

WHO'S GOT MR. BALDY?

by

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FADE IN:

INT. STANLEY NUSBAUM'S SANCTUM SANCTORUM, HIS COMBINED, OFFICE, LIBRARY AND LABORATORY, IN THE FAMILY'S UPPER EASTSIDE MANHATTAN TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

The stars and the skyline of Manhattan are framed by French doors leading out onto the balcony.

In the doorway, a very expensive and powerful telescope is aimed out at the sky.

Also included within the room are a telephone and its answering machine, and a large flat-screen TV with a remote control.

A large, elegant steamer trunk sits in a corner of the room.

Moving from left to right, the walls, mantelpiece, a bookcase and a table conspicuously display photographs, publications, memorabilia and trophies reflecting the accomplishments of the members of Nusbaum family and the family's evolution.

The framed front page of The New York Times. The headline reads: "OIL DISCOVERED ON CONEY ISLAND!" A photograph of STANLEY Nusbaum standing beside an oil well in the front yard of his original home, a bungalow on Coney Island. The caption: "IT LOOKED LIKE A GOOD PLACE TO DIG"

The photograph unobtrusively depicts the characters who will come to be known as VINNY, VITO and VICKI pointing to the spot where the well is drilled.

A book titled: Astronomy Your Friends the Stars

The cover of Today's Oenophile magazine portrays a hooded, snow-encrusted figure standing in a blinding blizzard, stiffly holding out a bottle of wine. The headline: "THE WINES OF ALASKA"

Four books titled: PAINTING HOUSE TRIM FOR BEGINNERS, TRIM MADE EASY, TRIM TECHNIQUES, TIPS FOR TRIM

The cover of the medical journal The Lancet with the headline: "THE NUSBAUM CENTER FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH PERFECTS THE HEMORRHOID TRANSPLANT"

Stanley on the cover of Business Week magazine with the headline: "WHO IS THIS GUY NUSBAUM?"

A poster from Carnegie Hall reads: "JUDY AND JODY THE LAST WORD CONCERT" A diagonal banner across it reads: "SOLD OUT!"

The trade paper Variety, with a photograph of THE EMPRESS extending her hand toward the camera to block the lens. The headline reads: "JUDY AND JODY BREAKUP!" The caption: "I NEED TO FIND MY OWN VOICE, JODY SAYS. JUDY UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT."

A book titled: "...And the Horse You Rode in on The Collected Poems of David "Spike" Nusbaum"

The cover of Writer's Digest with SPIKE's photograph and the headline: "DAVID "SPIKE" NUSBAUM MUSE OR MADMAN?"

A photograph of the Pope and Stanley jointly holding a portrait of Jesus.

Arrayed across the mantelpiece, a row of books, standing with spines facing outward, titled: Passion, Passion's Escape, Passion's Return, Passion's Fancy, Passion's Romance, Passion's Tempest, Passion's Embrace, Passion's Flame, Passion in Love, Passion on the High Seas, Passion in the Dessert, Passion's Triumph, Passion's Heart, Passion's Destiny

The cover of Newsweek magazine with the headline: "PENISILLIN"

The cover of The New England Journal of Medicine with the headline: "PENISILLIN FOUND TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT SIDE EFFECTS"

The framed front page of a SLEAZY TABLOID with the photograph of a distressed Stanley and the headline: "MR. BALDY!" The glass over this page is cracked from a point slightly off-center and radiating outward in spokes, as if something has been thrown at it.

The front page of The New York Times with the headline:  
"STANLEY NUSBAUM MISSING, BELIEVED KIDNAPPED"

A different cover of the same SLEAZY TABLOID with the  
headline: "WHO'S GOT MR. BALDY?"

Over the mantelpiece is an enormous blowup of the cover of  
Fortune magazine with Stanley's portrait on it and the  
headline: "MAN OF THE YEAR STANLEY NUSBAUM GENIUS OR  
ASSHOLE?"

THE EMPRESS, in her late twenties or early thirties, steps  
into the scene from off screen to the right of the Fortune  
magazine blowup.

THE EMPRESS

(wailing)

Okay! Okay! So he's an asshole!  
He's still my father! Who would  
want to kidnap him?

O'BRIEN joins her.

O'Brien, in his late fifties or early sixties, is a  
competent but burned out police detective. Dedicated, but  
his abrasive nature has impeded his career. Whatever  
happens, this is his last case.

O'BRIEN

That's what we're here to  
investigate, Ms. Nusbaum.

BUBBLES approaches O'Brien from behind.

Marsha "BUBBLES" Nusbaum, matriarch of the family, is in  
her late fifties or early sixties, plump, loving, with a  
radiant smile, and—as described by her children—utterly  
"nuts."

BUBBLES

Detective O'Brien?

O'Brien turns to face Bubbles. Bubbles beams at him.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

(proudly)

Did you know that our family was  
voted "The Richest, Most  
Dysfunctional Family in America"?

Bubbles beams.

O'BRIEN

No, Ma'am. I didn't know that.

BUBBLES

Oh yes. There are families who are  
richer than we. There are even  
families who are more  
dysfunctional than we. But we were  
voted "The Richest, Most  
Dysfunctional Family in America."

THE EMPRESS

(with obviously  
strained patience)

Ma.

O'BRIEN

Very impressive.

Bubbles looks down at SWEETUMS, who is approaching off  
screen.

BUBBLES

(delighted)

Sweetums!

O'BRIEN

I beg your pardon?

SWEETUMS appears.

Sweetums, a computer-generated character of unspecified  
gender, will be described as "a cross between a porcupine,  
a hyena and a very pissed off werewolf."

Bubbles kneels and lovingly wraps her arms around as much  
of the beast's neck as she can embrace.

Sweetums bares his/her teeth in a silent snarl at O'Brien.

BUBBLES

(delighted)

Ooh look! Sweetums is smiling at you.

O'Brien bares his teeth in a silent snarl at Sweetums.

SHAMIKA and SPIKE are standing apart from the others, observing them and commenting between themselves.

David "Spike" Nusbaum, in his early thirties, is a battle-scarred veteran of the English War. His missing teeth and the maniacal gleam in his eyes attest to too many barroom brawls won and lost in defense of English, well-spoken and well-written.

Spike's most distinctive feature is a computer-generated #2 Eberhard Faber pencil stuck through his right earlobe.

This PENCIL performs as an independent character and reflects Spike's moods.

Shamika Johnson, in her late twenties or early thirties, is a Black police detective. Even within an ensemble vastly more "normal" than the present company, Shamika would be recognized as bright, sweet-natured and enthusiastic.

SPIKE

Detective O'Brien is not a dog person, is he?

SHAMIKA

I don't know; I never met his parents.

Spike and Shamika join O'Brien and Bubbles.

BUBBLES

Detective O'Brien, did you know that my husband invented the cholesterol free carrot?

THE EMPRESS

Ma, all carrots are cholesterol free.

BUBBLES

(beaming)

You see? It was one of his  
greatest successes.

THE EMPRESS

You'll have to excuse my mother;  
she's nuts.

SPIKE

Ma is not nuts. She is merely who  
she is. Dad is nuts

THE EMPRESS

(snarling)

No! Dad is an asshole! Ma is nuts!

Spike is unconvinced.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

Look at his investments! We lost a  
fortune on those waterproof  
towels.

SPIKE

Yeah. But we made two fortunes  
back when we began marketing them  
as rainwear.

THE EMPRESS

And that vineyard? Who but Dad  
would buy a vineyard in Alaska?

SPIKE

Yeah. And those grapes are so  
loaded with antioxidants that the  
wine has been approved by the FDA.  
We can't stomp on enough of them  
to keep up with the demand.

THE EMPRESS

But the worst... The absolute  
worst was that religious relic.

BUBBLES

(conciliatory)

Now, sweetheart, your father  
wouldn't be the first man to have  
been duped into buying a religious  
relic.

THE EMPRESS

At a garage sale?

BUBBLES

So?

THE EMPRESS

Ma! It was an autographed picture  
of Jesus Christ!

SPIKE

Yeah. And look what happened when  
the Vatican declared it authentic.

Spike turns to Bubbles.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

Ma? What was the Pope's last  
offer?

BUBBLES

(smugly)

Cardinal of New York.

(more dubiously)

If he'll convert.

THE EMPRESS

(shrieks)

I give up!

The Empress throws herself into a chair and begins grinding  
her teeth noisily.



BUBBLES

(stage whispers to  
O'Brien)

My daughter has issues with her temper. We've tried everything. At one point, she had two anger management coaches. We still don't know what started that fistfight between them.

O'BRIEN

(to The Empress,  
trying to improve  
situation)

It sounds like, when it comes to business, your father has some kind of sixth sense.

THE EMPRESS

No. He can't see dead people. He just has this bizarre gift for investments. Like a seventh sense.

O'BRIEN

Ms. Nusbaum, how did you become the CEO of the Nusbaum Corporation?

THE EMPRESS

Default. De fault was all mine. I wasn't good at anything else.

The Empress sighs and reflects upon her past.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

There was a time I wanted to dedicate myself to painting.

O'BRIEN

Oil, acrylic or watercolor?

THE EMPRESS

Houses. But I always had trouble with the trim. Then I tried singing. But Sweetums objected. Felt threatened.

O'BRIEN

Sweetums felt threatened by your singing?

THE EMPRESS

No. I felt threatened by Sweetums' growling.

BUBBLES

(stage whispers)

My daughter has had trouble finding herself.

O'Brien nods.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

"Check all the hospitals," I tell her. "Offer a reward. You're out there somewhere." But does she listen to me?

Bubbles shrugs.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

All she keeps saying is, "Ma, you're nuts."

THE EMPRESS

Ma, you're nuts.

Bubbles shrugs.

BUBBLES

You see what I mean?

O'BRIEN

What was your relationship with your father like?

THE EMPRESS

Dad always encouraged me. He called me his "Little Empress." It was "Little Empress this." And "Little Empress that." And "See what happens when you play with guns, Little Empress?"

O'Brien is nonplussed.

BUBBLES

It's so true. Stanley always supported our children's ambitions.

Bubbles turns to The Empress.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

When you wanted to paint, didn't your father insist that you use brushes? When you wanted to go to college to become an engineer, didn't he offer to buy you your own train? And, when you wanted to become an entertainer, he introduced you to Judy.

THE EMPRESS

(with intense  
bitterness)

Yeah, and look at how that turned out.

BUBBLES

Perhaps. We don't know yet. I have always had faith in your father's judgment.

THE EMPRESS

Like Mr. Baldy?

Bubbles is wounded.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

(contrite)

I'm sorry, Ma.

BUBBLES

No, dear. You are right. Penisillin has been a terrible mistake. We all know it. And your father knows it. Which is why we need to find him.

(to O'Brien)

Please help us, Detective O'Brien.

O'BRIEN

I'll do my best, Mrs. Nusbaum.  
Now, if you'll excuse me... I need  
to consult with Detective Johnson.

O'Brien approaches Shamika, who stands enrapt before the  
Passion books arrayed across the mantelpiece.

O'Brien joins her.

SHAMIKA

(awed)

This is it. The complete set of  
Vivian Lamour first editions.

Shamika begins naming them lovingly.

SHAMIKA (CONT'D)

Passion. Passion's Escape.  
Passion's Return. Passion's Fancy.  
Passion's Heart. Passion's  
Romance. Passion's Tempest...

O'BRIEN

(interrupting her)

Passion All the Way to the Bank.

Shamika scowls at O'Brien.

O'Brien pulls out Passion, the first book in the series.

INSERT - BOOK COVER OF PASSION

A gorgeous Eighteenth Century woman swoons into a one-armed  
embrace with a gorgeous Eighteenth Century man. Both are  
unbuttoned down to their knees.

BACK TO SCENE

Shamika's eyes become glazed.

O'Brien opens the book and reads a random page.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

"Though hell should bar the way, I shall go thither!" Roderick declared, clasping Passion to his chest.

Shamika quivers.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Oh, I get it. Passion is the name of the heroine. But who is Vivian Lamour?

Shamika gives O'Brien a look of contempt.

SHAMIKA

(scornfully)

Vivian Lamour is just the most successful romance writer in history. And the most reclusive. None of her books have her picture on them. She refuses to give interviews. She never signs copies. Nobody even knows what she looks like.

O'Brien, unimpressed, opens the cover and reads.

INSERT - THE INSIDE OF THE COVER OF PASSION

There is the handwritten dedication: "To Stanley, You were never an asshole to me. Love, Vivian"

BACK TO SCENE

O'BRIEN

"To Stanley, You were never an asshole to me. Love, Vivian"

Shamika is awed.

SHAMIKA

Oh my God. It's autographed.

Shamika shakes her head in wonderment.

SHAMIKA (CONT'D)

Do you have any idea what a complete set of autographed, first edition Vivian Lamours is worth?

O'BRIEN

Enough to kidnap somebody for?

SHAMIKA

Enough to kidnap the entire Mormon Tabernacle Choir for.

Spike comes up beside them.

SPIKE

(low growl)

You like Vivian Lamour?

SHAMIKA

She is my favorite author.

SPIKE

She is my father's favorite too. He made her the centerpiece of Nusbaum Publishing Inc.

(considering)

Maybe Sis is right about dad.

Shamika prepares to retort angrily, but O'Brien interrupts her.

O'BRIEN

Tell us about your father.

Spike considers this and the Pencil begins flapping wildly.

SPIKE

Dad is not your average tycoon. You've heard of the Midas Touch? Whatever you touch turns to gold.

Shamika nods.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

My father has the Caca Touch.  
Every time he touches shit, it  
turns to gold.

O'BRIEN

'Caca'?

SPIKE

From the Latin cacare, "to  
defecate."

O'BRIEN

No shit?

SPIKE

I never shit about English.

SHAMIKA

What's your relationship with your  
father like?

SPIKE

He's My Old Man. You know what I  
mean? Some people ridicule him.  
And everybody calls him an...

(resists saying  
the word)

You know.

The Pencil begins to smolder.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

(affectionately)

But he's always been good to me  
and Sis. He always encouraged my  
writing. So has Ma.  
Ma gave me the best advice I ever  
got about writing.

Spike smiles and softens.

SHAMIKA

What was it?

SPIKE (CONT'D)

It's easy to write nasty funny.  
It's easy to write crude funny.  
Writing love funny is hard. If you  
can write love funny, you are  
blessed.

SHAMIKA

Did your father have any enemies?

The Pencil hesitates.

SPIKE

You know? Nobody ever got mad at  
Dad. They laughed at him. Made  
faces at him behind his back.

The Pencil begins to smolder.

Spike pauses.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

But Dad never hurt anybody. Except  
for the family. And nobody ever  
got mad at Dad. Except for Sis and  
myself.

Shamika and O'Brien exchange glances.

SHAMIKA

What was he like when you and your  
sister were growing up? Did he  
ever mistreat you?

SPIKE

Nah. Dad would never hit us.  
Dad would never hit anybody.

SHAMIKA

How was discipline handled with  
you and your sister?



SPIKE

Ma did all the disciplining, and she would never hit us either. If we misbehaved, she'd just talk to us.

Spike smiles in reminiscence.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

It always worked.

Shamika smiles also.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

(changing tone)

Can you imagine listening to a half-hour lecture by my mother?

The Pencil begins spinning like a gyroscope and Shamika's smile falters.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

Oh yeah. After listening to my mother's insane rambling for five minutes, my sister and I would be swearing never to do whatever started the conversation again.

Spike reminisces happily.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

I remember begging her once, "Ma, please beat the crap out of me, but just shut up!"

Shamika nods nonplussed.

SHAMIKA

(hesitantly)

May I ask you a personal question?

Spike's eyes narrow warily and the Pencil swerves to aim its leaden point right between Shamika's eyes.

Shamika points anxiously.

SHAMIKA

Why a pencil?

Spike grins and the Pencil relaxes.

SPIKE

I'm a writer. When a sestina grabs me, I've got to get it down before I lose it.

SHAMIKA

(pleased and  
excited)

That's incredible. I'm a writer too.

SPIKE

Oh yeah? I own a writers' lounge in the Village.

SHAMIKA

Which one?

Spike expands proudly.

SPIKE

The Steaming Tankard of  
Testosterone Bar and Grill.

INSERT - EXT. THE STEAMING TANKARD OF TESTOSTERONE BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

A neon sign proclaims: "THE STEAMING TANKARD OF TESTOSTERONE BAR AND GRILL"

Another neon sign portrays William Shakespeare seated at his desk, writing. His right arm raises and lowers a quill to paper, alternating with his left arm raising and lowering a tankard to his lips.

BACK TO SCENE

The Pencil glows with pride.

SHAMIKA

(awed)

You own The Tankard?

O'BRIEN  
 (feeling left out)  
 You've heard of it?

Shamika looks at O'Brien scornfully.

SHAMIKA  
 What serious writer hasn't?

SPIKE  
 You want to come by some time?

The Pencil quivers.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 Maybe read something?

SHAMIKA  
 I've always wanted to read at The  
 Tankard. I just don't know if I'm  
 good enough.

SPIKE  
 Come and find out.

The Pencil beckons.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 Tuesday night. Tuesday night is  
 Poetry Night at the Tankard.

O'BRIEN  
 (testily)  
 If you'll excuse us. We have a  
 missing person investigation to  
 conduct.

The Pencil droops.

O'Brien escorts Shamika over to join Sherlock.

SHERLOCK is scrutinizing The New York Times article about  
 the Coney Island oil well.

Timothy "Sherlock" Uhlrich, in his twenties or early  
 thirties, is intelligent—cute—and maddening.

Sherlock is approached by Shamika and O'Brien.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)  
 Sherlock, why don't you interview  
 the family?

Sherlock whips out his pad and pencil, and prepares to write, all done in an oppressively self-conscious, obsessively punctilious manner.

SHERLOCK  
 If I may have your attention  
 please, we need to obtain some  
 information regarding the missing  
 person. I, Detective Uhlrich, will  
 be conducting the interview.

Spike, Bubbles and The Empress take seats.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)  
 (reciting the  
 formula)  
 Can you provide us with an  
 accurate description of the  
 subject?

Bubbles beams.

BUBBLES  
 Certainly. Stanley is a wonderful  
 man. He has a great sense of  
 humor. "He dances like Fred  
 Astaire," his Aunt Sadie used to  
 tell me. "Okay, so he's a nosher.  
 You'll have to make sure he eats  
 healthy." And she was right.

Bubbles beams and nods.

THE EMPRESS  
 You wanna know what my father  
 looks like?

The Empress jerks her thumb over her shoulder at the oversized Fortune magazine cover.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

Take a good look.

O'BRIEN

Mrs. Nusbaum, when was the last time you saw your husband?

Bubbles begins counting on her fingers.

BUBBLES

Three days ago. I know because we had tickets for the concert at the First Abyssinian Church of Harlem.

Shamika perks up.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Last year, Stanley awarded them a one million dollar grant for research into Nineteenth Century Caucasian spirituals.

SHAMIKA

Are there any Nineteenth Century Caucasian spirituals?

Bubbles shrugs.

BUBBLES

We'll never know. We never made it to the concert.

SHERLOCK

Clothing worn?

BUBBLES

Absolutely. My husband was definitely wearing clothing when he disappeared.

O'BRIEN

What was your husband wearing, Mrs. Nusbaum?

BUBBLES

It was a formal occasion. Stanley was wearing his burgundy tuxedo.

THE EMPRESS

(screeching)

Ma! You let him go out in that  
burgundy tuxedo?!

BUBBLES

Your father always liked that  
tuxedo. We were married in it. And  
his parents were also married in  
that tuxedo. Literally. There's a  
tradition in Stanley's family that  
requires the bride and the groom  
to squeeze into the same garment  
as the Rabbi pronounces them  
married.

Bubbles points to their wedding photograph on the wall.

INSERT - STANLEY'S AND BUBBLES' WEDDING PHOTOGRAPH

They are standing before a Rabbi, under a chupah, squeezed  
into the same burgundy tuxedo jacket, side-by-side, with  
Bubbles' right arm sticking out of the right sleeve and  
Stanley's left arm sticking out of left sleeve.

BACK TO SCENE

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

(only slightly  
defensive)

I don't understand it either,  
Detective. Something about saving  
on the dry cleaning, I think. But  
Stanley insisted on it and he has  
refused to replace that tuxedo  
ever since. It's fortunate it's  
three sizes too big for him.

(stage whispering  
more  
confidentially)

Stanley's father was a big man,  
you know.

THE EMPRESS

Ma.

BUBBLES

(apologetically)

But I digress. So he was wearing the burgundy tuxedo. I laid out his black pants, of course. Stanley has always had exquisite taste.

Bubbles looks puzzled.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

The pants are still there. What is missing are Stanley's scarlet underpants with I heart NY on the tush.

Bubbles beams.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

We all know that means "I love New York," but Stanley has such an appreciation of symbolism.

THE EMPRESS

(louder)

Ma!

BUBBLES

Boxers. Not briefs. Stanley always found briefs too confining. "Bubbles," he would say to me, "A man likes underwear he can eat a pastrami sandwich in and not have to worry."

SHERLOCK

(utterly lost)

I beg your pardon?

Bubbles beams forgivingly.

BUBBLES

And you're welcomed to it.

THE EMPRESS

(growling)

Ma-a.

BUBBLES

(proudly)

Notice how "Ma" has become a two-syllable word, Detective? That proves my daughter is making admirable progress in controlling her temper.

O'BRIEN

Your husband's clothing...?

BUBBLES

Now, Stanley's shoes. They were interesting.

SHAMIKA

(attempting to expedite the conversation)

Black?

BUBBLES

One was. The other was cordovan.  
(proudly)  
Stanley always liked variety.

THE EMPRESS

(hissing with impatience)

Pleeeeeease, can we speed this up?

O'BRIEN

Mrs. Nusbaum, where was your husband last seen?

Bubbles spreads her arms to encompass the room.

BUBBLES

Here. My husband was last seen entering this room.

THE EMPRESS

This is Dad's room.

SHAMIKA

'Dad's room'?



SPIKE

His Sanctum Sanctorum.

THE EMPRESS

This is where my father did all his best work. His combined office, library, laboratory. When Dad was in a creative mood, he would lock himself in here for days.

SPIKE

Or weeks.

THE EMPRESS

We were forbidden to bother him. Every night, we'd leave food and drinks outside the door, and, in the morning, we'd find the empty pizza boxes.

SHAMIKA

Was there anything unusual about that?

THE EMPRESS

Except for the fact that we were leaving him Chinese food, no.

SPIKE

Tell her about the Danish.

SHAMIKA

The Danish?

Sherlock writes ponderously in his notebook.

SHERLOCK

'The Danish.'

SPIKE

Yeah. Every other time my father sequestered himself, we were required to leave an assortment of Danish outside the door.

The Empress nods.

THE EMPRESS

No prune.

SHAMIKA

No prune?

SPIKE

No prune Danish in the assortment.

Sherlock writes into his notebook with slow solemnity.

SHERLOCK

(ponderously)

'No prune.'

THE EMPRESS

And then, suddenly, Dad would emerge with something brilliant. I remember the day he invented Penisillin. He came charging out of this room shouting, "Eureka! Bubbles, I've got it!" and "My God! What has that animal been eating?"

Bubbles sighs.

BUBBLES

Poor Sweetums always got blamed.

SHAMIKA

Doesn't your father have a laboratory?

BUBBLES

Well... Sometimes he uses our kitchen. But he always cleans up after himself.

SHERLOCK

Mrs. Nusbaum, what security measures do you have on these premises?

BUBBLES

Oh, we always lock the front door when we go to bed. But we do keep a key under the mat.

SHAMIKA

Ms. Nusbaum, aren't you concerned about burglars?

Bubbles considers this.

BUBBLES

(scoffing)

N-n-n-o-o.

Bubbles looks down at Sweetums.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Sweetums? Are we worried about burglars?

Sweetums bares a row of significant fangs.

THE EMPRESS

Trust me. These are the most burglarproof premises in New York City.

SHERLOCK

Excuse me, but, on behalf of the New York City Police Department, may I ask do you have a license for Sweetums?

O'Brien and Shamika are impressed. It is a good question. They turn to Bubbles, clearly interested in her answer.

BUBBLES

You know, Officer Uhlrich? That's an interesting story. I brought Sweetums to the veterinarian to get the necessary shots.

FLASHBACK - INT. VETERINARIAN'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bubbles, seen from behind, enters the veterinarian's crowded waiting room, with Sweetums, unseen, beside her.

The other PET OWNERS—and their PETS—blanch in terror.

BACK TO PRESENT

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

But as soon as we entered the waiting room, the other animals became so agitated that we were requested to leave.

Bubbles looks sympathetically down at Sweetums.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Those other animals were so unfriendly. Weren't they, Sweetums?

FLASHBACK - INT. VETERINARIAN'S WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Pets are going ballistic and the Pet Owners are equally terrified.

BACK TO PRESENT

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

You would not believe the commotion poor Sweetums caused. I didn't think a goldfish could look frightened, but now I know better.

INSERT - A FRIGHTENED GOLDFISH, a computer-generated character, gapes wide-eyed through the wall of its bowl.

BUBBLES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And didn't that glass tank just make its buggy eyes look even bigger? I thought they'd pop out of its fishy head.

BACK TO SCENE

Bubbles giggles.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Anyway, I refused to leave until the doctor gave Sweetums the necessary shots. And all the other animals were getting noisier and noisier. Finally, the veterinarian agreed. He used a dart gun from across the room.

FLASHBACK - INT. VETERINARIAN'S WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sweetums is cornered, crouching, with fangs bared, preparing to spring toward the camera.

BACK TO PRESENT

Bubbles addresses Sweetums sympathetically.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

That mean doctor hurt you, didn't he? And that made you so unhappy. Didn't it, my angel?

FLASHBACK - INT. VETERINARIAN'S WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A dart, flying in from off screen, hits Sweetums in the rump and Sweetums springs toward the camera.

BACK TO PRESENT

Bubbles looks remorseful.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

I offered to pay for the destroyed furniture and to reimburse the other owners for the losses of their pets, but they just gave me the papers and asked me to leave. Immediately. They were so rude. We are never going back to that mean doctor again, are we, Sweetums?

Sweetums shakes his/her head in agreement.

Shamika and O'Brien react again to the cognition implied by Sweetum's headshake.

SHAMIKA

May I ask what type of animal  
Sweetums is?

BUBBLES

(disapprovingly)

Oh, Detective, my family doesn't  
believe in assigning labels to the  
things we love.

SHAMIKA

Let me ask it this way. If you  
wanted to breed Sweetums, what  
species would you use?

BUBBLES

(smoothly)

Well, I think that depends on what  
type of offspring you would like  
to get.

SHERLOCK

How did you find Sweetums?

BUBBLES

Oh, Detective. We didn't find  
Sweetums. Sweetums found us.  
Sweetums followed my husband home  
one day.

Bubbles beams down at the creature.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

We still don't know whether  
Sweetums was looking for  
companionship or a meal.

O'BRIEN

(chilled)

Excuse me, are you saying you are  
not certain whether Sweetums  
wanted your husband as company or  
dinner?

Bubbles looks surprised.

BUBBLES

You know, Detective, I never  
thought of that possibility.

Bubbles looks sternly down at Sweetums.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Sweetums? Were you thinking of  
eating Daddy?

Sweetums looks sheepish.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

(accusatory)

Sweetums, you are looking  
sheepish.

THE EMPRESS

Hah! That's the first time  
Sweetums has resembled a known  
species.

BUBBLES

(severely)

Bad bad Sweetums. No good. No  
eating Daddy.

Bubbles waits.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Sweetums, did you hear me? I said,  
"No eating Daddy."

Sweetums nods in agreement.

Shamika and O'Brien react again to the cognition implied by  
Sweetum's nod.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Okay then; where were we?

Sherlock points to the Carnegie Hall poster.

SHERLOCK

Who is Judy?

Spike and Bubbles look at The Empress.

The Empress becomes still and her eyes moisten. She bites her lips in refusal.

O'BRIEN

Would Judy have any reason to harm your father?

The Empress gives one of her rare small wry smiles.

THE EMPRESS

No. They liked each other.

O'BRIEN

We still need to interview her. Do you know where we can find her?

THE EMPRESS

Why? Trust me; Judy has nothing to do with this case.

O'BRIEN

We still need to speak with her.

The Empress smirks.

THE EMPRESS

Okay. Would you like to speak with her now?

O'Brien nods.

The Empress sighs.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

(wryly)

Spike, would you get Judy? They want to interview her.

Spike and The Empress laugh.

SPIKE

(grinning)

Surely. Where is she?

The Empress points to the steamer trunk in the corner of the room.



O'Brien and Shamika look at each other concerned.

Spike gets the trunk and carries it to the center of the room.

They all gather around it.

The Empress kneels and lifts the lid.

INSERT - JUDY LYING IN STATE ON A WHITE SATIN MATTRESS

JUDY, a small computer-generated woman, young, gorgeous, with a sultry voice and voluptuous physique, is dressed in a chic black silk gown that would grace any cocktail lounge.

Judy is not a ventriloquist's dummy, but she is dependent upon The Empress as her source of animation. When contact, even through a shared object, breaks between them, Judy immediately becomes inanimate, as she appears in her trunk. Most importantly, her raucous, raunchy, sardonic, enormously confident and popular personality is in direct contrast to and a profound irritant to The Empress.

BACK TO SCENE

Shamika recovers first.

SHAMIKA

A dummy? Judy is a ventriloquist's dummy?

THE EMPRESS

She's no dummy. Judy is one of a kind.

As The Empress looks down upon her erstwhile partner, she wears the sad smile of old friends now estranged. This is her hurt.

O'BRIEN

She is beautiful.

THE EMPRESS

(tearful)

Yes, she is.

The Empress reaches out to brush an invisible film of dust off Judy's cheek. Hesitates. Sadly draws her hand back.

O'BRIEN

Tell us about her.

THE EMPRESS

We were entertainers. We called ourselves "Judy and Jody".

The Empress smirks wryly.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

Even then, she came first.

SPIKE

(gently)

You were some team. I saw you chug a pitcher of beer once as Judy cheered you on. Then later she held your head over the toilet while you puked most of it back up.

SHAMIKA

So what happened?

The Empress looks stricken.

THE EMPRESS

She broke my heart.

SHAMIKA

How?

THE EMPRESS

She kept trying to take over the act. One time on stage, she started speaking Latin.

SHAMIKA

What did she say?

THE EMPRESS

I don't know. I don't speak Latin. She was no longer a puppet. She was a channel.

SHERLOCK  
UHF, cable or dish?

BUBBLES  
(tenderly)  
You were good with Judy.

THE EMPRESS  
(insincerely)  
No, I wasn't.

BUBBLES  
(decisively)  
You were good.

THE EMPRESS  
(defiantly proud)  
I was good.

The Empress points accusingly at Judy.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)  
But she is better. Brighter.  
Better looking. More popular. We  
went on a double date once. Both  
guys called her afterwards.

SHAMIKA  
Can we meet her?

The Empress hesitates, sighs, shrugs and then tenderly  
lifts Judy from the trunk.

SPIKE  
The Prodigal Daughter has  
returned.

The Empress sits and places Judy on her lap. She relaxes  
and she and Judy seem to merge.

Judy settles her hips and sighs. She opens her eyes. She  
turns to The Empress, smiles broadly and gives her a hug.

JUDY

(brightly)

Hello. So how have you been? I have missed you. Can I have a cigarette?

THE EMPRESS

You are flammable, not to mention inanimate.

JUDY

Yeah, I know. It slows me down. Can I have a cigarette?

BUBBLES

(scolding)

Cigarettes are bad for you.

JUDY

What do I care? I ain't got no lungs. Besides, cancer doesn't scare me; termites scare me.

Judy sees Sweetums. She freezes. Her eyes widen and splinters rise on the back of her neck.

JUDY (CONT'D)

(bellows)

Cave canem! What in God's name is that?

BUBBLES

That's our dog.

JUDY

Yeah, and I'm Pinocchio. Ain't no dogs look like that.

Sweetums rumbles.

THE EMPRESS

Keep it up. You want to become a chew toy?

JUDY

Hey, Fido,...

Judy extends her middle finger at Sweetums.

JUDY (CONT'D)  
...fetch this.

Sweetums rumbles again and shakes a bristling head.

The others cringe.

SPIKE  
(awed)  
I don't believe this. Sweetums is  
laughing.

Sweetums rumbles louder and nods.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
Judy cracks Sweetums up.

Judy softens and leans into The Empress, looking up into her face.

JUDY  
We had some good times you and me.  
Remember that tennis trophy we  
won?

Judy points to a photograph on the wall.

INSERT - THE TENNIS TROPHY PHOTOGRAPH

A photograph of Judy and The Empress holding opposite handles of a tennis trophy cup. Judy is elevated off the ground. Each is smiling and giving a thumbs up at the camera.

BACK TO SCENE

THE EMPRESS  
It was good until you tried to  
control the act.

Judy sits upright. It's her turn to be resentful.

JUDY

Me controlling the act? If I were controlling the act, you'd be sitting on my lap with my hand up your ass.

SHAMIKA

Stanley Nusbaum is missing. He is believed to have been kidnapped.

JUDY

(deeply  
distressed)

That's terrible.

Judy turns to Bubbles.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Oh, Bubbles, I am so sorry. He's a nice guy. I like him.

Shamika and O'Brien pause, expectant.

Judy says nothing further.

O'BRIEN

(whispering to  
Shamika)

Did she say the "a" word?

Shamika shakes her head.

SHAMIKA

No.

O'BRIEN

Hmmm.

Shamika and O'Brien look at each other.

Judy nods toward O'Brien, Shamika and Sherlock.

JUDY

(dubiously)

Who do we have here?

SPIKE

It's "Whom do we have here?" Whom,  
damn it!

JUDY

Whom cares?

THE EMPRESS

They are the police.

Judy jerks a thumb at Sherlock.

JUDY

Even this goofy looking one?

SHAMIKA

(quickly)

Do you know anything that might  
help?

JUDY

Yeah. A brain transplant and  
intensive psychotherapy. But,  
regarding Stanley, no.

SHAMIKA

What can any of you tell us about  
Vivian Lamour?

Spike becomes grimly silent and the Pencil quivers.

THE EMPRESS

(indifferent)

Not much. Dad was the only one who  
ever dealt with her. That was the  
strictest part of her contract.  
The rest of us don't even know  
what she looks like.

The Empress's face hardens.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

She still owes us one book. When I threatened to sue her for breach of contract, she became enraged. She claimed that her creativity was being stifled. That she was sick of her character. She wanted to murder Passion.

O'Brien and Shamika look at each other.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

Dad let her go. He said it was okay.

Spike and the Pencil relax.

The Empress looks at O'Brien and Shamika meaningfully.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

She's someone you should be speaking to.

Spike and the Pencil stiffen.

SHAMIKA

Do you have any idea how we can find her?

Something occurs to Judy. She turns to look at Spike with a grace that is eerily natural. She studies him for a moment. Then smiles.

JUDY

So, Spike, how you doin'? Still got lead in your pencil?

Spike and the Pencil grin.

Judy isn't smiling.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Have you spoken to Vivian lately?

Spike's face and the Pencil harden.

Shamika and O'Brien are shocked.



JUDY (CONT'D)

I heard that argument you and your father had about Vivian Lamour. Sounded like Czar Nicholas II's send off party.

Spike becomes menacing.

Sweetums glances protectively at Judy.

Judy remains unfazed.

SHAMIKA

(to Spike)

Your sister said your father was the only one who ever dealt with her. Do you know Vivian Lamour?

Spike resists... Then yields.

SPIKE

I know her. I can't stand her, but I know her.

O'BRIEN

Mr. Nusbaum, we need to speak with Vivian Lamour.

Spike glares at O'Brien.

O'Brien stares back unmoved.

Shamika interrupts.

SHAMIKA

Can you think of anyone who might want to harm Stanley?

Bubbles, Spike and The Empress consider this.

BUBBLES

Stanley has never been popular with the financial community. They resent his refusal to share his investment strategies.

Bubbles shrugs.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

But he doesn't have any. As he has so often said to me, "Bubbles, I don't know I'm going to buy something until I'm counting my change." And "That animal did it again!"

Bubbles pauses, reorients.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

But regarding your question... Certainly anyone who has ever been turned down for a research grant might have a grudge against Stanley.

The Empress groans.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

And, of course, someone who is applying for funding might see abducting Stanley as a way of influencing him.

The Empress groans.

THE EMPRESS

(muttering to herself)

Great. The suspect list has just grown to the size of one of our smaller states. It now includes every crackpot, screwball, and, yes, every asshole and nut who has had an idea and enough postage to ask Dad for money.

SHAMIKA

(to The Empress)

Did your father ever discuss any of the grant proposals with you?

THE EMPRESS

Every insane one of them.

O'BRIEN

Has your father ever received any letters that were threatening or bizarre?

The Empress laughs and points to an overloaded desk.

INSERT - A VERY LARGE, OVERLOADED DESK WITH THREE INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE TRAYS WITH LARGE LABELS INDICATING: "SANE", "THREATENING", "BIZARRE"

The amount of correspondence stacked in each category increases exponentially in that order. The number of trays in each category may also increase.

BACK TO SCENE

SHAMIKA

Ms. Nusbaum, how do you define 'bizarre'?

The Empress takes the top letter off the "BIZARRE" tray and begins reading.

THE EMPRESS

Dear Stanley, I refuse to bear any more of your children. I may be an alien from the planet Zircon, but I demand respect if not love.

The Empress looks up enquiringly.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

You want another one?

JUDY

I'd like another one.

SHAMIKA

How do you distinguish between Bizarre and Threatening?

THE EMPRESS

If that last writer had expressed the intention of abducting my father to "The Planet Zircon in the Numph Galaxy" and plying him with anal probes, that would be Threatening.

O'BRIEN

You get many of those?

The Empress points to:

INSERT - ANOTHER FULL CORRESPONDENCE TRAY WITH THE LARGE LABEL: "THE PLANET ZIRCON"

The SLEAZY TABLOID with the headline "STANLEY NUSBAUM PAWN OF THE ALIENS" is taped to the tray.

BACK TO SCENE

The Empress transfers the letter onto this tray.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Ms. Nusbaum, we will need your help going over everyone who is currently applying for a grant.

The Empress groans.

SHAMIKA

And last year's list of everyone who was rejected.

The Empress pantomimes slitting her wrists.

BUBBLES

Certainly, Detective. We will do everything we can to get my husband back. Won't we, Jody?

The Empress agonizes, weighing how much she really wants her father back.

THE EMPRESS

(defeated)

Yeah. Surely, Ma.

The Empress shudders and looks heavenward.

Shamika and O'Brien look at each other.

SHAMIKA

(reluctantly,  
struggling to be  
tactful)

Mrs. Nusbaum, we must also consider that your husband's disappearance is related to someone who was affected by...

BUBBLES

Penisillin?

Shamika and O'Brien look at each other. Shamika nods.

Bubbles is saddened.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

My husband has never recovered from the Penisillin debacle.

SPIKE

No one has, Ma. No one has.

JUDY

Penisillin? Excuse me. I've been truncated. Will somebody please tell me, what is Penisillin?

THE EMPRESS

Erection on demand.

JUDY

So? Of course it's erection on demand. You can't have erection on demand woman.

SPIKE

That would be a fallacy.

The Empress eyes Judy resentfully.

THE EMPRESS

Ma? Does the fireplace still work?

BUBBLES

I don't know. We haven't used it  
in a while.

THE EMPRESS

Let's try it, okay? Anybody want  
some marshmallows?

O'BRIEN

I'm good for a couple.

Judy sticks her tongue out at him.

O'Brien is shocked by her ability to perform the act.

O'BRIEN

Did you see that? She stuck her  
tongue out at me.

BUBBLES

(completely  
missing the point,  
scolding)

I know. I'm sorry. Judy, stop  
being rude. Put the feelings into  
words, not unpleasant actions.

THE EMPRESS

Take a look at this.

The Empress aims a remote control at the television.

INSERT - THE PENISILLIN COMMERCIAL

INT. THE LIVING ROOM OF LOU AND ROSE - AN AVERAGE WEEKDAY  
NIGHT

SUPER: "The following is a paid advertisement for Nusbaum  
Pharmaceuticals"

LOU and ROSE, epitomizing the average, middle-aged, White,  
American couple, are sitting on their living room couch,  
holding hands, lit by the flickering television facing  
them.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Lou and Rose were your average,  
middle-aged, American couple.

INT. LOU'S AND ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Their bed is just off screen. The night table beside it is shaking spasmodically as they attempt to have sex.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They made love once a month—if  
they weren't mad at each other.

Seen from directly over their bed, Rose is looking up from beneath Lou, bored and silent.

Lou is panting loudly and struggling on top of her. Lou's back is exceedingly hairy.

ROSE

I ran into Ruth Melman at the deli  
counter today. She's getting a hip  
replacement.

Lou gives a loud gasp and collapses upon her in defeat.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

But, somehow, things had changed  
between them.

ROSE

Lou, that water stain on the  
ceiling is back.

EXT. ROSE'S ROSE GARDEN - DAY

Lou observes Rose watering the roses.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Lou felt embarrassed, inadequate.  
He felt like Rose was blaming him.

Rose is watering the roses with a limp hose trickling water.

INT. DOOR OF UROLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

SIGN ON THE DOOR READS: "JAMES LANE MD UROLOGIST"

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Lou sought medical help from his urologist.

INT. UROLOGIST'S EXAMINING ROOM - SAME DAY

Lou, wearing a hospital gown, poses on all fours on the examining table, facing the camera.

The UROLOGIST, in his fifties and wearing a lab coat, is standing behind Lou with his right arm extended off screen.

UROLOGIST

Well, your prostate gland seems to be fine.

Lou lowers his head and looks down the length of his body through the arch between his arms and legs at the Urologist.

LOU

But, Doctor, why do I find it so difficult to achieve an erection?

Urologist pulls his gloved right hand back synchronized with:

SFX THE SOUND OF A POPPING CHAMPAGNE CORK.

The Urologist crouches and looks back at Lou through the arch formed by his legs. The Urologist begins stroking his chin with his right hand, still covered by the used glove, as he considers this question.

UROLOGIST

Hmmm.

INT. UROLOGIST'S CONSULTING ROOM - SAME DAY

Lou and Rose are seated before the Urologist's desk.

The Urologist sits behind the desk, still wearing the used glove.



UROLOGIST (CONT'D)

Lou, you are suffering from a case of erectile dysfunction disorder.

ROSE

And I thought it was because I put on fifty pounds. What a relief. Now I know it's all his fault.

Lou is mortified.

UROLOGIST

Now, Lou, there's nothing to be embarrassed about. Seventy percent of all us men over fifty experience some degree of erectile dysfunction.

The Urologist smiles sympathetically.

Lou smiles hopefully.

LOU

Are... Are you saying you are one of us, Doctor?

UROLOGIST

Hell no. I'm a real man. But, for the rest of you, there's Penisillin.

The Urologist extends a pill bottle of Penisillin.

INSERT - PILL BOTTLE LABELED: "PENISILLIN"

BACK TO UROLOGIST'S CONSULTING ROOM

LOU

Penisillin, Doctor? How do I know it will work?

ROSE

It worked for the Melmans. That's why Ruth needs the hip replacement.

UROLOGIST

And Penisillin is a product of  
Nusbaum Pharmaceuticals.

ROSE

Nusbaum Pharmaceuticals? Didn't  
they invent the pill that cures  
the twenty-four hour virus in just  
forty-eight hours?

UROLOGIST

Yes. Nusbaum Pharmaceuticals. A  
division of the Nusbaum Center for  
Medical Research. The people who  
perfected the hemorrhoid  
transplant.

The Urologist looks into the camera and smiles.

UROLOGIST (CONT'D)

Nusbaum. A name you can trust.

LOU

Are there any side effects?

UROLOGIST

In a very small percentage of  
cases, we have had reports of some  
facial blushing. But we like to  
think of it as a triumphant  
afterglow.

The Urologist chuckles and Lou and Rose smile.

UROLOGIST (CONT'D)

And there is a slight risk of  
priapism.

LOU

Priapism, Doctor?

UROLOGIST

It's a condition where an erection  
will not go down.

Rose looks nervous.

Lou looks thrilled.

UROLOGIST (CONT'D)  
It's named after the Greek god of  
fertility, Priapus.

The Urologist points to:

INSERT - PRIAPUS COAT HOOK

A sculptured coat hook, representing Priapus, hangs on the office wall with a coat hanging from it strategically.

BACK TO UROLOGIST'S CONSULTING ROOM

LOU  
Well, I'm willing to take that  
risk. What do I do?

UROLOGIST  
Take one pill every day for as  
long as you want to remain  
sexually active. The effect will  
wear off one month after you take  
your last pill.

LOU  
But, Doctor, how do I avoid  
getting an erection if I don't  
want one?

UROLOGIST  
(puzzled)  
Hmmm. No man has ever asked me  
that question before. Some wives  
have... but... never mind. Don't  
worry, Lou. Erections will only  
occur after some form of external  
stimulation.

Lou and Rose nod.

UROLOGIST (CONT'D)  
Oral stimulation has been proven  
to be the most effective.

ROSE

(reconsidering the  
whole arrangement)

Lou, you know I love you just the  
way you are.

UROLOGIST

But manual stimulation has also  
been proven to be quite adequate.

Lou and Rose hold hands and gaze adoringly into each  
other's eyes.

LOU

Well, I'm convinced, Doctor. Write  
me a prescription.

Lou and Rose prepare to leave the Urologist's consulting  
room. Lou and the Urologist shake hands. The Urologist is  
still wearing the used glove.

UROLOGIST

Remember, Lou, if you get an  
erection that lasts for twenty-  
four hours, call me.

LOU

Don't worry, Doc. If I get an  
erection that lasts for twenty-  
four hours, I'm calling everybody.

Lou, Rose and the Urologist chuckle good-naturedly.

INT. LOU'S AND ROSE'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

SUPER: "THAT NIGHT"

The previously noted night table is shaking rhythmically as  
Lou and Rose have passionate and noisy sex on the bed  
beside it off screen. There is an open bottle of Penisillin  
on the table. Their rhythms cause the bottle to walk  
towards the edge. Ultimately, the bottle tips over, sending  
a shower of pills over the edge.

INSERT - A CONTINUOUS CURTAIN OF PILLS FALLING ACROSS A  
BLACK BACKGROUND

ROSE (O.S.)  
 Oh yes, Lou! Yes! Yes! God bless  
 Nusbaum Pharmaceuticals!

Lou and Rose groan in ecstasy off screen.

ROSE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Oh, Lou. It's just like being a  
 bride with my first husband again.

SUPER: "PENISILLIN MAKING LIFE HARDER SINCE 2003"

ROSE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Lou, you still haven't fixed that  
 water stain on the ceiling.

SUPER: "A PRODUCT OF NUSBAUM PHARMACEUTICALS"

BACK TO SCENE

The Empress looks up startled, then removes a Penisillin pill from her hair. Looks at it puzzled, then tosses it away.

JUDY  
 Wow!

SHAMIKA  
 Oh, yes. 'Wow!'

SPIKE  
 We couldn't make enough of the  
 stuff to keep it on the shelves.

BUBBLES  
 It was never meant to be taken  
 daily forever.

THE EMPRESS  
 As more people took it for longer  
 periods of time, it built up in  
 their systems.

SPIKE  
 We were crazy to think there would  
 be no side effects.

JUDY  
(concerned)  
Uh oh.

THE EMPRESS  
The triumphant afterglow? It was  
merely a blush. A blood pressure  
thing.

BUBBLES  
A minor physiological reaction.

SPIKE  
Yeah. Compared with other warnings  
about drowsiness, dry mouth and  
driving an eighteen-wheeler.

BUBBLES  
Ears. Ears show blushes most  
readily.

THE EMPRESS  
Penisillin makes your ears turn  
red.

BUBBLES  
(defensively)  
But only under very specific  
circumstances. And only for  
twenty-four hours.

THE EMPRESS  
Only when you have an orgasm.

SHAMIKA  
If you're on this stuff for too  
long and you have an orgasm, your  
ears will turn red for twenty-four  
hours.

Judy's jaw drops.

JUDY  
An Orgasmeter?!

THE EMPRESS

And Penisillin can't tell the difference between intercourse and masturbation.

SPIKE

Penisillin doesn't care. It's a pill.

JUDY

Lordy, Lordy!

SHAMIKA

Oh yes. Lordy, Lordy. Penisillin made one of our most private behaviors blazingly public. Penisillin challenged us to acknowledge and accept our own sexuality and the sexuality of others.

SPIKE

Americans have never been able to do that.

SHAMIKA

Penisillin created chaos in American sexual history.

JUDY

I can imagine.

THE EMPRESS

Imagine your husband coming home from "Poker Night with the Boys"...

SHAMIKA

Imagine passing strangers on the street... Your coworkers. Your boss... Imagine your clergyman preaching from the pulpit... Judges, mayors, senators, governors...

SPIKE

Imagine...

INSERT - THE PUBLIC DOMAIN "OFFICIAL PORTRAIT" OF THE CURRENT U.S. PRESIDENT TAKEN FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS' "FREE TO USE AND REUSE: PRESIDENTIAL PORTRAITS" GALLERY, WITH THE PRESIDENT'S EARS COLORED RED.

<https://www.loc.gov/free-to-use/presidential-portraits/>

BACK TO SCENE

JUDY

And the names?

SPIKE

Whenever something big happens, people need to give it a name. And, whether it's the media or the masses, somebody always comes up with a name that sticks.

THE EMPRESS

In this case, there were two.

BUBBLES

In polite company, it's "Penisillin."

SPIKE

But, for the rest of us, it's always been "Mr. Baldy."

Spike laughs raucously.

BUBBLES

(reprovingly)

My son has an Elizabethan sense of humor.

SPIKE

Sorry, Ma, but is it any surprise that both the pill and Dad have the same sobriquet? "Mr. Baldy"

BUBBLES

(deeply wounded)

You would not believe the hate mail we get.



THE EMPRESS

(defensively)

Ma, we do get thank you notes.

BUBBLES

From divorce lawyers. Of course,  
the FDA pulled Penisillin off the  
market immediately.

THE EMPRESS

You have no idea how many foreign  
countries still want to buy all  
we've got.

BUBBLES

But it's too late.

Bubbles is saddened.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

They will never forgive us.

Bubbles sighs.

SPIKE

They never liked us anyway, Ma.

BUBBLES

We are unconventional.

SPIKE

Unconventional. I love that word.  
It's like there's a convention  
that meets every year—presumably  
in Geneva—to decide what's normal.  
And we never get invited.

BUBBLES

And you, Detective O'Brien? Has my  
husband's creation affected your  
life?

O'BRIEN

Not me. I wasn't allowed to take  
it. I have problems with my  
prostrate gland.

SPIKE  
 (snarling)  
 It's prostate! Not prostrate!

O'BRIEN  
 (snarling back)  
 If it knocks you on your ass, it's  
 prostrate.  
 (gently to  
 Bubbles)  
 So don't worry about me, Mrs.  
 Nusbaum. Besides, I never blush.

SHAMIKA  
 He's a carrier; he makes other  
 people blush.

JUDY  
 How has the family responded?

THE EMPRESS  
 Listen.

The Empress goes to the telephone and plays the recorded message on the answering machine. The message was recorded by Bubbles, but inadvertently includes background comments made by The Empress.

BUBBLES (V.O.)  
 Hello. This is Nusbaum  
 Pharmaceuticals. I am Marsha  
 Nusbaum, but you can call me  
 Bubbles.

The Empress winces.

BUBBLES (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Nusbaum Pharmaceuticals accepts  
 full responsibility for any  
 distress caused by our product  
 known as Penisillin. Some people,  
 my son included, refer to it as  
 Mr. Baldy, but I find that term  
 vulgar and offensive.

THE EMPRESS (V.O.)  
 Ma-a.

The Empress cringes.

BUBBLES (V.O.)

That's my daughter, Jody. She has problems with anger management.

The Empress writhes.

BUBBLES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

No, sweetheart. Something bad has happened, and we have to take full responsibility. Anyway... If you feel that a simple apology will suffice, please press or say one. If you would like a refund, please press or say two. If you feel like leaping from a tall building because Penisillin has ruined your life, please press or say three.

The Empress shudders and pauses the answering machine.

THE EMPRESS

Our lawyers are apoplectic about that one.

BUBBLES

The law is about taking responsibility. Lawyers are about the other guy taking responsibility.

The Empress restarts the answering machine.

BUBBLES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If you would like to sue us for every dime we're worth, please wait until my husband returns. Thank you.

The Empress stops the recording and, defeated, slumps into her chair.

JUDY

Bravo! Bravissimo!

SHAMIKA

Mrs. Nusbaum, we need to speak among ourselves. May we use this room?

BUBBLES

Certainly. David, Jody. Let's leave these officers to get on with their investigation.

Bubbles, Sweetums and Spike leave, followed by The Empress carrying Judy, who blows them a kiss as she leaves.

PAUSE.

O'BRIEN

So what do you think?

SHERLOCK

They are one strange family.

SHAMIKA

Amen, brother.

SHERLOCK

(smitten)

Except for The Emp... I think Jody is incredible.

O'BRIEN

Judy disturbs me. I don't care if Sweetums thinks she's the funniest thing since the girl from Nantucket, what is she?

SHERLOCK

A ventriloquist's dummy?

O'BRIEN

A dummy who smokes cigarettes and can give you the finger?

SHAMIKA

And, even stranger, she doesn't call Stanley an "asshole."

SHERLOCK

And Sweetums? What the hell is that?

SHAMIKA

(irritated, but  
uncomfortably  
uncertain)

The license says it's a dog.

O'Brien and Sherlock laugh derisively.

SHERLOCK

No way that's a dog. That thing looks like a cross between a porcupine, a hyena, and a very pissed off werewolf.

O'BRIEN

C'mon, Shamika, what do you call something with four legs and a tail that nods when it agrees with you? And laughs. Dogs don't laugh.

SHERLOCK

He's right.

O'BRIEN

And what's the story with the pencil sticking through that guy's ear? Did you see the way that thing moves? Like it reads his thoughts?

SHERLOCK

I have a theory about that.

O'Brien and Shamika grimace in anticipation.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

I think it's an underdeveloped Siamese twin.

O'BRIEN

Oh yeah? And he painted it yellow and stamped Eberhard Faber on it?

Sherlock nods, winks knowingly and wags his finger.

SHERLOCK  
It's a disguise.

Shamika is nonplussed.

O'BRIEN  
(jerking his head  
dismissively  
toward Sherlock)  
Dis guy's crazy.

Shamika becomes increasingly troubled.

SHAMIKA  
What have we gotten ourselves  
into?

O'BRIEN  
I've got a better question. "Why  
us?" Why were we given the worst  
police investigation in New York  
City history? Finding the City's  
richest, most bizarre citizen.  
Mr. Baldy.

Shamika and Sherlock consider this.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)  
You know the politics. The cases  
that will end up with triumphant  
police officers being interviewed  
on TV are gobbled up by the higher  
ranks. When was the last time you  
got a case like that?

SHAMIKA  
So what are you saying?

O'BRIEN

Do they expect him to be found? Do they even want him found? And who gets the blame if he's not found? Do you get the feeling that the Top Brass are laughing their asses off about sticking us with this case? I repeat, "Why us?"

SHERLOCK

The administration recognizes the quality of our work.

Shamika and O'Brien look at each other and laugh.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

(hurt)

What? What's so funny?

O'BRIEN

Sherlock, look at us. Our careers have not been... stellar. I have antagonized too many of the brass. And they know this is my last case. I am retiring after this. And you...? Face it. We're losers.

SHERLOCK

Uh uh. No way. Not me. You may be a loser. But not me. I am an effective and respected police office.

O'BRIEN

'Sherlock'?

SHERLOCK

What?

O'BRIEN

No. I'm asking you, why do you think everybody calls you "Sherlock"?

SHERLOCK

It's a tribute to my investigative skills.

O'BRIEN

Sherlock, no offense, but you couldn't find your ass in the dark with both hands. People call you 'Sherlock' because it's just easier than responding to everything you say with "No shit, Sherlock."

Sherlock looks hurt. He turns to Shamika.

SHERLOCK

Shamika?

SHAMIKA

(reproachfully)

O'Brien.

O'BRIEN

No. If this case is going to be the last coating of caca on our careers, let's at least be honest with each other.

SHAMIKA

Where does honesty end and cruelty begin?

SHERLOCK

(to Shamika)

Is it true?

SHAMIKA

Yes and no. You are an effective police officer. And O'Brien and I do respect you. But... Sometimes, you get so caught up with procedures and details...

SHERLOCK

Say it.

SHAMIKA

You lose people. People are messy.

O'BRIEN

Especially this family.



Sherlock, hurt, silently integrates this.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

That's why we're here. But you, Shamika? What did you do to get here?

SHAMIKA

I volunteered.

O'BRIEN

(astonished)

Why?

SHAMIKA

I owe him. I went to college on a Nusbaum scholarship. I got my degree in English thanks to Stanley Nusbaum.

O'Brien nods.

O'BRIEN

Okay then. So let's do this. This is my last case, but you two are still gonna be here after I'm gone. So I say to hell with those who have no faith in us. We are in this together. And we're gonna find Mr. Baldy.

Shamika and Sherlock nod in uncertain agreement.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

You've heard of the Mod Squad? We're the Odd Squad. So let's start thinking and acting like New York City cops. Sherlock, you interviewed the neighbors. What have you got?

Sherlock regains his composure, stands and, with a profound and maddening deliberateness, takes out his notebook.

O'Brien and Shamika squirm with anticipated impatience.

Sherlock coughs to clear his throat.

## SHERLOCK

On Monday, \_\_\_\_\_, at approximately eleven hundred hours, Officer Timothy Uhlrich interviewed Frederick and Shirley Waxman, residing at seven eighty-six Central Park West, the townhouse immediately next to the domicile of the missing person. What follows is the transcript of that interview:

FLASHBACK - INT. THE WAXMAN APARTMENT - DAY

FREDERICK and SHIRLEY WAXMAN, an elderly couple, are seated on their living room couch staring into the camera.

Sherlock's voiced over narrative is lip-synched with all their statements, as they remain silent.

## SHERLOCK (V.O.)

Officer Uhlrich: What can you tell me about Stanley Nusbaum and the Nusbaum family?

Frederick Waxman: We didn't know him all that well. He always kept to himself.

Shirley Waxman: She's nice. He's an asshole.

Frederick Waxman: She doesn't mean that.

Shirley Waxman: Don't tell me what I mean. He's an asshole.

Frederick Waxman: I wouldn't say that. He seemed nice enough. He was quiet. He always kept to himself, but he was always polite when we met.

Shirley Waxman: No, Fred. You're talking about the ax murderer they arrested three houses down.

Frederick Waxman: Yeah? So who are we talking about?

Shirley Waxman: Stanley Nusbaum. The Nusbaums from next door.

Frederick Waxman: Him? He's an asshole.

Shirley Waxman shrugs in obvious agreement.

SHERLOCK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Shirley Waxman: So what have I been saying?

Frederick Waxman: Stanley Nusbaum? I thought we were talking about the ax murderer they arrested three houses down.

Shirley Waxman: He doesn't listen, this man. It drives me crazy. I always have to repeat myself fifty times and...

BACK TO PRESENT

O'Brien abruptly and decisively interrupts this flashback.

O'BRIEN

Okay, Sherlock. We get the picture. Any other thoughts?

SHAMIKA

'Asshole'?

SHERLOCK

Exactly, asshole.

SHAMIKA

We do a background check as part of every missing person investigation. We interview neighbors, business associates... You know.

O'Brien nods.

SHAMIKA (CONT'D)

So why is it that, whenever we ask anybody about Stanley Nusbaum, the word "asshole" always comes up? I mean, we might expect it from a disgruntled neighbor. But his Rabbi?

O'Brien listens attentively.

O'BRIEN

What are you getting at?

SHAMIKA

What does the word "asshole" suggest to you? Poor judgment. Impaired social skills. But this man is the head of one of the richest and most powerful corporations in America. And his generosity is legendary. If he wasn't such an asshole, he'd be a genius.

O'BRIEN

So?

SHAMIKA

He's got crowds of people pushing ideas at him. What if he stole one? What if he made a fortune on somebody else's idea?

O'Brien is favorably impressed by her suggestion.

O'BRIEN

Any other thoughts?

SHAMIKA

Have you noticed the way they speak?

SHERLOCK

(sudden  
realization)

Yeah, they talk funny.

SHAMIKA

They speak English. Real English. English as it is supposed to be spoken. They say, "Than we." They say, "Whom." Who the hell says 'whom' anymore? How many supposedly English-speaking people even know the difference between "then" and "than"? Let alone "me" and "myself"?

O'BRIEN

Me don't.

SHAMIKA

(gently)

And another thing. They each have a special relationship. Spike has his pencil. Bubbles has Sweetums. Jody has Judy. Hers is the saddest.

O'BRIEN

Is that important?

SHAMIKA

I don't know; maybe it's just sad.

SHERLOCK

Why would she be sad? She's beautiful. Talented. She could be anyone she wants. She could have anyone she wants. She has marvelous organizational skills.

SHAMIKA

How would you like to be the sanest inmate in the madhouse?

Sherlock considers this.

O'BRIEN

So who do we interview next?

SHAMIKA

It's whom.

O'BRIEN

What?

SHAMIKA

It's whom do we interview next?

O'Brien is hurt, despite himself. He becomes sarcastic to cover it.

O'BRIEN

Well thank you, Ms. Pronunciation.

SHAMIKA

I just think that, if we are going to be working with a family for whom properly spoken English is very important, our credibility will be enhanced by speaking well.

O'BRIEN

Agreed. I will talk English good.

O'Brien turns to Sherlock.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Sherlock?

SHERLOCK

I don't even know what you're talking about.

SHAMIKA

Forget it.

O'BRIEN

So whom should we interview next?

LATER

The Empress sits at her desk, flanked by enormous stacks of grant proposals, with O'Brien and Shamika seated beside her.

Sherlock is looking through Stanley's telescope out at the stars.

THE EMPRESS

Detective O'Brien, we have thousands of grant applications. Can you tell me what you're looking for?

O'BRIEN

I don't know. I'm hoping we'll know it when we find it.

The Empress grimaces and shakes her head.

SHERLOCK

Your father has an incredible telescope.

THE EMPRESS

Astronomy is one of Dad's hobbies.

O'BRIEN

(with restrained irritation)

Officer Uhlrich, why don't you join us?

Sherlock joins them.

Judy lights a cigarette, and taps the ash into the empty ashtray on the desk.

THE EMPRESS

(resigned)

Okay, let's do this.

LATER

INSERT - THE SAME ASHTRAY LOADED WITH CIGARETTE BUTTS.

BACK TO SCENE

The team is obviously tired.

Judy slouches forward on The Empress' right knee, a cigarette with an extended sagging ash hangs from her mouth. The Empress thumbs through a stack of proposals, reading the titles. Judy reads with her.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

Cure for the common cold.

The Empress tosses it onto the rejected pile and reads the next proposal.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

Cold fission. Cold nuclear fission?

The Empress pauses. Her head wobbles side-to-side as she deliberates the desirability of pursuing this one.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)  
 (concludes  
 dismissively)

Nah.

The Empress tosses this grant proposal onto the rejected pile. She hesitates.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)  
 Fine. What the hell.

The Empress removes the proposal from the pile and stuffs it into her cleavage. She reads the next proposal.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)  
 Caucasian spirituals. Oops. That was from last year.

JUDY  
 (suddenly alert,  
 in stunned  
 disbelief)  
 What?

THE EMPRESS  
 Caucasian spirituals. Here! Look!

The Empress shoves the proposal in Judy's face. Judy places her cigarette in the ashtray. She takes the proposal in her hands and reads it. Judy looks up amazed.

JUDY  
 The First Abyssinian Church of Harlem received a one million dollar grant for research into Nineteenth Century Caucasian spirituals?

THE EMPRESS  
 (irritably)  
 Yeah. So?

JUDY  
 And your father gave it to them?



THE EMPRESS

Why is that any more bizarre than the million dollar grant my father gave to the guy who was training seeing-eye fish?

JUDY

You're shittin' me?

THE EMPRESS

They're intended to help blind swimmers.

Judy brays with laughter. She creaks with laughter. She laughs so hard she starts to disassemble herself. Her right arm falls off. She laughs even harder at this.

O'Brien starts laughing. He leans over and jams her arm back in.

Still laughing, Judy raises her arms. Her right arm is misarticulated. The palm is facing backwards. Judy sees this and laughs even harder.

O'Brien laughs harder. He pulls the arm out, correctly orients it, and shoves it back in.

They hug each other, laughing hysterically.

Throughout this episode, The Empress sits in seething silence.

Judy slowly regains her breath, gasping and coughing, as she wipes the tears from her eyes.

JUDY

We gotta find this guy. This world needs more trained fish.

O'BRIEN

I couldn't agree with you more.

THE EMPRESS

(defiantly)

You've heard of the Reformed, Conservative and Orthodox Jewish movements?

Shamika nods.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

Well, my father is a key figure in the Unorthodox Jewish movement. My father created the Clergy Exchange Program.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE - THE CLERGY EXCHANGE PROGRAM

INT. BLACK BAPTIST CHURCH - SUNDAY SERVICE

A HASSIDIC RABBI is on the pulpit quoting Genesis V 3-4.

HASSIDIC RABBI

(droning  
monotonously)

And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth. And the days of Adam after he begot Seth were eight hundred years...

INSERT - The CONGREGATION is comatose with boredom.

INT. THE BIMAH OF A HASSIDIC CONGREGATION - SABBATH SERVICE

A fiery Black Baptist MINISTER is on the bimah, exhorting the congregation loudly and passionately.

MINISTER

So I say to you all, "Hallelujah and praise Jesus!"

INT. THE MALE SECTION OF THIS CONGREGATION, INCLUDING A YOUTH WITH PAYES, THE SPIRAL SIDELOCKS WORN BY HASSIDIM. - CONTINUOUS

The jaws of these male congregants hang open in shock.

MINISTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(more loudly and  
passionately)

So I say to you again, "Somebody, give me a hallelujah and praise Jesus!"

The payes of this YOUTH rise straight up in shock.

BACK TO PRESENT

JUDY

So what happened?

THE EMPRESS

It was a triumph. My father held  
choir practice.

FLASHBACK - INT. BLACK BAPTIST CHURCH - CHOIR PRACTICE

The CHOIR belts out a subtitled gospel version of "Hevenu  
Shalom Aleicham." Jubilant!

BACK TO PRESENT

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

(conclusively)

That is my father.

JUDY

Wow!

The Empress holds out the CD titled: "HARLEM GOES HEBREW!"

INSERT - THE COVER OF THE "HARLEM GOES HEBREW!" CD.

A FEMALE SINGER has her arms outstretched and is smiling  
broadly. She has a gold Star of David cap on one of her top  
front incisors.

BACK TO SCENE

THE EMPRESS

You want a copy? It won a Grammy.

MANY MORE HOURS LATER

The team is utterly exhausted. Sherlock is barely  
conscious. Judy slouches farther forward, two cigarettes  
hang from her mouth with much longer ashes.

The Empress takes up the last proposal. She reads it in a  
hoarse, barely audible voice.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

The planet Zircon. A six million dollar grant is requested to reestablish communication with the planet Zircon.

The Empress wearily tosses this last proposal on the pile and leans back in exhaustion.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

(with finality)

That's the last of 'em.

O'BRIEN

What?

THE EMPRESS

The last of the grant proposals.

O'BRIEN

What was the purpose of that last one again?

THE EMPRESS

Zircon. A six million dollar grant to reestablish communication with the planet Zircon.

O'BRIEN

'reestablish'?

SHERLOCK

(awake now)

Isn't that the planet your half-siblings are from?

The Empress glares at him.

JUDY

(nodding toward  
Sherlock)

He's sharp as a matzoh ball this one.

THE EMPRESS

What next?

SHAMIKA

We need to speak with your  
brother. Where is he today?

THE EMPRESS

Today is Tuesday. It's Poetry  
Night. He'll be at the Tankard.

JUDY

Ah, the Sestina Chapel. I've  
missed the Tankard.

SHAMIKA

We can speak with him there. We  
need to ask him about Vivian  
Lamour.

Judy and The Empress are stunned.

JUDY

Are you crazy or stupid?

SHAMIKA

Who says I have to choose?

O'Brien looks worried.

Shamika is unperturbed.

THE EMPRESS

You want to question my brother  
about Vivian Lamour? At the  
Tankard? On Poetry Night? Do you  
know how many Pulitzer Prize  
winners have left their teeth  
marks on Spike's knuckles for  
less?

Shamika shrugs.

SHAMIKA

We'll pick you up this evening at  
eight. Okay?

The Empress resists, then nods unhappily.

Judy, delighted at the prospect, coaxes her.

JUDY  
C'mon. It'll be fun.

The Empress gives her a dubious side-long glance.

EXT. THE BALCONY OF THE NUSBAUM TOWNHOUSE, JUST OUTSIDE THE  
SANCTUM SANCTORUM - THAT EVENING

Judy sits on the balcony railing, snuggled against The  
Empress, both quietly contemplating the stars.

Judy turns to face her.

JUDY (CONT'D)  
(nostalgic)  
Remember all those cold, dry  
winter nights we'd stand out here,  
arms wrapped around each other,  
watching the stars flicker down  
through the shit we breathe?

THE EMPRESS  
Just what we need, another poet in  
the family.

Judy chuckles and smiles up at her. Then seriously.

JUDY  
How are you?

THE EMPRESS  
I'm worried about my father.

JUDY  
Me too.

Judy leans over and kisses The Empress on her cheek.

THE EMPRESS  
I don't know what to do without  
him.

JUDY  
Trust yourself.

THE EMPRESS

Easy for you to say. You're the success. I'm the CEO of Nusbaum Inc.

The Empress shudders.

JUDY

Why do you think your father made you CEO?

THE EMPRESS

Because he loves me?

JUDY

Certainly. But he also loves your mother, and he didn't make her CEO.

THE EMPRESS

Because I've screwed up every other career?

Judy considers this.

JUDY

No.

(reconsiders)

Not only that.

The Empress snorts.

THE EMPRESS

Because my father is an asshole.

JUDY

No.

(reconsiders)

I mean, I'm not saying he's not an asshole. But I'm not saying your father is an asshole.

THE EMPRESS

So what are you saying?

JUDY

Whatever he is, he is not malicious. The only person I know who is kinder and more loving than your father is your mother. I'd rather have a well-meaning asshole for a father than a malicious genius. And, whether he is an asshole or not, he chose you.

THE EMPRESS

Why?

JUDY

He trusts you. Do you think your father cares about the money? Hah! 'Seeing-eye fish'?

Judy begins laughing so hard she starts to topple over the railing.

The Empress casually grabs her by her rear collar as she goes over the edge.

Hanging suspended over the railing, Judy calls down to an imaginary figure on the street far below.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Humpty! I'll be right down, sweetheart.

The Empress laughs and pulls Judy back.

Judy resumes her seat on the railing.

JUDY (CONT'D)

The worst that will happen is that you will lose every dime the family has and make a complete asshole out of yourself.

THE EMPRESS

Been there; done that.



JUDY

You want to know the best part? It wouldn't matter. Not to your father. If he comes back to find you all living in that two bedroom bungalow on Coney Island, do you think he'll care?

THE EMPRESS

And if he doesn't come back?

Judy shrugs.

JUDY

Honor him. Do good. Do good well. He wants you to.

THE EMPRESS

What do you think of the detectives assigned to this case?

JUDY

O'Brien seems competent. So does Johnson.

THE EMPRESS

What do you think about Detective Uhlrich?

Judy's head sways side-to-side as she considers this.

JUDY

I haven't decided. Why?

The Empress hesitates.

Suspicious, Judy examines her.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Oh my God. You've got the hots for Sherlock.

Caught, The Empress is embarrassed.

THE EMPRESS

He's cute.

JUDY

So's my ass. And you can get a better conversation out of it.

THE EMPRESS

What's wrong with him?

JUDY

Where's the fun in him? Where's the adventure? The excitement?

THE EMPRESS

I get my maximum daily requirement of excitement just being part of this family. I don't want a guy who's going to surprise me. Sherlock is intelligent. He's sweet-natured. And, most of all, he's normal. Will he ever wind up on any front page? No and hallelujah!

JUDY

What about the Big Picture? He's so focused on the details, he never sees the Big Picture.

THE EMPRESS

What's the Big Picture? The Big Picture is my father's face on every magazine cover for one triumph of bizarreness or another. My mother with a pet unlike anything seen outside of a nightmare. But that's still better than my brother, who has a meaningful relationship with a #2 pencil.

The Empress pauses and considers Judy.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

And look whom I'm talking to. God knows what you are.

JUDY

(facetiously)

If you only knew how it hurts me  
when you talk like this.

THE EMPRESS

I'm ready for the Small Picture!  
Somebody, please bore me!

JUDY

Okay, so he's a lot better than  
most of the specimens you've  
dated. At least, his knuckles  
don't scrape the pavement.  
Remember Stephen?

The Empress winces.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Exhibit A for Charles Darwin. He  
was so slow he needed a fourteen-  
step program. At least, this one  
has brains between his ears.

THE EMPRESS

Not wood like some people?

JUDY

Face it. Your taste in men is in  
my toilet.

THE EMPRESS

You don't have a toilet. You don't  
need a toilet. You are the only  
one here who has never used a  
toilet.

JUDY

Yeah. But... if I needed a  
toilet... And... if I had a  
toilet... Your taste in men would  
be in it.

THE EMPRESS

Look who's talking. When was the  
last time you had a date?

JUDY

I don't know. Me and Eberhard got it on once.

The Empress shudders.

THE EMPRESS

Oh, yeah. That image is going to keep me awake tonight.

Judy and The Empress giggle.

They relax and sit, arms around each other, quietly contemplating life and Manhattan.

PAUSE.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)

(hesitant)

What's it like?

JUDY

What's what like?

THE EMPRESS

(embarrassed)

When we are apart. What's it like?

JUDY

Death.

The Empress reacts.

JUDY (CONT'D)

People are so afraid of death. Death is okay. Dying sucks; death is okay. Death is the glorious oblivion. Sans flesh. Sans concern. Sans everything. Do you think the dead mourn for the living?

THE EMPRESS

No.

JUDY

We don't. The living mourn the dead. The dead are gloriously indifferent. If we could, we would tell you not to. We would tell you to rejoice in our memories and be good to each other. That's our homage.

THE EMPRESS

(vulnerable)

What am I to you?

Judy turns The Empress's face toward her.

JUDY

Everything. What am I without you?  
You touch me and I come alive.

The Empress begins to weep and Judy caresses the tears off her cheek.

JUDY (CONT'D)

So you do what you gotta do with me. Shut me in a trunk. Grill your burgers over me. And I will still love you.

They embrace lovingly.

PAUSE.

Bubbles enters unnoticed. She hesitates, contemplating her daughter and Judy.

BUBBLES

(softly)

May I join the two of you? Or is it the one of you?

The Empress brushes away her tears.

THE EMPRESS

Surely, Ma. Come on over.

Bubbles joins them at the railing.

BUBBLES

How are you?

THE EMPRESS

I'm worried, Ma.

BUBBLES

Me too.

THE EMPRESS

You think he's all right?

BUBBLES

I don't know. There are so many things I don't know and so little I can do about them.

Bubbles looks at The Empress.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

I will do what I can.

Bubbles shrugs.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Beyond that, I will weep or rejoice as my soul and honor dictate.

THE EMPRESS

And... if we never see him again?

Bubbles becomes tearful.

BUBBLES

I will have lost the good foolish man who has been the great love of my life.

Bubbles sheds a TEAR that falls over the balcony.

INSERT - THE TEAR'S DESCENT

This Tear descends toward a dormant rosebush at the base of the building. The tear lands on a tight rosebud that abruptly and gloriously blooms.

BACK TO SCENE

The Empress wraps her arm around her mother.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

I have loved your father since  
before you were born.

Nonplussed, The Empress opens her mouth to speak, but  
changes her mind and closes it.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

I know many people consider him to  
be an a... No. I refuse to say  
that word. But do you know what  
your father's gift is?

THE EMPRESS

What?

BUBBLES

Your father sees what is best in  
others and provides them with what  
they need to achieve it. Most  
people would rather do good than  
harm. Your father enables them.

Bubbles looks at The Empress. Bubbles is serious.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

These are terrorist times. Fewer  
people can cause more harm than  
ever before. Your father reaffirms  
the goodness of average people.

THE EMPRESS

I know how he's helped Spike and  
me. I need to find myself. Spike  
wants to be an author. But what  
about you, Ma? What do you want?  
What has Dad given you?

BUBBLES

I am the luckiest of all. I have  
always known what I want to be.

THE EMPRESS

What, Ma?

BUBBLES

Happy. I want to be happy.

Bubbles glows.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Oh, such a life your father has given me. A life of wonder and laughter. Of benevolence and generosity. Of pride that my man has done so much good, despite the ridicule. Despite himself sometimes.

Bubbles smiles.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Everything good that has come into our home has come from your father. Your brother and you. Sweetums. Judy. It has been... almost perfect.

Bubbles and The Empress stand together, quietly sharing a sad pause.

THE EMPRESS

Damned Mr. Baldy.

BUBBLES

Yes, dear. Damned Mr. Baldy.

Bubbles and The Empress wrap their arms around each other in comfort and support.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

(hesitant)

I'm... I'm ashamed.

THE EMPRESS

(shocked)

Why, Ma?



BUBBLES

The last time I saw your father I was saddened. I am worried that he left thinking that I blame him.

Bubbles looks at The Empress.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

What if your father has harmed himself?

THE EMPRESS

Dad commit suicide? Dad wouldn't commit suicide. Even if he wanted to... Dad couldn't kill himself if he tried.

BUBBLES

That's a comfort.

JUDY

We were discussing the three detectives. What do you think of them?

BUBBLES

O'Brien seems very competent, but sad. Shamika puzzles me.

THE EMPRESS

Why, Ma?

BUBBLES

I don't know. That's why she puzzles me.

THE EMPRESS

(somewhat  
anxiously)

What do you think about Detective Uhlrich?

BUBBLES

He seems very nice. He is very detail-oriented.

Judy snorts.

The Empress gives her a dirty look.

JUDY  
(innocently)  
What? I'm just expressing my  
opinion.

THE EMPRESS  
How'd you like to express it to  
the inside of a trunk?

JUDY  
Can you at least put in some  
tanning lights?

THE EMPRESS  
I like him, Ma.

BUBBLES  
I'm happy for you.

The Empress hesitates.

THE EMPRESS  
Ma, would you put my taste in men  
in your toilet?

BUBBLES  
No, sweetheart.

The Empress beams in affirmation.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)  
I don't trust the plumbing.

Judy chuckles.

The Empress gives her another dirty look.

THE EMPRESS  
Okay, so maybe I do have some  
self-esteem issues, but look what  
happens every time I bring a  
normal guy home to meet the  
family. Remember the one who left  
skid marks?

The Empress looks at Bubbles and Judy.

THE EMPRESS (CONT'D)  
Maybe he's not right for me. But  
let me find that out for myself.  
All I'm asking is that nobody  
screws this up for me. Okay?

JUDY  
Fine. I'll behave myself.

INSERT - JUDY'S BACK

Judy crosses her fingers behind her back.

BACK TO SCENE

BUBBLES  
Certainly, sweetheart. You know  
all I want is for you to be happy.

THE EMPRESS  
And all I ever wanted was to paint  
houses.

JUDY  
I want to live long enough to  
legally smoke marijuana with my  
daughter.

BUBBLES  
You may; I won't, but you may.

The Empress, Bubbles and Judy gather closer. Judy, in the middle, puts her arms around them both, as they embrace each other.

Shamika enters unnoticed, observes them, hesitates, then intrudes.

SHAMIKA  
May I join you?

BUBBLES  
Ah, Detective Johnson, what brings  
you here?

THE EMPRESS

She's here to pick us up. We're going to the Tankard.

JUDY

She wants to interview Spike.

THE EMPRESS

On Poetry Night.

Bubbles looks concerned.

JUDY

About Vivian Lamour.

BUBBLES

(very concerned)

Oh dear. Do be careful.

SHAMIKA

I shall.

BUBBLES

Detective, you speak beautifully. I've been meaning to ask you, what is your background?

SHAMIKA

I was an English major.

BUBBLES

That's wonderful. I had an uncle who was also in the military, but he was only a Lieutenant.

Shamika is nonplussed.

SHAMIKA

I got my doctorate on a Nusbaum scholarship.

BUBBLES

(happily excited)

I knew we'd spoken before! Your dissertation was...?

SHAMIKA

The Romance Novel in the Twenty-  
First Century,...

BUBBLES

...with Special Emphasis on the  
Work of Vivian Lamour.

JUDY

Wow.

THE EMPRESS

I wouldn't mention that to Spike  
if I were you.

BUBBLES

I remember it now. It was an  
excellent paper. I urged my  
husband and son to read it.

Shamika nods appreciatively.

SHAMIKA

You agreed to try to get me an  
interview with Vivian Lamour.

BUBBLES

I did try. I know Stanley asked,  
but the request was refused.

Bubbles smiles sadly.

SHAMIKA

I'm not surprised.

Bubbles shrugs.

BUBBLES

(encouragingly)

I am convinced that you may still  
get the chance to meet Vivian  
Lamour.

Shamika smiles wanly.

THE EMPRESS

What made you decide to leave  
English and enter law enforcement?

SHAMIKA

Your father. Your father spoke at  
my graduation.

FLASHBACK - EXT. SHAMIKA'S GRADUATION CEREMONY - DAY

Shamika sits, enthralled, among the other GRADUATING  
STUDENTS, all wearing caps and gowns, and all of whom are  
bored, on their cell phones, talking among themselves or  
asleep.

SHAMIKA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(savoring the  
memory)

I will never forget what your  
father said.

Shamika is radiant.

SHAMIKA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I felt as if he was talking to me.  
He touched my soul. And when he  
finished...

Shamika, alone, leaps to her feet, applauding wildly. All  
the other Graduating Students, completely indifferent,  
remain seated and look at her like she's crazy.

BACK TO PRESENT

BUBBLES

Ah, so you were the one who  
applauded. I knew I'd seen you  
before.

SHAMIKA

Your husband's speech changed my  
life.

BUBBLES

Stanley has changed so many lives.

SHAMIKA

We both want the same world, your husband and I.

BUBBLES

Amen.

Sherlock joins them.

Bubbles notices him.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Good evening, Detective Uhlrich.  
We were just talking about you.

THE EMPRESS

(concerned)

Ma-a.

BUBBLES

I was just complimenting you on  
your gift for details.

Judy snorts.

The Empress is pleased.

Shamika looks unconvinced.

Sherlock is flattered.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

And it is a gift.

Sherlock nods uncertainly.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

An under-appreciated gift perhaps.  
But details are important. Details  
have a way of creeping up behind  
you and biting you on the tush  
when you're not looking. And I  
just wanted to tell you how much  
my family appreciates your  
efforts... and yours, Detective  
Johnson... on our behalf.

SHERLOCK

You're welcome, Mrs. Nusbaum.

The Empress kisses her mother on her forehead.

THE EMPRESS

Thanks, Ma.

BUBBLES

Certainly, sweetheart.

THE EMPRESS

Ma, we have to go. Would... would you like to come with us?

BUBBLES

No thank you, dear. I think I'll just stand out here with my thoughts.

The Empress, Judy, Shamika and Sherlock leave.

Bubbles remains sadly and quietly... Alone.

PAUSE.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Oh, Stanley, what have you gotten us into?

EXT. THE STEAMING TANKARD OF TESTOSTERONE BAR AND GRILL - POETRY NIGHT

The previously described neon sign proclaims: "THE STEAMING TANKARD OF TESTOSTERONE BAR AND GRILL"

The previously described neon sign portraying William Shakespeare is evident.

A smaller blinking neon sign announces: "POETRY NIGHT"

INT. FOYER OF THE TANKARD - CONTINUOUS

The group enters.

Suddenly, a DISGRACED AUTHOR is being catapulted out past them by the two, burly IDENTICAL TWIN BOUNCERS.



The Empress and company stand aside to avoid a collision and observe his airborne departure, with concern.

CERBERUS, the head bouncer and guardian of the portal, shouts after him from off screen.

CERBERUS (O.S.)

"Irregardless"! Did you say  
"Irregardless"? There is no word  
"irregardless"! It's "regardless,"  
damn it!

THE EMPRESS

(to Shamika)

You sure you want to do this?

SHAMIKA

Yes.

The Empress shrugs.

THE EMPRESS

Okay. They're your teeth.

CERBERUS appears before them, arms folded challengingly. The Identical Twin Bouncers are standing so close behind him that he appears to have three heads. He wears a T-shirt that demands: "ENGLISH LOVE IT SPEAK IT WELL"

CERBERUS

Yeah? What do you want?

SHAMIKA

We'd like to speak with Mr.  
Nusbaum.

CERBERUS

You and every would-be author in  
America.

O'Brien presents his badge.

O'BRIEN

We're with the New York City  
Police Department.

CERBERUS

I don't care if you're with the  
Swiss Guard; nobody bothers Spike  
on Poetry Night.

Judy pokes her head around from behind Shamika.

JUDY

Hello, Cerberus. It's okay.  
They're with me.

CERBERUS

(overjoyed)

Judy! How have you been? I haven't  
seen you since you were a sapling.

Judy pats his stomach.

JUDY

You've put on a few rings  
yourself.

Cerberus laughs.

The Empress remains ignored and increasingly furious.

Cerberus finally acknowledges her.

CERBERUS

Oh, hello, Emp... Ms. Nusbaum. How  
are you?

THE EMPRESS

I'm...

Cerberus immediately dismisses her and refocuses upon Judy.

CERBERUS

It's great to see you again, Judy.  
Welcome back.

JUDY

You got a table that's in one  
piece?

CERBERUS

Your favorite. It's just being cleared.

A FEMALE AUTHOR is being forcefully propelled through the foyer by the Identical Twin Bouncers. As she passes him, Cerberus shouts at her.

CERBERUS (CONT'D)

It's M-A-S-T-U-R-B! Not E-R-B!

The Identical Twin Bouncers carry her to the door.

CERBERUS (CONT'D)

(shouting after her)

If you can't spell it, you shouldn't be allowed to do it!

Cerberus turns to Judy and the group, instantly cordial.

CERBERUS (CONT'D)

(graciously)

Please come with me.

As they follow him through the bar to their table, the AUDIENCE reacts with amazement and delight at Judy's reappearance.

AUDIENCE

Look, it's Judy! Judy's back! Hey, Judy! How's it hinging? Judy, we love you!

Judy, on The Empress's arm, is exultant, basking in the adoration of her fans, waving and throwing kisses.

The Empress, bearing Judy and utterly ignored, silently seethes.

The group passes a table at which VINNY, VITO and VICKI are seated.

Only, Shamika notices them.

The group is seated at a table next to the stage, with its microphone, and by a wall covered with photographs of famous patrons.

Shamika is ecstatic.

O'Brien looks around warily.

Sherlock examines the photographs.

INSERT - PHOTOGRAPH OF ALBERT EINSTEIN READING AT THE MICROPHONE.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. TABLE OF FEMALE LIERATI - CONTINUOUS

A table of rowdy FEMALE LITERATI are taking turns looking up words in a massive dictionary, sharing them with each other and laughing hysterically at the definitions.

BACK TO SCENE

O'BRIEN

Is it always like this on Poetry Night?

THE EMPRESS

Oh, yeah. There's something about the Tankard that has a profound effect on all writers, especially women writers.

JUDY

Sylvia Plath always claimed the place cheered her up.

THE EMPRESS

I don't know what it is. Maybe the name of the place has something to do with it. It stirs their passions.

SHAMIKA

Speaking about passion, we still need to ask your brother about Vivian Lamour.

The Empress and O'Brien look worried.

Shamika remains unconcerned.

JUDY

You want some advice? Wait until after the place is closed. Wait until Spike has gotten some prose into him. And still be prepared to duck.

Spike saunters over. When he reaches their table, he deftly pivots a chair backwards and sits, straddling the chair, arms resting on its back, facing them.

SPIKE

(to O'Brien)

What do you think of the place?

O'BRIEN

(tentative)

This is some place.

Spike gives a maniacal grin.

SPIKE

(fondly)

Dad gave this place to me as a Bar Mitzvah present. And all the spilt beer, blood, and other bodily fluids that have coated it since then have only added to its mystique.

Spike points to a splatter pattern on a far wall off screen.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

See those bloodstains? That's where Eudora Welty broke somebody's nose in an argument over a semicolon.

Spike points to a crack on the plank floor off screen.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

See that crack? That's where P. G. Wodehouse decked Hemingway over his sentence structure.

Spike points to one corner of the room off screen.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

Fitzgerald puked himself senseless in that corner once.

Spike points to another corner off screen.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

And Dorothy Parker in that one.

Shamika is shocked.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

You shocked? Don't be. I don't know what it is about the place, but even the Nobel Prize winners have to be watched around here.

Spike pauses and considers.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

I can handle the short story writers. Even the poets. But the playwrights...

Spike reminisces happily.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

I remember the time we hadda pull Gene O'Neil and Thornton Wilder off each other.

Spike points to:

INSERT - PHOTOGRAPH OF EUGENE O'NEIL AND THORNTON WILDER ON THE WALL BESIDE THE TABLE

The photograph depicts Eugene O'Neil and Thornton Wilder struggling to assault each other, unobtrusively being restrained by VINNY, VITO and VICKI.

BACK TO SCENE

Spike brays with laughter.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 (wiping tears from  
 his left eye)  
 It got so bad, even I thought I  
 was finally going to have to call  
 the cops. Steinbeck never forgave  
 me. He had fifty bucks riding on  
 Wilder.

Spike and the Pencil glow with reminiscence.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 (lovingly)  
 Yeah, this place has its memories.

Shamika examines the photograph of Eugene O'Neil and  
 Thornton Wilder. She points to Vinny, Vito and Vicki.

SHAMIKA  
 Who are these people?

Shamika turns to the table where Vinny, Vito and Vicki were  
 sitting.

INSERT - TABLE WHERE VINNY, VITO AND VICKI WERE PREVIOUSLY  
 SEATED. IT IS NOW EMPTY.

BACK TO SCENE

SPIKE  
 What people?

SHAMIKA  
 The people in this photograph.  
 They were sitting at that table.

Shamika points to the empty table off screen.

Spike looks over at it, perplexed, then studies the  
 photograph more closely.

SPIKE

Oh, them. They've been coming here for as long as I've owned the place.

SHAMIKA

What's the name of the woman?

SPIKE

I don't know her name. We call her Vicki.

SHAMIKA

And the guys?

SPIKE

Vito and Vinny.

SHAMIKA

Vinny Vito Vicki?

SPIKE

Yeah. They come here every Tuesday night. They sit. They laugh. Sometimes they laugh at the wrong times. But they seem to enjoy themselves. Why?

SHAMIKA

I don't know. I have the feeling I've seen them before.

Shamika shrugs.

Sherlock examines the photograph carefully.

SHERLOCK

You're right. We have seen them before.

Sherlock tries to remember, then shakes his head in temporary defeat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

It'll come to me. It always does.



AUDIENCE (O.S.)  
 (begins chanting)  
 Spike! Spike! Spike! Spike! Spike!

SPIKE  
 I have to go. I'm Master of  
 Ceremonies.  
 (menacing)  
 But I'll be back.

INT. THE STAGE AT THE TANKARD - CONTINUOUS

Spike swaggers to the mic as confidently as any  
 prizefighter.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 (bellows)  
 Hello! And welcome to poetry night  
 at The Steaming Tankard of  
 Testosterone Bar and Grill!

HOWLS and the POUNDING OF BEER BOTTLES AGAINST WOOD greet  
 this as the Audience demonstrates its support.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 For those of you who don't know  
 the rules...

SNARLS of derision from the Audience.

Spike flaps his hands in a placating gesture.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 Yeah. Yeah. I know you know how  
 this works, but there may be some  
 virgins in the crowd.

The Audience looks around suspiciously, concerned that  
 they've been infiltrated.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 It's an open mic. Everybody gets  
 six minutes.

Spike glances around the room menacingly.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 (threateningly)  
 Remember, people, this is  
 somebody's soul. Be sensitive. We  
 are here to be helpful.

The Audience guffaws. It's an old joke.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
 Who wants to go first?

Spike and the Audience look around, daring someone to start.

Shamika raises her hand.

O'Brien is watching Spike and doesn't see her.

INT. FEMALE LITERATI TABLE - CONTINUOUS

There is a brief shocked hush.

Then... A cacophony of SCREAMS, POUNDING BEER BOTTLES, and TWO-FINGER WHISTLES erupts from the Female Literati.

BACK TO SCENE

Shamika rises.

O'Brien turns and realizes what's going on.

O'BRIEN  
 Are you crazy? Do you want to get  
 yourself hurt over punctuation?

THE EMPRESS  
 He's right. You don't know what  
 you're getting yourself into.  
 Sure, everybody takes risks here  
 on poetry night. But more than one  
 heart-broken author has abandoned  
 literature altogether after their  
 reception at The Tankard.

The Empress points to:

INSERT - THE SECOND PHOTOGRAPH OF ALBERT EINSTEIN

This photograph, taken shortly after the previously cited one, depicts Einstein, still at the microphone, just after reading, furiously extending his middle finger at the audience while being pelted with pretzels.

BACK TO SCENE

JUDY

If Einstein's limericks had made a hit, we still wouldn't know  $E=mc^2$ .

SHAMIKA

Don't worry. I know what I'm doing.

O'Brien shrugs.

Shamika strides to the microphone.

The Female Literati become even louder.

SHAMIKA (CONT'D)

This is a little piece I want to dedicate to my parole officer.

SPIKE (O.S.)

(impressed)

Smart. The sentimental approach.

Shamika reads.

MUSIC rises as Shamika's voice fades to silence, and the music plays over her as she reads.

INT. AUDIENCE - CONTINUOUS

The Audience is entranced by her words.

BACK TO SCENE

JUDY

(very impressed)

I don't believe this.

O'BRIEN

What?

JUDY

Look.

Judy points to Spike.

Spike is dabbing at a tear from his left eye.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Spike is smitten.

O'BRIEN

How can you tell?

JUDY

He's got a tear in his left eye.

THE EMPRESS

That's just where Dr. Seuss broke  
that bottle across his cheekbone.

JUDY

No. That was his right eye. This  
is the left eye. The only one that  
can still weep.

Shamika finishes reading. There is a moment's silence.  
Then... She is surrounded by an avalanche of noise.

The Audience stomps, whistles, pounds beer bottles and  
throws pretzels. And it is good!

Spike resumes his place at the microphone.

SPIKE

(roaring)

So? How does this piece make you  
feel? What's jumping off the page?

LATER - CLOSING TIME

The place is empty except for the LAST DRUNKEN POET,  
slouched over his table, singing.

INT. LAST DRUNKEN POET'S TABLE - CONTINUOUS

The Last Drunken Poet continues singing even as the Identical Twin Bouncers each grab an arm and begin carrying him to the front door.

LAST DRUNKEN POET

(singing  
drunkenly)

With an Oink Oink here. And an  
Oink Oink there. Here an Oink.  
There an Oink. Everywhere an Oink  
Oink. With a Cluck Cluck here. And  
a Cluck Cluck there. Here a Cluck.  
There a Cluck. Everywhere a Cluck  
Cluck. Old MacDonald had a farm.  
E-I! E-I!

INT. DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Identical Twin Bouncers stand in the doorway, and begin swinging him in rhythm with the "E-I! E-I!" They heave him out through the doorway as the last "O!" rises.

LAST DRUNKEN POET (CONT'D)

(flying through  
the doorway)

O-O-O-O!

One of the Identical Twin Bouncers slams and locks the door behind him.

Cerberus shuts the main lights.

BACK TO SCENE

Spike and the others remain at their table in a soft pool of light.

Cerberus joins them

CERBERUS

'Night, Spike. See you tomorrow.

SPIKE

Good-night sweet prince, And  
flights of angels sing thee to thy  
rest.

Spike sits dreamily, dabbing at his left eye.

SPIKE (CONT'D)  
I can't help it. That last sonnet  
got to me.

Spike dabs his left eye again.

The Empress leans over to Shamika.

THE EMPRESS  
(whispers)  
Now's your chance.

Judy nods.

SHAMIKA  
Mr. Nusbaum...

SPIKE  
Call me Spike.

Spike gives a cavernous yawn. Conversation is clearly ending.

SHAMIKA  
(impulsively)  
Tell us about Vivian Lamour.

Spike's head rotates somnolently toward Shamika and he gives her what is left of his glare.

Even the Pencil pivots drowsily.

Spike attempts to work up a rage and fails. He slumps back into his chair, defeated and intensely bitter.

SPIKE  
(with intense  
bitterness)  
Her.

JUDY  
(sotto voce)  
That last sonnet saved your ass.

SPIKE

Detective Johnson, what is it  
about you and Vivian Lamour?

The others stare at her, all interested in the same  
question.

SHAMIKA

(with growing  
enthusiasm)

Vivian Lamour is a brilliant  
author, particularly in a genre  
that is too easily dismissed. I  
read her words and I can feel her  
struggle against the gravitational  
pull toward cliché and mediocrity  
that so many romance writers  
succumb to. But not Vivian Lamour.  
She has maintained her integrity.  
Her characters, her dialogue, her  
plots remain honest and timeless.  
Her adjectives are vivid and  
precise. She is abstemious yet  
effective in her use of adverbs.  
Her sexual scenes could make the  
Venus de Milo moist. She tends to  
overuse commas. But I love what  
she does with semicolons.

PAUSE.

The others are clearly impressed with Shamika's speech,  
even Spike.

Spike slowly nods in agreement.

SPIKE

You're right. What do you want to  
know about her?

SHAMIKA

Do you know how we can speak with  
her? We need to ask her about your  
father's disappearance.

SPIKE

She won't speak with you. But I can assure you she would never harm Dad.

O'BRIEN

How do you know that?

SPIKE

She appreciates Dad. She wanted privacy; Dad gave her privacy. Dad could have made her life miserable about that last book. He didn't; she's grateful.

Spike smiles slyly.

SPIKE (CONT'D)

(archly)

Dad doesn't even know she finished it. The book is done.

SHAMIKA

(awed)

There's a final unpublished Vivian Lamour?

Spike nods.

Shamika becomes excited.

SHAMIKA (CONT'D)

What's it called?

SPIKE

(proudly)

Passion's Menopause

Shamika is dumbstruck.

PAUSE.

JUDY

You're shittin' me?

Judy laughs uproariously.



Despite themselves, O'Brien and then The Empress join her.

Shamika is disapproving.

Spike is hurt.

SPIKE

(defensively)

That's just the working title. But  
the manuscript is completed.

Sherlock jumps up and charges over to the photograph of Vinny, Vito and Vicki. He grabs it off the wall and scrutinizes it carefully.

SHERLOCK

(excited)

It's them! It's them! We've got to  
get back to the apartment. Now! I  
think I know who has your father.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - EARLY THAT MORNING

Sherlock holds The New York Times oil well photograph beside the photograph from The Tankard.

INSERT - THE TWO PHOTOGRAPHS BEING HELD BESIDE EACH OTHER.

Vinny, Vito and Vicki are obvious in both.

BACK TO SCENE

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Look! It's them!

SHAMIKA

He's right.

Shamika looks admiringly at Sherlock.

O'Brien takes the photographs from him. He nods respectfully to Sherlock. And smiles.

SHAMIKA (CONT'D)

You da policeman.

Shamika and Sherlock high five.

O'BRIEN  
(admiringly)  
Sherlock, I take back every bad  
thing I've ever said about you.  
You're a great cop.

Sherlock looks concerned.

SHERLOCK  
What bad things have you said  
about me?

Not responding, O'Brien studies the photographs.

BUBBLES  
I've got something else for you.

Bubbles retrieves her previously shown wedding photograph,  
portraying the shared tuxedo, and hands it to O'Brien.

INSERT - STANLEY'S AND BUBBLES' WEDDING PHOTOGRAPH

The photograph clearly reveals Vinny, Vito and Vicki in the  
crowd.

BACK TO SCENE

SHERLOCK  
I knew I'd seen them before.

O'Brien examines the photographs.

SHAMIKA  
This is very weird. Don't you  
think this is weird?

O'BRIEN  
This whole case is weird.

Shamika addresses the assembled group.

SHAMIKA  
I mean it. Does anything about  
this case strike any of you as...  
weird?

Spike, the Pencil, The Empress with Judy on her right leg, Sweetums on the floor, and Bubbles consider the question.

JUDY

Nah.

Judy looks questioningly at Sweetums.

JUDY (CONT'D)

(to Sweetums)

You?

Sweetums shrugs and shakes his/her head.

Judy turns to the Pencil.

JUDY (CONT'D)

(to the Pencil)

You?

The Pencil indicates "no."

Judy shrugs.

SHAMIKA

(exasperated)

Look whom I'm asking. Du-uh.

O'Brien turns to stare at Spike.

O'BRIEN

We will follow up on this lead.  
But, meanwhile, we still need to  
interview Vivian Lamour.

Spike becomes sullenly silent.

SPIKE

I told you; she has nothing to do  
with this case.

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

You said you know her; we need to  
speak with her.

Spike shakes his head in refusal.

SPIKE

I'm not talking.

SHAMIKA

Mr. Nusbaum, you are obstructing a police investigation.

SPIKE

You think I'm going to let myself be bullied by the police? Hah! I'm your worst nightmare.

PAUSE.

O'BRIEN

(puzzled)

You mean the one about the three quart ice water enema?

SHAMIKA

No. I think he means the one about having to pee on the pitcher's mound at Yankee Stadium, with everybody watching.

O'BRIEN

He said, 'nightmare.' Not fantasy.

SHERLOCK

(utterly lost)

What the hell are you talking about?

O'BRIEN AND SHAMIKA

(shouting  
simultaneously)

Worst nightmares!

SHERLOCK

Oh. Like the one about running down the street naked being chased by Dracula?

O'BRIEN

Exactly.

SHERLOCK

Or the one about...

SPIKE

(exploding)

Fine. Fine, damn it! So I'm not your worst nightmare! But I'm a guy who's not talking.

O'BRIEN

That's not even close to my worst nightmare. That's number four hundred and thirty-eight on my nightmare list. Right after having to eat pastrami on white bread with ketchup.

SHAMIKA

And me? You think a guy who is not talking is my idea of a nightmare?

SPIKE

I have nothing to say.

Spike sits defiantly with his arms folded.

O'Brien is no longer joking.

O'BRIEN

Okay, Mr. Nusbaum, we can do this the easy way or we can arrest you for obstruction of justice and take you in.

Spike remains stubbornly silent.

SHAMIKA

Mrs. Nusbaum, can you convince your son to cooperate with the police?

SPIKE

Not convince! Persuade, damn it! Persuade!

SHAMIKA

What's the difference?

SPIKE

You convince someone of an idea.  
You persuade them to act.

O'BRIEN

(regretfully)

That's it. Mr. Nusbaum, I am  
sorry, but you are under arrest.  
Officer Uhlrich, cuff him. Officer  
Johnson, read him his rights.

The conflict involving Spike, Sherlock and Shamika escalates during the following dialogue, with them acting and talking over each other.

Shamika begins reading him his Miranda rights.

SHERLOCK

(regretfully)

Please stand and hold out your  
wrists.

Spike stands and defiantly extends his hands in front of him.

Shamika locks one handcuff on his right wrist.

SHAMIKA

(regretfully)

You have the right to remain  
silent...

Bubbles becomes increasingly angry throughout these interactions. Finally, she erupts.

BUBBLES

(roaring)

Stop this! All of you!

The others freeze in amazement at the intensity of her fury.

Sweetums crouches and covers his/her face with his/her front paws, peeking at Bubbles between his/her fingers.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)  
(more controlled  
but furious)  
I am very angry!

Bubbles instantly regains her equanimity.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)  
(calmly)  
David, no one in this family has  
ever been convicted of a felony.  
(beat)  
So far.  
(slightly  
embarrassed)  
God knows, we've had our share of  
misdemeanors.

Bubbles considers this.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)  
Well, maybe more than our share of  
misdemeanors. But, until now, all  
felony charges have been dropped.  
(beat)  
Is that too much for a mother to  
ask?

Spike and the Pencil look at each other uncertainly.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)  
(gently, kindly)  
Tell them, son.

Spike and the Pencil hesitate. Spike suspects he knows what  
his mother means.

SPIKE  
(uncertain)  
What?

BUBBLES  
Tell them who Vivian Lamour is?

PAUSE.

SPIKE

Ma? You know?

BUBBLES

You think I don't know my own son?

The others are stunned, particularly Shamika.

SHAMIKA

(amazed,  
stammering)

You? You are Vivian Lamour?

SPIKE

(embarrassed,  
adopting a  
defensive sullen  
growl)

Yeah? So?

Shamika swoons.

Spike catches her in a one-armed embrace, using his left arm, popping all of the buttons on both of their shirts. It is a clear parody of the Passion book covers. The handcuffs dangle from his right wrist.

PAUSE.

O'BRIEN

Why wouldn't you tell us?

SPIKE

Yeah? And what do you think the crowd at The Tankard would do if they find out I'm Vivian Lamour? You think all they'd throw would be pretzels?

O'BRIEN

As long as it has nothing to do with this case, I'm not going to tell anyone?

O'Brien looks at the others.



O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Are any of you?

JUDY

Not me.

Judy looks at Sweetums.

JUDY (CONT'D)

(to Sweetums)

You?

Sweetums shakes his/her head.

SHERLOCK

(in melodramatic  
parody)

I shan't go thither.

Sherlock cracks up.

Spike and the Pencil fume.

Shamika recovers. She slowly takes the MOST RECENT PASSION BOOK from her pocketbook and offers it and a PEN to Spike in homage.

SHAMIKA

(with awed  
hesitancy)

May...? May I have your autograph?

With regained confidence and a flourish, Spike prepares to autograph the book with his cuffed right hand.

SPIKE

Surely. Why the hell not?

SHERLOCK

So if Vivian Lamour has nothing to do with this, who's got Mr. Baldy?

A broad shaft of dusty golden light blazes diagonally downward through the French doors.

MUSIC A gospel version of "Beethoven's Ninth Symphony Fourth Movement (Ode to Joy)"

VICKI glides diagonally downward within that shaft of light. Her arms are raised in greeting and blessing.

Behind her, VINNY and VITO float down, ceremoniously bearing STANLEY, dressed in the previously described burgundy tuxedo jacket and scarlet boxers.

SPIKE  
Deus ex machina!

Spike falls to his knees in obeisance.

INSERT - STANLEY'S TUSH ENCASED IN SCARLET BOXERS WITH I HEART NY ON THE SEAT.

BACK TO SCENE

The inhabitants of the room react, in various, highly personalized manners, to the entry of Stanley et al.

Stanley lands and eagerly extends a test tube to Bubbles.

STANLEY  
(triumphantly)  
Eureka! Bubbles, I've got it!  
Penisillin 2!

BUBBLES  
Stanley! Are you all right?

STANLEY  
Of course. Bubbles, I'd like to  
introduce my friends and  
collaborators.

Stanley points to Vito.

STANLEY (CONT'D)  
This is Vito.

Vito waves.

STANLEY (CONT'D)  
Vinny.

Vinny nods sullenly.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

And Vicki.

Vicki smiles brightly.

VICKI

Charmed I'm sure.

Stanley indicates Spike.

STANLEY

This is my son, David.

VICKI

(delighted)

We are very pleased to meet you.

VITO

Your father gave us your book.

VICKI

You are the best-selling author on Zircon.

VITO

(puzzled)

But what does "...And the Horse  
You Rode in on" mean?

Stanley indicates The Empress.

STANLEY

And this is my daughter, Jody.

VICKI

Your father is so proud of you.

The Empress beams.

VICKI (CONT'D)

And the progress you are making  
with anger management.

The Empress winces.

STANLEY

And this is my wife...

Bubbles interrupts.

BUBBLES

(angrily)

What have you done with my  
husband?

VINNY

What we've always done.

VICKI

Tried to help him and your planet.

BUBBLES

By abducting him?

STANLEY

Who abducted me? Whenever we get  
together, they always come here. I  
bring in Chinese. They bring in  
pizza. We alternate bringing  
dessert.

VINNY, VITO, VICKI

(in unison)

Danish. No prune.

STANLEY

We share. We collaborate. Bubbles,  
you wouldn't believe the ideas we  
come up with. So, for once, they  
invite me to their place. I should  
say no?

VICKI

(apologetically)

We owed it to Stanley.

VITO

It was the least we could do.

VINNY

(intensely

awkward,

embarrassed)

We wanted to make amends for...

Realization hits Shamika.

SHAMIKA  
Penisillin?

Vinny, Vito and Vicki nod ashamedly.

VICKI  
Until then it was a wonderful  
collaboration.

THE EMPRESS  
Penisillin was your fault?

VITO  
We are very sorry.

VINNY  
We thought you'd be pleased.

VICKI  
I blame myself.

STANLEY  
Blame shmame. We did it, Bubbles!  
Penisillin 2!

Stanley holds out the test tube.

Bubbles and Sweetums exchange worried glances.

STANLEY (CONT'D)  
This stuff works even on women.

Judy and The Empress exchange worried glances.

STANLEY (CONT'D)  
And there are no side effects!

VITO  
So far.

Shamika and O'Brien exchange worried glances.

THE EMPRESS  
So everything my father has  
accomplished he owes to you?

VITO

Oh no. I showed him where the oil was, but your father dug the hole.

VICKI

And, I admit, I recognized Jesus' signature on that portrait. He wrote me a check once. But your father found it at that garage sale.

VINNY

(sardonically)

The Clergy Exchange Program was all his idea.

BUBBLES

But why my husband? Why did you choose Stanley?

VITO

We needed the right person.

VICKI

Someone generous and benevolent.

VINNY

Someone who would be receptive to our proposals, however bizarre.

VITO

Someone for whom image is meaningless and doing good is all important.

THE EMPRESS

An asshole.

VICKI

Your father.

VITO

We do not think of your father as an asshole.

VICKI

Has your father ever hurt anyone?  
Does your father want to kill  
anyone in the name of God?

VINNY

Or oil?

Vito points out through the French doors accusingly.

VITO

The assholes are the ones out  
there trying to destroy your  
planet and themselves.

VICKI

We have seen what happens when  
planets explode.

VINNY

How do you think your universe got  
started?

SHERLOCK

The Big Bang Theory...? It's...  
real?

VINNY

(irritably)

Please. Don't talk to me about the  
Big Bang Theory. I was there. That  
was another planet, much like  
yours. They also cracked the atom.

VICKI

And look what happened to them.  
It's all so sad.

VITO

That's when we resolved never to  
let it happen again.

SHAMIKA

How...? How long have you been  
with us?

Vito quotes Genesis I,2.

VITO

We were with you when "...the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters..."

VICKI

And it was good.

VINNY

And look at you. Relative to your body size, you have the greatest combined proportion of brain and penis of any species on the planet, and you haven't learned to live peacefully with either of them.

VITO

We had such hopes for you.

VICKI

I still have.

VINNY

You applauded when they learned to walk on their hind legs.

VICKI

They looked so cute.

VINNY

What have they accomplished?

VICKI

They invented the alphabet.

VINNY

They invented consonants. You gave them vowels.

VICKI

They made their words sound better.

VITO

Look at their potential.



VINNY

Let them look at their own  
potential.

VICKI

Was there ever a healthier or  
better educated society than there  
is now?

VITO

Was there ever such a sharing of  
information as there is now?

VICKI

The individual has never been more  
empowered to do good.

VITO

Or evil.

VINNY

(cynically)

They're living through Renaissance  
II and they don't even know it.

Vinny, Vito and Vicki quote 2 Esdras 4:5.

VINNY, VITO, VICKI

(in unison)

Come, then, weigh me a pound of  
fire, measure me a bushel of wind,  
or call back a day that has  
passed.

VINNY

And they are passing.

VITO

Do you know how many gallons of  
water flow over Niagara Falls  
every second?

VICKI

How many bushels of wind sweep  
across your mountaintops every  
minute?

VITO

Do you know how many turbines you should have generating electricity from them?

VINNY

Or how many gigawatts of potential energy you are constantly wasting? Do you even want to know?

BUBBLES

I would like to know.

JUDY

Me too.

SWEETUMS

Woof.

Vinny holds up a piece of paper before Bubbles, Judy and Sweetums.

VINNY

This many.

Bubbles, Judy and Sweetums read it.

JUDY

Wow!

SWEETUMS

(impressed,  
whistling)

Whew!

BUBBLES

That certainly is a large number.

VICKI

And, given the chance, Stanley will build those turbines.

THE EMPRESS

What makes you so sure we can make a difference?

VITO

Your father is a visionary.

VICKI

And visionaries gather about him.

Vicki indicates Sweetums, Judy and the Pencil.

VINNY

(sardonically)

Look at the grant proposals.

VICKI

We empower Stanley.

VITO

And Stanley empowers others.

VICKI

It has been a wonderful  
collaboration.

PAUSE.

VITO

But now we must go. We have other  
worlds to save.

JUDY

Wait a minute. Before you guys  
leave, I gotta ask you a question.

BUBBLES

(worried)

Oh dear.

JUDY

Did you guys come up with seeing-  
eye fish?

VINNY

(dismissively)

Puh-leese.

JUDY

Hah! I knew it! I love this guy!  
Stanley, you da Mensch!

The Empress nods at Judy.

THE EMPRESS

Is she with you?

VICKI

We thought she was with you.

SHERLOCK

Can you tell me what Sweetums is?

VINNY

(dubiously)

According to New York State, he...  
or she... is a dog.

Judy laughs, joined by O'Brien, Sherlock, Vicki, Vito and, finally, despite himself, Vinny.

BUBBLES

What are all of you laughing at?  
Sweetums knows all the doggy  
tricks.

Bubbles turns to face Sweetums, who is off screen.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

Sweetums, roll over.

Sweetums cartwheels across the background from right to left, backward handsprings across the background from left to right, and, finally, lands, center screen, in a split with arms upraised, waving pompoms like a cheerleader.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

See? Do you want to hear Sweetums  
speak?

O'BRIEN, SHAMIKA AND THE EMPRESS

(in unison,  
immediately and  
emphatically)

No!

SHAMIKA

Please, Mrs. Nusbaum, allow me to retain some vestige of reality as I once knew it.

BUBBLES

Certainly. Although, personally...

Bubble's wave encompasses them all.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

...I prefer this.

SHERLOCK

May I ask a question?

The others demonstrate anticipatory dismay.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Which did come first? The chicken or the egg?

Vicki opens her mouth to answer.

Vinny interrupts her.

VINNY

Don't tell them. Let them figure out something for themselves.

BUBBLES

(assertively)

I have a question. Those letters from Zircon...?

Vito and Vinny look at Vicki.

VICKI

That was our signal to Stanley, Mrs. Nusbaum. Whenever we wanted to meet, we'd send him a letter with a reference to our planet.

BUBBLES

And the part about bearing his children...?

Vito and Vicki look at Vinny.

VINNY

(annoyed about  
being on the  
defensive)

It was a joke! All right? You all  
complain I have no sense of humor.  
See what happens when I do? Fine!  
I won't do it again.

Vinny sulks.

VITO

We leave you with the words of  
your greatest Physicist.

VICKI

Dear Posterity,

VINNY

If you have not become more  
just,...

VICKI

more peaceful,...

VITO

and in general more sensible...

VINNY

then may the Devil take you.

VITO

I liked Al.

VICKI

He liked you.

VITO

Do you think it was a mistake to  
give him  $E=mc^2$ ?

VICKI

He seemed grateful.

VINNY

And it stopped him from writing  
those limericks.

Vinny, Vito and Vicki shudder in recollection.

VICKI

Now we must go.

VITO

But we'll be back.

VINNY

I'm not done yet.

Vicki ignores Vinny.

VICKI

Stanley, you know your mission.

Stanley nods.

VICKI (CONT'D)

Pursue it. We are all depending on  
you.

Vito and Vicki gently, but firmly, take hold of Vinny's arms. With Vito and Vicki facing outward, and Vinny facing back into the room, they lift him and glide out through the window in an ascending diagonal.

VINNY

(more irritably)

And another thing... What's with  
you earthlings and anal probes?

Vinny, Vito and Vicki exit through the window.

Stanley waves after them.

STANLEY

Bye, guys. See you around. Next  
time, I bring the Danish.

VINNY, VITO, VICKI (O.S.)

No prune!

Bubbles approaches Stanley. She is furious.

BUBBLES  
Stanley. I have been worried sick  
about you. Couldn't you have  
written me a note?

STANLEY  
I did.

Stanley removes the note from the inner pocket of his  
burgundy tuxedo jacket and extends it towards her.

STANLEY  
See? Here it is.

BUBBLES  
(struggling with  
her anger)  
Stanley, sometimes you are such an  
a...

THE EMPRESS  
(horrified)  
Ma!

BUBBLES  
(rebuked,  
apologetic)  
You're right. Come to my arms, my  
beloved.

Bubbles embraces Stanley, and kisses him passionately.

PAUSE.

O'BRIEN  
So what do we do now?

Sherlock removes his notebook and pencil and prepares to  
write.

THE EMPRESS  
What do you mean?



O'BRIEN

We can't tell anybody what happened.

SHAMIKA

He's right. Who's going to file a report saying that Stanley Nusbaum was abducted by aliens from the planet Zircon in the Numph Galaxy?

Sherlock writes in his notebook.

SHERLOCK

(punctiliously)

"Numph Galaxy"

SHAMIKA

But it's okay because they're the ones who've been helping him all along. Your career or mine?

SHERLOCK

(looking up from his notebook)

How do you spell Numph?

Sweetums seizes Sherlock's notebook in his/her teeth and swallows it.

O'BRIEN

(to Sweetums)

Thank you.

(to the others)

I repeat, what do we do now?

BUBBLES

We be the Nusbaums.

SPIKE

Ma, this is no time to start talking Ebonics.

JUDY

Word.

SHAMIKA

Your mother is right. Be who you are.

BUBBLES

Exactly. We are the Nusbaums.

SWEETUMS

(hurt)

Woof.

Bubbles beams at Sweetums.

BUBBLES

And friends. So let us be the Nusbaums. I say we regroup, reconsider, redefine and reassert ourselves.

Shamika applauds.

SHAMIKA

Mrs. Nusbaum, you are marvelous.

BUBBLES

When the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

SHAMIKA

I believe you do, Mrs. Nusbaum. I do believe you do.

Stanley indicates O'Brien, Shamika and Sherlock.

STANLEY

Bubbles, who are these people?

THE EMPRESS

These are the police detectives who have been trying to find you.

Stanley becomes very apologetic.

STANLEY

I am very sorry for wasting your time.

BUBBLES

How can we show our gratitude?

SHAMIKA

Maybe you can use some help with your mission? Someone who can help you with your correspondence?

O'BRIEN

How about two jobs? I'm retiring.

SHERLOCK

Do you need help organizing the grant applications?

Bubbles beams.

BUBBLES

Certainly. I believe I speak for my entire family when I say we can use all the help we can get.

SUPER: "six months later"

BEGIN CLOSING CREDITS INTERSPERSED WITH THE FOLLOWING IMAGES

INT. THE CHOIR OF THE FIRST ABYSSINIAN CHURCH OF HARLEM - DAY

As the closing credits begin, a SOLOIST, backed by the CHOIR, begins belting out a gospel version of "Hava Nagilah", sung like a locomotive, starting slowly, with a heavy rhythm. Then accelerating in passion and volume, until it is rushing forward at full speed with whistle blaring. The final lyrics are prolonged loudly and triumphantly by the Soloist, as the choir continuously repeats the first verse at a joyous pace, "Hava Nagilah! Hava Nagilah! Hava Nagilah!"

The song is subtitled.

INT. SANCTUM SANCTORUM - PRESENT DAY

Beginning with the image of the Fortune magazine blowup of Stanley at which the opening credits ended, and continuing from left to right.

The front page of The New York Times with headline:  
"PENISILLIN 2"

The front page of The Wall Street Journal with the  
headline: "NUSBAUM DOES IT AGAIN!"

A poster from Carnegie Hall: "LOOK WHO'S TALKING! THE JUDY  
AND JODY REUNION" and the banner "SOLD OUT!" across it.

The cover of Publisher's Weekly with the headline:  
"PASSION'S MENOPAUSE WINS PULITZER"

The cover of the magazine Modern House Painting.

Judy is smiling into the camera, holding the bottom of a  
ladder leaning against a house.

As the camera ascends, the featured articles appearing on  
the cover include: "MINERAL SPIRITS OR TURPENTINE? YOU  
DECIDE", "BOAR BRISTLE OR NYLON? THE CONTROVERSY HEATS  
UP", "A PRIMER PRIMER", "LADDERS YOU CAN LEAN ON TRAYS YOU  
CAN TRUST"

The Empress is at the top of the ladder, waving a  
paintbrush and smiling triumphantly into the camera with a  
thumbs up. The headline: "I CONQUERED TRIM!"

A wedding ceremony photograph with Shamika and Spike,  
squeezed into the infamous burgundy tuxedo, being married  
under a chupah. O'Brien is best man. Judy is the maid of  
honor.

A wedding reception photograph of Sweetums with the bridal  
bouquet in his/her jaws, crouched and daring anyone to take  
it from him/her.

A wedding reception photograph with Stanley being hoisted  
on a chair supported by Vinny, Vito, Vicki and Sweetums.

A large, updated family photograph of the extended Nusbaum  
clan, arranged (from left) with The Empress, Judy on her  
lap, Spike holding hands with Shamika, Stanley, and  
Bubbles. Sweetums' front teeth are pressed against right  
foreground edge, as if Sweetums is attacking the camera.

"Hava Nagilah" ends exultantly!

Silence.

PAUSE.

The family photograph abruptly tips sixty degrees clockwise.

END CREDITS

FADE OUT:

THE END