?

DETECTIVE: Look in my car on the dash.

POLICEMAN: Ok. *(starts to leave)*

DETECTIVE: Wait. One more thing.

POLICEMAN: *(turns and comes back)*

DETECTIVE: Hold on. Im going to give you a letter. I want you to put it on the bed up there and take some pictures of it.

POLICEMAN: Ok, whatever you say.

DETECTIVE: *(goes to bedside table and retrieves hotel stationery and pen and says the words as he writes them)*

... 'My dearest Bunny Muffin,
You pulled out my heart and ripped it to pieces
You stomped it to hell and back
Just like I did to ol' Whitey back in '69.
I loved you and made you my queen.
You made me your dog. It's a cruel world.
Made more cruel by your cruelty.
At least I'll never have to suffer no more.
I probably won't see you again but please
Know that I love you tender and
I'll always and forever be your only
Teddy Bear..... Goodbye my only Love,
Yours truly forever,
Tiny

DETECTIVE: *(holds letter out to Policeman)* Here. Here it is.
Put this on the bed up there and take the pictures. Do it now.

POLICEMAN: Ok. *(exits)*

DETECTIVE: *(stands, straightens himself, looks at Tiny and shakes his head.)* Goddamn, you are one ugly bastard! *(Looks in mirror. Straightens his hair. Talking to himself).* Hmm, and I am one damn good looking guy! Hair's getting a little long. I think I'll get a haircut today. *(starts to leave, stops and turns)* Nice seeing you again Tiny. Say hello to Beelzebub.

CURTAIN

ACT 3, Scene 1

Saturday noon

(INTERIOR. BARBER SHOP. JACK WALKS IN AND SITS IN BARBER CHAIR. HIS FACE IS SWOLLEN.)

STYLIST: Hello.

JACK: Hello.

STYLIST: How do you like your hair.

JACK: Give me an old fashion.

STYLIST: Old fashion? I'm not familiar with that one.

JACK: Long on top and tapered down around the sides and back.

STYLIST: Oh you mean a fade.

JACK: Yeah sure, whatever you say.

STYLIST: Say, you're eye's swollen. (*she touches it softly*)

JACK: Yeah I know. I slipped and fell in the bathroom this morning.

STYLIST: Does it hurt?

JACK: Nah, it's ok.

STYLIST: Ok, well be careful darling.

JACK: Thanks, I will.

STYLIST: (*begins cutting*) Did you hear the news?

JACK: No.

STYLIST: A pimp was found dead at the MoonWinx Hotel this morning.

JACK: Is that so?

STYLIST: Yeah, he was laying on the pavement in front of the hotel face down in a pool of blood.

JACK: *(pause)* On the pavement?

STYLIST: Yeah, they think it was a suicide. Cops found a note in a room on the fourth floor. Girlfriend jilted him or something. The window was open. They think he jumped.

JACK: Really?

STYLIST: Yeah but my friend Suzie said she saw the crime scene. She saw the body. Said the pimp was a great big fat guy and his face was all smashed in.

JACK: Oh, well he must've landed on his face, huh?

STYLIST: No, I think something else happened.

JACK: Yeah?

STYLIST: Yeah.

JACK: Like what?

STYLIST: I think somebody smashed his face with a baseball bat.

JACK: That's not nice.

STYLIST: No it isn't.

JACK: Well I doubt he was a nice man.

STYLIST: *(chuckles)* Probably not. *(finishes up, holding mirror up)* How do you like it?

JACK: I like it. A good haircut will make a man feel like a million dollars and that's how I feel right now.

STYLIST: Good. *(brushes hair off his shoulders and face. Stops and gently touches his swollen eye)*. Mind you put an icepack on that, ok?

JACK: I will. *(gets up)*. How much do I owe you?

STYLIST: Its 20 dollars.

(JACK REACHES INTO BILLFOLD. AS HE IS
RETRIEVING A \$100 BILL, THE DETECTIVE WALKS

IN. JACK PAUSES, THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND NOD. JACK HANDS THE BILL TO STYLIST. DETECTIVE GETS IN BARBER CHAIR. STUDIES JACK. STYLIST IS MAKING CHANGE.)

DETECTIVE: You ok?

JACK: *(turns)* Huh?

DETECTIVE: *(pointing to his own eye)*

JACK: *(touches swollen eye)*. Oh, that, yeah I just had a little accident.

DETECTIVE: Slip and fall.

JACK: Yeah, slip and fall.

DETECTIVE: Call Alexander Shunnarhk.

JACK: Who?

DETECTIVE: You know, the billboard attorney.

JACK: Oh that guy.

DETECTIVE: Slip and Fall? One call! *(pause)* Frozen limas.

JACK: What?

DETECTIVE: *(points at his own eye)* Bag of frozen limas-- brings the swelling down.

JACK: Frozen limas, huh?

DETECTIVE: Yep.

JACK: Ok, thanks for tip.

DETECTIVE: De nada.

STYLIST: Here's your change sweetheart.

JACK: *(looking in mirror)* Ok. *(takes change and hands her a \$20)*

STYLIST: Thank you. Please come again.

JACK: I will.

DETECTIVE: Have nice day mister.

JACK: *(nods)* You too. *(exit stage right)*

(STYLIST PUTTING APRON ON DETECTIVE.)

DETECTIVE: That wasn't no slip and fall.

STYLIST: No?

DETECTIVE: No m'am. That boy's been in a fight.

STYLIST: I wondered.

DETECTIVE: Do you know him?

STYLIST: No. It's his first visit.

DETECTIVE: He tell you his name?

STYLIST: No. Why do you ask?

DETECTIVE: I feel like I know him from somewhere. He looks familiar.

STYLIST: Well I can't help you. He didn't give me his name and he paid cash.

DETECTIVE: Hmmm.

STYLIST: So what'll it be?

DETECTIVE: Give me a flattop.

STYLIST: Yes sir. *(turns to get her clippers)*. Say did you hear about the dead pimp down at the MoonWinx?

DETECTIVE: I sure did.

LIGHTS DOWN AND CURTAINS

ACT 3, Scene 2
Saturday afternoon

(INTERIOR. FINE CLOTHING STORE FOR MEN.)

JACK: *(walks in and looks around)*

STORE CLERK: *(looking Jack up and down, all haughty and arrogant)*. May I help you sir?

JACK: I need a suit.

STORE CLERK: *(looking him up and down with a look of disdain)*
Have you tried the Sunset Mall?

JACK: No. I came here. Why would I go to the Sunset Mall?

STORE CLERK: *(condescending)* The Men's Wearhouse, sir. It's at the mall.

JACK: Is that so?

STORE CLERK: Yes.

JACK: Well what's wrong with this place? Do you sell suits?

STORE CLERK: Yes but the Men's Wearhouse may be better suited to your budget, sir.

JACK: What do you know about my budget? *(pause)*
Nothing, huh? But apparently you know a lot about this Men's Wearhouse place.

STORE CLERK: *(coughs, embarrassed)*

JACK: Maybe you worked there?

STORE CLERK: *(clears throat nervously)*

JACK: Are you in the habit of profiling your customers.

STORE CLERK: I'm a professional sir.

JACK: A professional? Professional what?

STORE CLERK: I am a men's clothing consultant.

JACK: Say, I got an idea. Why don't you try The Men's Wearhouse?

STORE CLERK: Sir, our suits start at \$2000.

JACK: Are you paid on commission mister?

STORE CLERK: Yes sir.

JACK: Good. Cause you're about to lose a very large commission.

STORE CLERK: Sir-

JACK: Sir?

STORE CLERK: Sir-

JACK: Yes.

STORE CLERK: Sir-

JACK: Sir?

STORE CLERK: Sir-

JACK: Me?

STORE CLERK: You-

JACK: You?

STORE CLERK: Me- (flustered)

JACK: Sir?

STORE CLERK: Yes.

JACK: Were you about to say something.

STORE CLERK: I'm afraid-

JACK: What are you afraid of?

STORE CLERK: I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

JACK: Im confused.

STORE CLERK: Confused, sir?

JACK: Yes, because when I came in you asked if you could help me-- Sir.

STORE CLERK: Yes.

JACK: Now you're asking me to leave- Sir.

STORE CLERK: Well-

JACK: But I really need your help. Will you help me now like you offered, sir?

STORE CLERK: I'll try.

JACK: Good. I'm afraid I'm going to need your help in locating the store manager.

STORE CLERK: Why do you need to see the store manager?

JACK: I'm afraid I'm unable to share that with you, sir.

STORE CLERK: I'm afraid he's very busy at the moment.

JACK: I'll wait.

STORE CLERK: I'll see if he can see you. May I ask your name, sir?

JACK: Yes you may.

STORE CLERK: What is your name?

(STORE MANAGER HAS BEEN STANDING IN CORNER LISTENING. HE COMES OVER AND INTERRUPTS.)

STORE MGR: What seems to be the problem here gentlemen?

JACK: Your salesman here doesn't to want a sale today.

STORE MGR: I'll be glad to assist you. (*turns to store clerk*) Gaylord will you please finish folding the underwear on that rack over there?

STORE CLERK: (*turns without saying anything*)

STORE MGR: Sir, if you will follow me, I'll show you our latest Armanis. I believe the European cut will fit you nicely.

JACK: Ok.

(LIGHTS DOWN BRIEFLY. AFTER A FEW SECONDS, SHOW JACK AT THE COUNTER WEARING A NEW SUIT, SHIRT, TIE AND SHOES....)

STORE MGR: (*punches the numbers in on a calculator*) The total comes to \$3995, sir.

(THE STORE CLERK IS MALINGERING NEARBY IN ANTICIPATION OF A DECLINED CREDIT CARD.)

JACK: Do you take cash?

STORE MGR: Yes we do.

JACK: (*pulls out bulging wallet and begins counting out \$100s*) 38, 39 and 40.

STORE MGR: (*hands him receipt and a \$5 bill*) Thank you for your business. It has been a pleasure.

JACK: Yes it has. You've been very helpful. And here's a small token of my appreciation. (*lays 6 \$100s on the counter*)

STORE MGR: Ah thank you but that's really not necessary, we are compensated with a generous commission structure.

JACK: I'm sure you are and you should be. But in the meantime, I insist that you keep this. You see this is the nicest outfit I've ever owned and without your assistance, it never would have happened.

STORE MGR: I'm happy that you are pleased. It is a very nice suit. Anytime you'd like to add to your wardrobe, please come back and see us.

JACK: I will. I definitely will.

STORE MGR: Have a great evening.

JACK: Thank you.

STORE MGR: Oh I almost forgot.

JACK: Yes?

STORE MANAGER: The clothes you wore in. Let me put them in a bag for you.

JACK: That's ok, I won't be needing them anymore. Give them to Gaylord. *(Jack turns to exit)*

STORE MANAGER: *(sees piece of paper with Angel's name on it on floor, runs towards exit with it)*. Excuse me, sir, you dropped this.

JACK: *(his voice from past the exit)*. What is it?

STORE MANAGER: A name and number. I think it's yours.

JACK: Hmm. Who- Oh yes. Thank you.

STORE MANAGER: You're very welcome.

LIGHTS AND CURTAIN

ACT 3, Scene 3

Saturday afternoon

(INTERIOR, DINER. JACK ENTERS AND SITS AT
END OF BAR. JIMMY THE DRUNK IS SITTING A
FEW SEATS AWAY. WAITRESS COMES OVER.)

WAITRESS: Coffee?

JACK: Yes please.

WAITRESS: (*pours him a coffee*) Haven't I seen you in here
before?

JACK: No, I've never been here.

WAITRESS: Well you look familiar. What's your name?

JACK: Romeo.

WAITRESS: (*chuckles*) Hello Romeo. I'm Juliette.

JACK: Hi Juliette.

WAITRESS: Here's a menu. I'll be back in a few minutes.

JACK: Ok.

JIMMY: I think she's specializing on you.

JACK: (*glances at Jimmy and then looks at menu*)

JIMMY: Say, ya got a nasty shiner there mister. Get in a fight

JACK: (*ignores him*)

JIMMY: I been in a fight or two. Got a couple o' teeth knocked
out up here. (*opens his mouth and points*). You hear about that
pimp what got his head smashed in? They say it was suicide. Say
he jumped. I dunno. Nasty business, pimpin. Maybe it was
sumthin else ya know? Maybe it wasn't suicide.

WAITRESS: Ok Romeo, what can I get you?

JACK: Steak, medium, salad with ranch, sweet potatoe fries.

WAITRESS: That's all.

JACK: Yes.

WAITRESS: Ok, I'll get your order in. You know, I'm sure I've seen you before.

JACK: Maybe.

WAITRESS: Romeo, huh?

JACK: Yep.

WAITRESS: What does Romeo do?

JACK: Nothing.

WAITRESS: You lose your job?

JACK: No.

WAITRESS: You don't work?

JACK: I used to.

WAITRESS: Retired?

JACK: No.

WAITRESS: You don't work, you're not retired and you're wearing an expensive suit. I don't get it.

JACK: I don't either.

WAITRESS: Oh, ok. (pause) I get it. Don't worry, I'll give you some space.

JACK: Its ok, you're not bothering me. In fact you can bother me all you want.

WAITRESS: (*quiet, studying him*)

JACK: I had an accident a yesterday and when I came to, I couldn't remember anything, not even my name.

WAITRESS: Amnesia? Holy cow. I've never met someone with amnesia. What about your id? I mean don't you have a wallet or

something with your name on it?

JACK: I lost it.

WAITRESS: Maybe you should go to the police station or the hospital or something.

JACK: Not the police. I've always felt uneasy around cops. I don't know why.

WAITRESS: I know the feeling. *(pause)* Listen, uh, if you don't have your wallet or any money, I can cover your coffee but I can't give you a free meal. The boss is a real jerk you know?

JACK: No, no, I have money. *(pulls out a wad of bills)*. I just don't have a wallet.

WAITRESS: *(whispering)* Romeo! What are you, nuts? Don't go waving a big roll around in here.

JACK: *(stuffs it back in his pocket)*

WAITRESS: So what are you going to do?

JACK: Do?

WAITRESS: Yeah. What are you going to do about this amnesia thing?

JACK: Nothing. *(pause, smiles)* I'm not worried about it.

WAITRESS: I'd be flipping out.

JACK: I know, I should be upset but somehow for some reason I'm not overly concerned. I've got money, I've got a new suit. I'm about to have a steak dinner and I'm talking with a beautiful lady right now.

WAITRESS: *(smiles, blushes)*

JACK: I'll be ok. I just need a good meal and a good night's sleep and then I'm sure everything will come back- *(stops, puts his hand to his head, grimacing in pain)*

WAITRESS: Hey, you ok?

JACK: My head. A migraine.

WAITRESS: (*reaches over and touches his shoulder*). Just a sec. I'll get a couple of tylenol and water.

JACK: Thanks.

JIMMY: Ya got a nice roll there mister. You been to the casino?

JACK: (*ignores him*)

JIMMY: Whasamatter mister, you don't like me?

JACK: (*irritated*) How'd you guess?

JIMMY: Ha! High and mighty, are ya? (*pause*). Well you can shove it. Cause I don't like you either.

WAITRESS: Here. Take these. (*hands him the water and tylenol*)

JACK: Thank you.

WAITRESS: It's nothing. Take it easy. Try to relax. I'll have your dinner out in a little bit.

JACK: (*nods*)

JIMMY: Yessir. She's sweet on you mister. I believe you could get some. If'n you wants some.

JACK: (*ignores him*)

JIMMY: Mister, I'm talking to you. (*pause*) What's wrong with you?

JACK: (*ignores him*)

JIMMY: I said you could get some. Don't you want any?

JACK: (*ignores him*)

JIMMY: Don't you like pussy?

JACK: (*ignores him*)

JIMMY: What are you some kinda faggot? Damn fag. Look at her. I bet she's got a sweet one.

WAITRESS: (*pouring more coffee for Jack*) Don't mind ol'

Jimmy. He's harmless.

JIMMY: Yeah baby doll. You shore smell sweet. I'd like to eat some-

JACK: That's it buddy. (*gets up*) Come on, you need some fresh air. (*reaches for him*)

JIMMY: Git yer filthy rookers off me, you faggot.

(JIMMY GETS UP AND SWINGS AND MISSES. JACK GRABS HIS ARM, TWISTS IT AND TURNS IT BEHIND THE GUY'S BACK AND ESCORTS HIM OUT.)

JIMMY: I'll kill ya.

(JACK COMES BACK IN A MOMENT LATER.)

WAITRESS: Thanks.

JACK: (nods)

WAITRESS: He comes here all the time. Boss runs him off and he comes back couple days later all weepy and apologizing.

JACK: Well I don't think he'll be coming back tonight.

(FRONT DOOR FLIES OPEN. JIMMY COMES IN WITH A BROKEN WHISKEY BOTTLE. RUSHES AT JACK. JACK PUSHES WAITRESS TO SAFETY.)

JIMMY: Faggot! I'll cut ya to ribbons.

(THEY GO AT EACH OTHER. DRUNK GUY IS SWINGING AND MISSING. WAITRESS GOES TO PHONE AND CALLS POLICE. JACK SLIPS AND THE DRUNK GUY IS STANDING OVER HIM. DRUNK GUY SWINGS THE BOTTLE AT HIM, JACK ROLLS OUT OF THE WAY AND KICKS THE DRUNK IN THE SHIN. THE DRUNK SCREAMS AND COLLAPSES. JACK GETS UP AND BRUSHES HIS SUIT AND PANTS. HE PUTS A \$50 ON THE COUNTER. HE STARTS FOR THE DOOR.)

WAITRESS: Hey, wait up. (*goes to him*). Leavin' so soon.

JACK: Yeah, I've had enough excitement for one night.

WAITRESS: What about your dinner?

JACK: Give it to the next person.

WAITRESS: I'm very sorry.

JACK: It's ok. Not your fault. He's just a filthy ol' drunk.

WAITRESS: He's disgusting.

JACK: You don't need to put up with people like that.

WAITRESS: Comes with the job.

JACK: Still.

WAITRESS: One day I'll be outta here.

JACK: *(reaches in his pocket and hands her five hundred)* Here.

WAITRESS: Huh? What's this? I can't take this.

JACK: It's for having to put up with trash like that.

WAITRESS: I can't take this.

JACK: Please.

WAITRESS: Thank you. Rent's coming due. It'll be a big help. Can't you stay a bit? I was hoping we might—

JACK: I need to go. (pause) I'd rather not deal with the cops.

WAITRESS: Ok.

JACK: I can't figure it out.

WAITRESS: What?

JACK: Everywhere I go lately it seems someone wants to hassle me. I don't bother anybody. I mind my own business and every time I turn around, there's some kook giving me a hard time-- big fat guy last night tried to kill me, the guy at the clothing store gave me a hard time and now this idiot.

WAITRESS: He didn't cut you did he?

JACK: No, I'm ok. But he's not. I think I broke his leg.

WAITRESS: Serves him right.

JACK: I better go. Take care.

WAITRESS: You too Romeo. *(pause, gives him a little kiss on cheek)* I hope everything works out for you.

JACK: Thanks. I'll be alright. *(turns to leave)*

WAITRESS: Wait. Here's my number. Call me if you need some help ok?

JACK: *(takes it)* Ok, thanks. Goodbye.

WAITRESS: Bye.

(JACK EXITS STAGE LEFT. A MOMENT LATER,
DETECTIVE AND POLICEMAN ENTER STAGE
RIGHT.)

DETECTIVE: What's going on here?

WAITRESS: Ol' Jimmy causing trouble officer.

DETECTIVE: Jesus, here we go again.

(WALKS OVER TO JIMMY. JIMMY IS MOANING
AND RUBBING HIS LEG.)

JIMMY: The sonofabitch broke my leg.

DETECTIVE: Jimmy Jimmy Jimmy. When will you learn.

JIMMY: What?

DETECTIVE: M'am will you call an ambulance?

JIMMY: The guy....where'd he go? He broke my Goddamn leg.

DETECTIVE: He broke your leg?

JIMMY: Yeah, its broken. Look.

DETECTIVE: Where?

JIMMY: Right there. (points)

DETECTIVE: Here? (*reaches down and grabs it*)

JIMMY: (*screams*) Ayyyyyeee, ow, ow. ow Stop it. Goddamnit.

DETECTIVE: Does that hurt? (*squeezes again*)

JIMMY: (*crying out in pain*). Yes, yes, oh oh oh oh oh. Fucking hell.

DETECTIVE: Ok, hmmm, well I'm not a doctor Jimmy but I'd say you got it right.

JIMMY: Huh?

DETECTIVE: Your leg, it's broken.

JIMMY: I told you it was. What are you gonna do about it?

DETECTIVE: We're going to get you an ambulance.

JIMMY: I don't want an ambulance.

DETECTIVE: You don't? What? You want to walk to the hospital?

JIMMY: NO!

DETECTIVE: NO? Well what do you want Jimmy?

JIMMY: I want you to arrest the bastard that broke my leg.

DETECTIVE: Someone did this to you? Are you sure?

JIMMY: Sure I'm sure.

DETECTIVE: I don't know. It's possible but anything's possible Jimmy. I mean in your condition, it's possible you passed out and fell.

JIMMY: Goddamnit I told you the bastard broke my leg. Everyone saw it. Ask 'em.

DETECTIVE: Did anyone see someone breaking Jimmy's leg?

WAITRESS: I didn't.

DETECTIVE: Anyone? Anyone here see someone break this man's leg?

(silence)

DETECTIVE: Jimmy? Are you sure about this?

JIMMY: What the hell is going on here? They all saw him. He was here a minute ago. The sonofabitch. Where'd he go?

DETECTIVE: Nemo.

JIMMY: What?

DETECTIVE: Nemo Jimmy, it means no man.

JIMMY: I'm telling you-

DETECTIVE: Yes, you've told me. But you know what I think?

JIMMY: What?

DETECTIVE: I think you passed out and had a bad fall. *(looks at waitress)* Im guessing he fell off that bar stool there, huh?

WAITRESS: How'd you know?

DETECTIVE: Detective work m'am, just plain ol' detective work.

JIMMY: Liars, filthy liars. I'm calling the cops.

DETECTIVE: *(chuckles)* We are the cops Jimmy.

JIMMY: I'm calling my lawyer, you bastards.

(AMBULANCE GUYS - SAME ONES AS ABOVE-
COME IN AND GATHER JIMMY UP.)

DETECTIVE: *(patting Jimmy)* You're gonna live Jimmy.

(THEY WHEEL HIM OUT.)

DETECTIVE: That ol' guy's got 99 lives. He refuses to die.

WAITRESS: I'm so sick of him.

DETECTIVE: Yeah, me too. Can't figure it out. We've arrested him 100 times. I believe his life's ambition is to cause trouble for the rest of the world.

WAITRESS: He's been causing plenty here.

DETECTIVE: Well you're going to have a nice long break from Jimmy the drunk. He's not going to get too far with a broken leg. (*finishes writing report*) M'am if you'll just sign this report here. We have to write this up showing how Jimmy was drunk and disorderly and fell off that stool there through his own negligence.

WAITRESS: He can't sue us can he?

DETECTIVE: No m'am. It was his own fault. He's lucky. He only fell and broke a leg. Tiny Tim fell and broke his head (*pause*) and his face.

WAITRESS: Who?

DETECTIVE: Tiny the pimp.

WAITRESS: Oh yeah, I heard about that.

DETECTIVE: It was ugly.

WAITRESS: I heard his face was smashed in.

DETECTIVE: Yes it was. Poor ol' Tiny. He was unrecognizable.

WAITRESS: That's too bad.

DETECTIVE: It's ok. It's one less piece of trash for us to pick up. But there's plenty more where he came from. Trash trash and more trash. You know some days I just get to feeling like an old garbage collector.

LIGHTS AND CURTAIN

ACT 4

Saturday, twilight

(SKID ROW. JACK SITTING ON CURB WITH BUMS.)

LEON: Road Dog!

JACK: (*silent*)

LEON: S'up homes?

JACK: Nothing.

LEON: You sweet?

JACK: (*looks at him*)

LEON: Its ok. Didn't mean no offense. I'm just out.

JACK: Out?

LEON: Out of the joint.

JACK: (*looks at Leon and looks away*)

LEON: Yeah. Place was full of sweets. (*beat*) Don't care none for 'em myself.

JACK: To each his own.

LEON: Huh?

JACK: Nothing.

LEON: You a playuh?

JACK: A what?

LEON: Player, dice, 21, poker-- you know man, casinos.

JACK: No, never did any gambling.

LEON: I got a system.

JACK: Hmmm.

LEON: Just need somebody to bankroll me.

JACK: Well good luck.

LEON: Will you?

JACK: Will I what?

LEON: Stake me, man?

JACK: No.

LEON: Why not?

JACK: Cause I don't gamble.

LEON: Just a hundred. That's all I need.

JACK: Not me.

LEON: Asshole. Sittin here in your fancy suit and shit. Comin down here to judge on my brothers.

JACK: Look friend, I'm just sitting here. Ok? That's all. And I just want to be left alone. I don't care if you're black, white, gay or straight or just out of prison. I'm just wanting a little peace and quiet, all right?

LEON: *(grunts disapproval, and sits down beside him)* Got a smoke?

JACK: *(hands him pack and lighter)*

LEON: Thanks brother. *(pause)*. Sorry 'bout the jawjackin. Just a little on edge you know?

JACK: It's ok.

LEON: Got no money, and no family or friends around.

JACK: *(passes bottle in brown paper to him)*. Here.

LEON: What is it?

JACK: Cognac.

LEON: Yeah man, you all right. *(sips)* Haven't had a drink in 30

days. (*sips again and hands it back*). Hmm. I worked on my system the whole time I was in. Just wanted to try it out. I know it'll work. It's a chance you know. But hell isn't that what life's all about?

JACK: Maybe.

LEON: It's a chance you'll meet the right woman. (*pause*) Or come from the right family, you know a family with connections and money and all that shit.

JACK: Hmm. If you say so.

LEON: Yeah man, if you got all that behind you, then you're set. Your life is on cruise control, you know?

JACK: Yeah.

LEON: Not me though. It's been potholes and bumps the whole goddamn way.

JACK: I've hit a few of those the last couple days.

LEON: A hundred.

JACK: Huh?

LEON: A hundred dollars. That's all I need.

JACK: (*pause*) That's all.

LEON: Yeah. A hundred and I can beat the chances. This time I can, I know it.

JACK: You got no friends or family that can loan it to you?

LEON: Naw man, they're all back in Chicago.

JACK: A hundred dollars?

LEON: That's all.

JACK: (*takes a sip*). What the hell. Got nothing better to do.

LEON: You'll stake me?

JACK: Yeah. (*takes a big swill and hands bottle to Leon*)

LEON: My Roaddog! *(takes a big sip, hands it back)*

JACK: *(finishes it off and smashes the bottle against the wall).*
Lets go.

LIGHTS AND CURTAINS

ACT 5, Scene 1
Saturday night

(JACK AND LEON ARE AT THE CASINO PLAYING CRAPS. THE TABLE IS FILLED UP. GIRLS ON EITHER SIDE OF LEON AND JACK. PEOPLE SHOUTING “ROAD DOG! ROAD DOG! ROAD DOG!” AND “WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!” CASINO OWNER WALKS UP AND CALLS TO THE PIT BOSS.)

OWNER: What the hell’s going on here?

PIT BOSS: The suit there, he’s killing us.

OWNER: How much?

PIT BOSS: He’s up 50.

OWNER: What?

PIT BOSS: 50 grand. And his partner is up 50 too.

OWNER: Did you check the dice?

PIT BOSS: Every roll.

OWNER: How long’s he been throwing.

PIT BOSS: 20 minutes. He’s making points, 4s and 10s, naturals on the come out. It’s insane. I’ve never seen anything like it.

OWNER: Who is this sonofabitch?

PIT BOSS: They call him ‘Road Dog’.

OWNER: Road Dog? Never heard.

PIT BOSS: Oh and something else.

OWNER: Yeah?

PIT BOSS: Virgin.

PIT: Impossible.

PIT BOSS: Not. The guy's never played. His buddy is telling him what to do.

OWNER: Who's his buddy?

PIT BOSS: The black guy over there. Name's Leon.

OWNER: 100 fucking grand.

PIT BOSS: Yeah.

OWNER: Did you try the ice.

PIT BOSS: Yeah, got 4 girls on him and his partner. It's not working.

OWNER: Ok, we're shutting the table down. And split those two bastards up.

PIT BOSS: What?

OWNER: You heard me. Close it down.

PIT BOSS: Christ there's gonna be a riot.

OWNER: Do it now. Call security. I'll pull the player aside.

PIT BOSS: Whatever you say boss. (*turns back to the table*) Ok folks we're closing the table. That's it. Game over.

(SHOUTS OF DISAPPROVAL. 'ASSHOLE'. 'LET HIM THROW.' 'FUCK YOU.')

PIT BOSS: (*to his walkie talkie*). Security to the craps table. (*pause*) Ok, break it up folks.

LEON: What the fuck?

PIT BOSS: Staff break.

LEON: Staff break, my big black ass.

PIT BOSS: There are plenty of other games on the floor sir.

LEON: Hell no. Craps is all and you just crapped on ours. Fuckin' bullshit man.

PIT BOSS: We'll open it back up in the morning.

LEON: Gottdamn! You been robbin' folks for 50 years. And look here now somebody comes along and makes a run, you shut it down. We get the goose going and you mofos come along and shit on the egg. That ain't right.

PIT BOSS: Move along sir.

LEON: Move along my ass. Fuck this place!

PIT BOSS: What's your name sir?

LEON: Fuck You! That's my name.

PIT BOSS: *(to security)* Gentlemen will you escort this gentleman to the cashier and the front door?

(SECURITY GUARDS COME IN AT EITHER SIDE OF LEON AND REACH FOR HIS ARMS TO ESCORT HIM OUT. LEON JERKS HIS ARMS AWAY.)

LEON: Get your goddamn nasty ass hands off of me! I'm cashing out.

(HE TURNS AND THE GUARDS FOLLOW HIM TO THE CASHIER. HE'S GRUMBLING AND CURSING THE WHOLE WAY.)

(CASINO OWNER APPROACHES JACK.)

OWNER: Sir?

JACK: *(doesn't hear him)*

OWNER: Sir- Hi, I'm Sam Johnston.

JACK: Hello Sam.

OWNER: I'm the owner here and I'd like to congratulate you on your success.

JACK: Thanks. Say what's going on? Why are they shutting us down.

OWNER: Routine service and procedure. We'll open the table again in the morning. *(pause)* I'm sorry sir, I don't think I caught your name.

JACK: Romeo.

OWNER: (*paus*) Ahem,,,, Well now Mr. Romeo have you played with us before?

JACK: No.

OWNER: You've done some excellent gaming tonight and we certainly appreciate your patronage. Will you be staying with us?

JACK: I don't know.

OWNER: May I offer you a VIP package?

JACK: What's that?

OWNER: A complementary dinner in the Chop House and a suite for the evening. You will also receive a pass to the high stakes room upstairs. Would that interest you?

JACK: Yeah sure. That would be nice. I am pretty hungry, and tired. Can you do a meal and room for my friend too?

OWNER: Your friend?

JACK: Yeah, my friend Leon. Leon. Hey Leon! (*looks around*) Where'd he go?

PIT BOSS: I believe he's gone off with a couple of escorts.

JACK: Escorts?

PIT BOSS: Yes sir.

JACK: Escorts. (*pause*) Oh oh yes, the ladies. Hmmm.

OWNER: Here's your pass sir.

JACK: Thanks.

OWNER: I'll have Ginger escort you to the restaurant. Ginger, please show Mr. Romeo to the Chop House and after he's finished dining take him up to his room.

GINGER: Yes sir Mr. Johnston. (*smiling*) Right this way Mr. Romeo.

JACK: Ok. Thank you.

GINGER: *(smiles and leads him off)*

THEY EXIT AND THE CROWD DISPERSES.

LIGHTS AND CURTAIN

ACT 5-Scene 2

Saturday night, late

(CASINO HOTEL ROOM. GINGER AND JACK ENTER. GINGER TURNS ON THE LIGHTS, SHOWS HIM AROUND AND STANDS.)

GINGER: This is our presidential suite Mr. Romeo. If there's anything you need just call the front desk. And if I can be of assistance in any way, here's my card.

JACK: Ok.

GINGER: May I do anything else for you?

JACK: Huh? *(pause)* Oh, no, no thank you. Here. *(hands her a \$100 bill)*

GINGER: Thank you Mr. Romeo. Enjoy your stay.

JACK: Thanks.

(GINGER EXITS. JACK WALKS AROUND, CHECKING THINGS OUT. HE PUTS A BROWN PAPER BAG UNDER THE BED. HE EMPTIES HIS POCKETS ONTO A TABLE. A FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER FALLS TO FLOOR. HE REACHES DOWN AND OPENS IT AND PAUSES. HE WALKS TO BEDSIDE AND SITS AND MAKES A PHONE CALL. PHONE RINGS AND ANGEL PICKS UP.)

ANGEL: Hello. *(pause)* HELLO! Romeo is that you?

JACK: Yes.

ANGEL: Are you ok?

JACK: Yeah.

ANGEL: I was so worried.

JACK: Can you come over?

ANGEL: Yes, of course. Where are you?

JACK: The Silver Spoon, room 222.

ANGEL: I know that place. I'll be there in 15 minutes. *(pause)*
Romeo?

JACK: Yes.

ANGEL: I've been thinking about you.

JACK: I've been thinking about you too.

ANGEL: I was praying you'd call me.

JACK: And I did.

ANGEL: I'm happy you did.

JACK: Me too.

(pause--both are waiting for the other to hang up)

ANGEL: You still there?

JACK: Yes.

ANGEL: Listen, before I hang up, I have to ask you something.

JACK: What?

ANGEL: Did you kill him. *(pause)* Did you?

JACK: Yes.

ANGEL: I knew it. How did you do it?

JACK: He was laying there. I wasn't planning to kill him. I thought he was passed out and then just as I was leaving, he grabbed my leg and pulled me down. I kicked him in the face until he let go.

ANGEL: That killed him?

JACK: No.

ANGEL: What then?

JACK: You don't want to know. It was ugly.

ANGEL: I can handle it.

JACK: Hmmm, yeah, well I, uh, I stomped his face in with the heel of my boot. I don't know what got in to me but I stomped it once and then again and again and again. It was strange, like an out of body experience. I've never done any violence to anyone. Something just snapped and I couldn't control myself. It was like this savage animal coming out and I couldn't stop.

ANGEL: You did what you had to do. He was going to kill you.

JACK: Yeah I think you're right.

ANGEL: You know the news has been saying it was suicide.

JACK: I heard. I don't know how they came up with that but it's fine with me.

ANGEL: They said there was a note.

JACK: Yeah, well fatso didn't kill himself. He was dead as a doornail when I left him.

ANGEL: Maybe the police did it.

JACK: Did what?

ANGEL: Wrote the note. Made it all up.

JACK: Why would they do that?

ANGEL: Maybe they didn't want to investigate. They figured whoever did the murder did them a favor. So they make this suicide story to close the case.

JACK: If it had come back to me I would have told the cops the truth. It was self-defense. Fatso was going to murder me.

ANGEL: Yeah and then he would have hurt us too, me . I've never seen him that way.

JACK: Well he's no more. He got his reward.

ANGEL: Yeah. I won't miss him.

JACK: Me neither.

ANGEL: Ok, well let me fresh up and I'll be there in a few.

JACK: You hungry?

ANGEL: I'm starving.

JACK: I'll order room service and a bottle of wine.
(*pause, chuckles*) And candles.

ANGEL: Romantic.

JACK: Yeah, I gotta live up to my name.

ANGEL: (*smack-kiss through phone*). See you soon.

JACK: Not soon enough, beautiful!

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT 5 – Scene 3
Saturday midnight

(CASINO HOTEL ROOM. PLATTER OF FOOD,
CANDLE AND EMPTY BOTTLE ON TABLE. JACK
AND ANGEL IN BED. ANGEL IS SMOKING.)

ANGEL: What time is it?

JACK: Little after 10.

ANGEL: Let's see if there's any more on the news about Tiny.
(she aims remote and turns on TV)

NEWS ANNOUNCER: In local news, authorities are ruling the death of Johnny "Tiny Tim" Fisch a suicide. Fisch's body was discovered outside the Moon Winx hotel this morning. A suicide note was found in a 4th floor room that Fisch was staying in. Authorities believe he jumped from the balcony of his hotel room. *(beat)*. In other news, police have issued a missing person report for a local man. *(image of Jack is displayed on TV)* 33 year old Jack Mersault was last seen leaving his job at ACME Computer Systems around lunch time on Friday. His wife reported him missing this morning. Anyone having information on Mersault's whereabouts is encouraged to contact the police.

ANGEL: Oh my God!

JACK: What the--- *(gets up and moves to the TV, turning channels to see if any more info)*

ANGEL: ROMEO! It's you.

DIFFERENT NEWS ANNOUNCER: ...the whereabouts of 33 year old computer programmer Jack Mersault....

(JACK TURNS TV VOLUME DOWN AND BEGINS
PACING THE FLOOR AND RUBBING HIS HEAD.)

ANGEL: Wow! You should call. They're looking for you. Oh Rome--- I mean Jack. Jack, that's a good name. I like it. Now we know. You have to call the cops or your wife. She must be worried sick, probably thinking you've been abducted or shot or something horrible. Jack you have to call her.

JACK: Wait,,,,,wait.

ANGEL: What?

JACK: (*pacing and rubbing his head, he sits on the bed*)
Something. Something.... ah,,, yes, it's coming back to me.
(*pause*). Yes, yes. Of course. Ok, so just before you got here, I
was taking a nap. But right before I fell asleep I was having little
flashbacks. Little pictures of things. I was all disjointed.

ANGEL: Shouldn't you call?

JACK: (*holding a hand up*) Hang on....ok so it was raining and
there was a giant tortoise in the road.

ANGEL: Right, we saw him too. We pulled over to help him. I
moved him off the road. That's when we found you.

JACK: I remember crashing. I was driving in the rain and I saw
the tortoise and swerved to miss him and ran off the road. But
before that I was getting drunk at the saloon and they threw me
out. (*pause*). But there was something else.

(STOPS, LOOKS AT TV. TURNS UP VOLUME.)

JANE MERSAULT'S VOICE: He's a devoted husband. He's
never done anything wrong. I'm terribly worried about his
safety...please please if anyone has seen him, please call me.

(JACK TURNS OFF THE TV.)

JACK: My God! That's it.

ANGEL: What?

JACK: Ha,,,that little bitch.

ANGEL: Who?

JACK: My wife. I got off early from work the other day and I got
home and there she was fucking some guy in our bedroom.

ANGEL: Ooooooo. That's not nice!

JACK: No, it isn't. And that's how all this started. (*pause*)
I was walking to the house. It was windy and there was a storm
coming. The bedroom window was cracked open. I was walking
past it to the front door and I heard something and looked in and
there they were humping away.

ANGEL: Do you know the guy?

JACK: No, never seen him before.

ANGEL: What did you do?

JACK: I just stood there.

ANGEL: You didn't do anything?

JACK: I just stood there and watched.

ANGEL: (*chuckling*) That's weird.

JACK: Yeah. And then something snapped and I picked up a big rock and threw it thru the window and pulled the window open and climbed in. It was so fucking weird. I can't explain it. It was like I wasn't really there but was seeing this scene. It was as if I was watching a movie of myself. I couldn't figure it out. We've been married for seven years. We never had any trouble. Every morning, we kissed, said 'I love you' and then I'd go off to work.

ANGEL: Hmmmm.

JACK: It was crazy. Oh yeah, and there's more. Earlier that day my co-worker died.

ANGEL: How?

JACK: A goose.

ANGEL: What?

JACK: A goose chased him and knocked him down. He came into the offices sweating and out of breath. A few minutes later he had a heart attack and died.

ANGEL: Oh my God, that's horrible.

JACK: Yeah, and he was 14 days from retirement. He was a good man. (*pause*) And that was how I found out about my wife. After John died and the paramedics took his body away, the boss told me to take the rest of the day off and so I went home and found her in bed with this guy. It's the only time in seven years I've ever left work early. I do it and look what I found. (*pause*) I never cheated on her.

ANGEL: (*chuckles*)

JACK: (*smiles*) What?

ANGEL: (*smiles*)

JACK: (*chuckles*) Ok ok, well at least not till the other day.

ANGEL: (*smiling wraps her arms around him*) At least we know who you are now.

JACK: Yes. I do. And I've been feeling better the last hours.

ANGEL: What will you do? Shouldn't you call the police?

JACK: Yes. (*pause*). But... I'm not going home.

ANGEL: Why not?

JACK: What? Are you kidding? After what she did. Don't you see. She doesn't love me. She never did. I was just a meal ticket.

(*pause*)

She never loved me. It hit me like a ton of bricks the way she was making love to that guy. It was something animal. She never did that with me. She'd just lay there like a dead fish. That's why I went off and got drunk. I had that epiphany. I've never been drunk in my life.

ANGEL: Never?

JACK: Never.

ANGEL: Wow.

JACK: And I've never made love to another woman.

ANGEL: I don't believe that.

JACK: It's true. I've been like that tortoise in the road last night. I've been a tortoise my whole life. Just plodding along doing the right thing every day, minding my business and doing my job.

ANGEL: What's wrong with that? Don't you like your work.

JACK: No not really. (*sarcastic*) You like yours?

ANGEL: (*hurt*) What do you think? Why would you ask me that?

JACK: I'm sorry. (*she turns away. He reaches over*) Baby, baby, I'm very sorry. I didn't mean anything. You're a beautiful and intelligent lady.

ANGEL: (*kisses him*) You big angel. (*pause*). Let's run away.

JACK: (*pulls her tight*). I was thinking the same. It seems crazy. We barely know each other but I feel a spark between us. I felt it last night when you were leaving the hotel and came back and gave me a kiss.

ANGEL: Me too. And I kept thinking about you afterwards but I never thought you'd call.

JACK: You were stuck in my head.

ANGEL: I'm so happy. I haven't felt this way in years. I feel like I'm in a dream.

JACK: Me too. And this amnesia—you know it's strange but even with everything coming back I feel different, like I'm in control of my life. I can make choices and do things. Not like before. It was like life was pushing me along and I was doing everything according to some program and I didn't have a say in it.

ANGEL: Most people feel that way.

JACK: I don't know, maybe. But it doesn't have to be. A person can make choices.

ANGEL: Yes.

JACK: Something woke up for me. I can't go home and I can't go back to that job either.

(*pause*)

I don't want to be like John. I don't want to go to work at the same job every day for 30 years and then have a fucking heart attack two weeks before I retire. He was right. We can talk about doing things all our life but we keep putting it off and before you know it it's too late. You wake up one morning and you're dead. John knew that and he was trying to tell me. It's all a big trap.

ANGEL: What is?

JACK: The system. The job. The car. The house. Disney World. It's all tied together. We get trapped in a place and a job. A job we don't like to pay a mortgage for a house that's always breaking down or a car that's always needing repair. Nothing ever gets paid for you know? 30 years for a mortgage, 5 years for a car, and there's never any left over.

ANGEL: So what are you going to do?

JACK: You mean what are WE going to do?

ANGEL: *(smiling)* Yes, of course, WE.

JACK: Travel,,,,see the world, do things, climb mountains, swim in the ocean. Make love in the dessert under a million shimmering stars on a clear cold night. *(looking at her. She seems distant suddenly)* Baby, what? What is it?

ANGEL: Oh honey, you gotta have a lot of money to do all these things. I don't have any. I have nothing.

JACK: Not true. You have me. And we have this- *(pulls the bag from under the bed and dumps the cash on the bed)*

ANGEL: *(gasps)* What?.... Where'd you-

JACK: Gambling. My friend Leon taught me a system. I can do it again, I know I can.

ANGEL: My God. Did you win that today.

JACK: Yes. And now we can leave. We can go out and live and see the world.

ANGEL: *(sobbing embracing him)*. I've been wanting to leave this crummy town for 30 years.

JACK: No more heartaches baby. Smile baby. I'll give you bluebird skies for the rest of your life. And no more emptiness for me. I think God sent you. You really are an angel.

ANGEL: *(kisses him)* And he sent you to me.

JACK: It all seems like a dream.

ANGEL: It's real. But—

JACK: But what?

ANGEL: My name isn't Angel. It's Juliette.

JACK: (*laughs*). That's even better.

(*pause*)

It fits. We're Romeo and Juliette.

ANGEL: This time the ending is a good one.

(THEY KISS, EMBRACE AND
FALL BACK ON THE BED.)

CURTAINS

-fnis-