F Craigmore/Vale

 VALE

You seem a bit... perturbed.

 CRAIGMORE

“A bit” would be an understatement.

 VALE

It seems I really should have had the medics on standby – but perhaps not for Sandra.

 CRAIGMORE

Let us say it has been a rather unpleasant experience, but one that shall very soon be ending.

 VALE

Indeed, so it shall... Mrs. Earhart.

CRAIGMORE’s face falls about a thousand feet through the floor. VALE grins wildly and plops HIMSELF down on a chair perhaps a little too comfortably. THEY stare at EACH OTHER for a moment.

 CRAIGMORE

You know?

 VALE

She told me – when you were on your cruise.

 CRAIGMORE

I can’t believe this.

 VALE

It was after her fifth or sixth drink, as I recall.

 CRAIGMORE

I would have thought that could have only improved her.

 VALE

Granted, it was a fool’s errand, taking her out – but she did rather insist. I couldn’t think of an excuse quickly enough to say “no.” Where are those annoying visits by relatives when you really need them?

 CRAIGMORE

So you know, Mr. Vale – but do you believe?

 VALE

Believe – like, in God?

 CRAIGMORE

You know what I mean.

 VALE

Ohhh, I don’t know.

 CRAIGMORE

You don’t know?

 VALE

Perhaps it’s more that I don’t care about the name on the checks, as long as they don’t bounce.

 CRAIGMORE

I sense that you’re enjoying this, Mr. Vale.

 VALE

You have to admit, it’s all rather amusing.

 CRAIGMORE

For you, perhaps.

 VALE

For me, of course! When I speak, I do tend to speak for myself, as opposed to speaking for other people. I consider that an unfair and uncompensated use of my vocal cords. Yes, Sandra sat me down at Rizzuto’s on Park Street one night and told me that you were – and still are - Amelia Earhart. She also told me about the group of people who believe it along with her – the air force colonel and the psychology professor and someone else who works in the Pentagon. They have phone calls every Monday – did you know that? That explains why Sandra always made sure to leave before eleven on Monday! Here I thought it was because she’d turn into a pumpkin! Anyway, they have this phone call at midnight every Monday and they spend it talking about you. Eerie feeling, I must say – the idea that a few nutjobs are whispering on their phones about you in the dark of the night. They even meet together once a quarter. The last time was this past summer in Philly. She told me all about that - right down to the name of the hotel – which I have since forgotten. I figure Sandra would have to tell you everything tonight in light of the revelation of your hasty departure.

 CRAIGMORE

Hasty?

 VALE

You’re leaving because of Ben Reiner, of course.

An exhausted CRAIGMORE just waves HER hand dismissively. SHE sits back in HER chair. Perhaps SHE hopes there is no back to it and SHE will be sucked into a void far from this time and place.

VALE

Now, I confess I made a little bet with myself when I was returning to the house. I thought “How far has Sandra gotten with her story in these past twenty minutes?” She gave me an earful in two hours – but twenty minutes? Granted, the good thing about betting with yourself is that you’re assured to win either way – but it’s enjoyable all the same. So I thought about it and I think I know the answer, so let’s see!

 CRAIGMORE

Let’s not.

 VALE

Obviously, she told you that you’re really Amelia Earhart and that you didn’t really crash into the Pacific Ocean and that the whole thing was a ruse by the United States government to...

 CRAIGMORE

Yes.

 VALE
All right – and I also suppose she got through the bit about how you were found by the Japanese and likely imprisoned and then rescued after the war and given a new identity, also by the...

 CRAIGMORE

Yes.

 VALE

Okay, good - and I also, also suppose she explained that you took the identity of a personal friend of Amelia Earhart’s, Aileen Kosterman – perhaps as some tribute to the old chum and aided by the fact that the Kosterman family is about as small as Sandra’s social circle – but that, in fact, you cannot really be Aileen Kosterman, because Aileen Kosterman died in a car accident in Sterling, Nebraska on July 9th, 1932.

 CRAIGMORE

July 8th.

 VALE

 (Pointing at HER, in mock accusatory fashion.)

Aha!

 CRAIGMORE

I listen closely.