

SFX: OPENING TANGO MUSIC, THEN --

The QuarantTeam presents Mansfield Mysteries: 'Fortune Says: Murder?' - Chapter One.

SCENE ONE:

SFX: CAR NOISES.

DORINDA: Thank you for driving today, my darling daughter.

STACEY: Well, you never know what high tea might turn into.

GIGI/FAITH (her many bracelets JINGLE as she talks): Yes, especially at Lina Halston's house. Tiny sandwiches and scones one minute, martinis and charcuterie the next.

DORINDA: I love that about her.

STACEY: I haven't heard you talk about Lina Halston until recently.

DORINDA: Well, she's new money, dear, but Faith and I are dying to see the inside of her house.

GIGI/FAITH: Now, Dorinda, I told you I want you to call me Gigi. I need to get used to it before the big day.

STACEY: That's right! Mom told me you're about to be a grandmother.

DORINDA: Stacey! That is not a word used in proper society. I expect you of all people to show more sensitivity than that.

STACEY: What's wrong with grand--

DORINDA: Don't say it!

GIGI: In our generation, Stacey, we've moved beyond such limiting labels. Grandmothers are old and frumpy. But a "Gigi," well, she's vibrant and stylish and full of life!

DORINDA: Personally, I can't wait to become a Gigi. Unfortunately, my sweet daughter isn't interested in settling down just yet.

STACEY: I'm in no rush. I'm only twenty--

DORINDA: A lady never discloses her age, lest it causes others to calculate how old her mother might be.

GIGI: Oh, Dorinda, I know that you're--

DORINDA: Don't make me say the "g-word," Faith.

GIGI: I'm only teasing. So, Stacey, you're not dating anyone?

STACEY: No. Not seriously.

DORINDA: But you are dating someone?

STACEY: I plead the fifth.

DORINDA: Well, that'll be my first question for Madame Anoushka! What are you going to ask about, Gigi?

GIGI: My first question is about the boutique I want to open. My husband is completely against it, but if I have some credible evidence pointing in my direction--

STACEY: What kind of boutique?

GIGI: A haberdashery.

DORINDA: In Berkshire Bay? I might be on your husband's side. There must be six or seven hat stores downtown alone.

GIGI (giggles): Oh, Dorinda, you have no imagination. Hats are the next big thing! We'll see what Madame Anoushka says. Also, I told Alice I'd ask about Richard. If he's at peace on the other side.

DORINDA: That's what happens when you have questionable ties with Russian oligarchs.

STACEY: Where is Alice? Seeing a fortune teller seems like just the kind of thing she'd be into.

DORINDA: Oh, she's at a spa. (Dorinda and Gigi both laugh.) Of sorts.

GIGI: If I forget to mention it later, Stacey, I am very grateful for the ride. It is unbecoming of a woman, and future Gigi, of my status to get a second DUI.

DORINDA: It's because you're always drinking on an empty stomach. You must eat something my dear.

GIGI: Oh, I just like to look.

STACEY: Always happy to be the designated driver. (a pause) Well, I think we're close. God, this neighborhood is so odd. The houses look just like the ones from our neighborhood.

DORINDA: They have managed to avoid that tacky new-build look.

STACEY: Yeah. But the trees are so tiny.

DORINDA: I know. They throw all of this money to mimic classic architecture but don't spring for mature trees! There are some things you simply cannot teach new money.

GIGI: I'm not quite sure what to expect today. Madame Anoushka is a celebrity psychic! How Lina Halston managed to snag her for a private session... I am quite impressed.

DORINDA: Michael's the one who made the connection for her.

GIGI: Our Michael?

DORINDA: He used to style Madame Anoushka's hair, back when he lived in Chicago.

GIGI: How did I not know this?!

DORINDA: Oh, I think there were some hurt feelings on his part. You know how devastating it is when a client leaves a stylist.

GIGI: Michael is my longest relationship, with the exception of my children.

DORINDA: Same. I would adopt him if he were forty years younger.

SFX: WINDOW GOES DOWN.

STACEY: Here we are!

SFX: AN INTERCOM BUTTON IS PRESSED.

RECORDED ATTENDANT: Welcome to the Halston Estate. Please enter your personal invitation code now. (buttons are pressed) Code accepted. Proceed once the gates have fully opened. And please remember, our Trumpeter Swans ARE aggressive. Do not make eye contact.

STACEY: God, this house is almost identical to--

DORINDA: Rosemary Berkshire's palace? I know. Which is part of the reason she might never crack the inner circle of Berkshire Bay. Rosemary abhors mimicry.

SFX: THEY PARK AND THE KEYS TURN IN THE IGNITION, TURNING THE CAR OFF.

STACEY: Some say it's the sincerest form of flattery.

DORINDA: Rosemary prefers the traditional way.

GIGI: Good old-fashioned ass-kissing. Pardon my French.

SFX: SEATBELTS CLICK, THEN DOORS OPENING AND CLOSING. THEY WALK TO THE FRONT DOOR.

GIGI: What a grand entrance!

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS. NO ANSWER. THE DOORKNOCKER POUNDS A FEW TURNS.

GIGI: It is quite lovely.

DORINDA (knocking again): If you like ostentatiousness.

SFX: THE LARGE DOOR OPENS.

LINA (an acquired accent that translates as posh, but not quite identifiable) Dorinda! Gigi!

DORINDA: Lina Halston!

GIGI (overlapping): Lina!

LINA: Gigi, I just love your jewelry. And this must be Stacey. What a pleasure to meet you. Your mother speaks of you endlessly.

STACEY: I'm sorry to hear that. How boring!

LINA: Not at all. I am so enamored with teachers. And kindergarten besides! To keep all of those little brains interested and all of those little hands off each other at the same time... I could never do it.

DORINDA: Where are your little ones?

LINA: Not so little anymore. Mine are eight and ten, so they're off to camp for the summer.

GIGI: Oh, thank god for summer camp! It's nice to have them for a few weeks in August, but to fill an entire summer! When would one find the time for tennis?

LINA: Please, please come in. Michael is already here, enjoying a flute of Veuve in the solarium. (The door closes.) Tea is prepared; we're just awaiting the arrival of Madame Anoushka.

GIGI: Then she should take her time! That's my favorite champagne.

LINA: Let's get you some. Follow me.

SFX: A GRANDFATHER CLOCK RINGS. FOOTSTEPS MOVE DOWN THE HALLWAY.

STACEY: Your house is beautiful, Mrs. Halston.

LINA (Dorinda, Gigi and Stacey quietly react to Lina's tour): Please, call me Lina! I'll give you a full tour later, but for now, let's see, to the right is the billiards room. Salvador just adores pool! In fact, he's in the pool right now--he'll be in later to say his hellos. On the left is the library. I'm the book collector in the family, and I've always dreamt of having a library to show off my books.

STACEY: When I was younger, I always wanted the kind of shelves with a rolling ladder--

LINA (overlapping): A rolling ladder! Yes, of course! It would feel incomplete without one.

DORINDA (to GIGI, unheard by the other two): Where's the conservatory?

GIGI: With Colonel Mustard and the candlestick?

DORINDA (giggles): Let's hope it doesn't come to that.

LINA: Oh, and this is my gallery wall. Joy Wakefield has been kind enough to enrich my knowledge of fine art.

GIGI (under her breath): Really?

LINA: That one on the end is a Jan Jewel I acquired at the Easter Gala.

DORINDA: Ah. I recognize the charcoal.

LINA: And here, at last, is the solarium--

SFX: PATIO DOOR SLIDING OPEN.

LINA: --and dear, dear Michael!

GIGI: Michael!

DORINDA (overlapping): Michael! Oh, you scoundrel...

MICHAEL: All of my favorite girls in one place! I don't know who does your hair, but you all look fabulous!

DORINDA: Nice try. You know I'm due to see you next week. We might have to move my appointments to every six weeks. I swear I'm going grayer by the month.

MICHAEL: You are aging like a fine wine, Dorinda. I will not have you speak ill of such a close friend.

DORINDA: All we do when I'm in the chair is speak ill of close friends.

MICHAEL: That's why I love you!

SFX: AIR KISSES.

GIGI: Speaking of fine wines, how about a little splash of that Veuve Cliquot. I could use a little something to take the edge off before Madame Anoushka reveals my future.

SFX: LINA POURS GLASSES OF CHAMPAGNE.

LINA: We owe it all to Michael. To secure a private reading with the nation's leading clairvoyant is no small feat.

MICHAEL: Well, we recently reconnected after a long--

DORINDA: Long what?

MICHAEL: She left Chicago for fame in Los Angeles, and I left Chicago--

DORINDA: For fame in Berkshire Bay. I think you're the winner in that game.

MICHAEL: As do I.

LINA (handing out drinks): Here you go, Gigi. Dorinda. Stacey. Would someone care to lead us in a little toast?

GIGI: I will. May our futures be as bubbly and crisp as these--

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

LINA: Oh, that must be Madame Anoushka! Excuse me, please. I want to greet her myself.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS AS LINA LEAVES. THE PATIO DOOR SLIDES OPEN AND CLOSED AGAIN.

GIGI: A house this size but no staff?

DORINDA: It is Saturday. And you don't have staff.

GIGI: Not daily, but I also don't live in a replica of Rosemary Berkshire's behemoth of a chateau.

STACEY: Oh, I find Lina to be charming. I like that she isn't showy.

DORINDA: Darling, she's hired a famous psychic to provide a private reading for the local elite at high tea. I'd call that showy.

MICHAEL: Oh, she told me everything when I did her highlights last week. She had an entire team prepare the house for the tour she'll pretend to have forgotten.

STACEY: She did mention showing us the house after the readings.

MICHAEL: Oh, the house tour will be a production.

GIGI: I'm dying to see it. I've never been beyond Rosemary's foyer.

MICHAEL: Speaking of which, the cakes and sandwiches were prepared by none other than Rosemary Berkshire's former private chef.

GIGI: The one who got fired for--

MICHAEL: Yep, him!

STACEY: For what?

MICHAEL: Procuring the wrong brand of caviar for her holiday party.

STACEY: That's outrageous.

MICHAEL: Rosemary was outraged, all right.

STACEY: No, I mean her privilege.

DORINDA: Stacey, darling, what Rosemary Berkshire wants, Rosemary Berkshire gets.

GIGI: It's like the Newton's Law of Berkshire Bay.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENS AND FOOTSTEPS.

LINA: Everyone, I am so excited to introduce you to the one, the only Madame Anoushka!

SFX: ONE SLOW CLAP FOLLOWED BY THE REST JOINING IN.

MADAME ANOUSHKA (She will use an Eastern European accent but slip into a regular American accent at certain points.): Good afternoon. I am Madame Anoushka, and it is my pleasure to be with you today.

SFX: MORE FOOTSTEPS. VOICES ARGUING.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA (In a thick Eastern European accent.): No, no. I will not have it! Not today!

SFX: PATIO DOOR CLOSES.

LINA: Oh, and this is her entourage: Mother Anoushka and Madame Anoushka's younger sister, Barb.

BARB (In a Boston accent--no trace of her mother's.): Another wasted Saturday, when it was leg day at the gym, and for what? Why do I always have to--

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Speak less.

LINA: Let me introduce everyone. This is my friend Dorinda Mansfield and her daughter, Stacey.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: You look like mother and daughter.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Except nose. One of you has fixed nose.

DORINDA: Why, I--

LINA: And this is Faith--sorry, I mean Gigi--Montgomery.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Pleasure.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: You must eat more. Too thin. Too many bracelets.

LINA: And, of course, you'll meet my husband, Salvador, as soon as he's nice and leathery from the son.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: I see skin cancer in future.

LINA: Anyway, Madame Anoushka, I have a large table set up at the far end of the solarium, based on what I have seen online of your readings.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Yes, yes. That will be fine. I need a moment to set up the tarot cards and the pendulum and the runes. And is the samovar ready? I will need my mother to go to the kitchen to prepare the Turkish coffee, so that I may read your cups.

LINA: With pleasure!

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Barb, give me the bag.

SFX: CLINKING COPPER AGAINST COFFEE CUPS.

LINA: Barb, could I get you a flute of champagne?

BARB: I'm going to need something to get through this afternoon.

SFX: POURING CHAMPAGNE.

LINA: Follow me, Mother Anoushka.

DORINDA: So, Barb... or is it Barbara?

BARB: Barb.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS. PATIO DOOR SLIDES OPEN AND CLOSED.

DORINDA: So, Barb, what exactly is your job with your sister's readings?

BARB: Bodyguard.

DORINDA: Interesting. So, Barb, you protect your sister from threats? Stalkers?

BARB: Angry clients.

GIGI: Is that necessary?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Not everyone is prepared to see their futures.

GIGI: Well, I assure you you are safe among this group.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: One never knows for sure.

DORINDA: Surely you do, being a psychic.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Of course. I know I am safe, but I cannot yet sense the vibrational energy of this particular gathering.

MICHAEL: Can you sense an old friend when you see them?

MADAME ANOUSHKA (after a beat, with no trace of her accent): Is that you? Michael Miller?

MICHAEL: I just go by Michael now.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Of course you do! You were always on your way to being known by a single name. Didn't I tell you that years ago?

MICHAEL: You sure did.

GIGI: Wait a second. I thought you arranged this whole thing, Michael.

MICHAEL: In a sense.

MADAME ANOUSHKA (coughs back into accent): I was contacted by Rosemary Berkshire's office. It was she who put me in touch with Lina Halston.

MICHAEL: Well, I asked Rosemary as a favor to Lina... none of this matters. You all know I'm a connector. What matters is your success, Ruth! I mean, Madame Anoushka. What you have accomplished over these years! The tours, the books! I don't know how you manage it all.

BARB: Tell 'em, Ruth. Tell them how you manage it.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Oh, Barb. Sometimes Barb forgets how grateful I am for my family rallying around me. Without my mother and my sister, I couldn't do any of this.

BARB: Adopted mother and sister. Mother took you in at seventeen.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: And we have been family ever since.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES. FOOTSTEPS.

LINA: Mother Anoushka is preparing the Turkish coffee. She said it would just be a moment. Madame Anoushka, would you

care for something to eat? The tea stands will be out shortly.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Perhaps.

LINA: And, uh, was it Barb? Are you hungry?

BARB: Oh, yeah. Of coure.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: I am gluten intolerant.

LINA: Oh, Chef Andre is aware. How about we set up at the table? Everyone, bring your champagne and let's find our place cards. Come, come.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS AS THEY MOVE TO THE FAR END OF THE SOLARIUM.

GIGI (whispering to DORINDA): Doesn't that sister seem a little off to you?

DORINDA: How so?

GIGI: She's like a dark cloud threatening a picnic.

DORINDA: You're a regular poet. If the hat store doesn't work out--

GIGI: She just seems a little nasty.

DORINDA: Probably a dash of sibling rivalry. That's why I only ever wanted one child.

STACEY: So you wouldn't have to deal with sibling rivalry?

DORINDA: No, so I wouldn't have to deal with my children knowing which one I loved more.

STACEY: That's ridiculous! Parents don't love one child the most.

(A beat. Dorinda and Gigi laugh.)

GIGI: Oh, youth! Nothing makes you feel older than being faced with the innocence of the young.

DORINDA: Or becoming a grandmother?

GIGI: A Gigi.

LINA: Dorinda, you're here, next to Michael. And Stacey, you're right across from your mother, right beside Gigi.

SFX: GLASSES ARE SET ON A TABLE AS THEY SIT.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES. TEA CUPS SHAKES ON A TRAY AS IT'S BEING CARRIED IN.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Ah ha! Here comes Mother Anoushka with the Turkish coffee.

SFX: MORE RATTLING OF CUPS.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Here, Mother, set the tray there.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA (struggling): This is very, very heavy. I am too old for this task. This should be Barb's task.
BARB: Let's not get into my to-do list right now, OK?

SFX: TRAY SET HARSHLY ON TABLE.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Thank you, Mother. Now, will you pour the coffees for the women, please? And Michael.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: I carry. I pour. I do the readings, too, no?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: No, Mother. I'll do the readings. Ladies, let me explain to you the art and interpretive vision of Turkish coffee fortune telling. First one must...

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES AGAIN. FOOTSTEPS.

CHEF ANDRE: Good afternoon, ladies.

LINA: Chef Andre!

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Andre Bucholz!

MICHAEL (overlapping): Andre Bucholz. Long time no see.

CHEF ANDRE: I am Chef Andre.

MICHAEL: I see you still wear your hair in a permanent wave.

CHEF ANDRE: "Fashion changes, but style endures." That's Coco Chanel.

LINA: We're about to begin the readings, Chef Andre. Perhaps you could set the tray--

CHEF ANDRE: Anyway. I have prepared for you a proper English tea service, including the various delights you'll see before you on this tray.

BARB: I'm wicked starving.

DORINDA: I'm famished by four o'clock. That's usually when I have my first martini--for the olives.

GIGI: Nothing like a couple of olives to get you to the cocktail hour.

LINA: All right, Chef. Set the tray right here in the middle. Ooh. What have you made for us today?

CHEF ANDRE: Cucumber sandwiches, of course, as well as egg salad. And there is a seafood salad on gluten-free toast.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: I adore seafood!

LINA: Well, thank you, Chef. Now, Madam Anoushka--

CHEF ANDRE: On the third tier you'll find the cakes--petit fours and some dark chocolate bites, with a fresh strawberry cake.

DORINDA: Dark chocolate is good for you, did you know that?

GIGI: Know it? I live by it!

DORINDA: Do you Gigi? I've never seen you eat anything, let alone chocolate.

GIGI: Well...

LINA: Thank you, Chef. That will be all--

CHEF ANDRE: And I made butterscotch scones--the round ones are sans gluten. I will bring the clotted cream out, as well, with the tea itself.

LINA: Thank you, Chef.

CHEF ANDRE: I will return momentarily.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS.

MICHAEL: This looks delicious!

LINA: Why doesn't everyone make a plate before we carry on with the readings.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES AS CHEF EXITS.

STACEY: I haven't had high tea since my sweet sixteen.

DORINDA: Of course! It's a rite of passage!

GIGI: I cannot believe Rosemary Berkshire would fire such a charming chef for ordering the wrong brand of caviar.

LINA: It wasn't just the brand; it was the kind. He ordered Osetra instead of Beluga, insistent the Osetra goes best with the creme fraiche. It's a regrettable mistake, but understandable on Rosemary's part.

SFX: GRANDFATHER CLOCK STRIKES IN FAR BACKGROUND.

DORINDA: Then why did you hire him?

LINA: I don't particularly like caviar.

SFX: CLINKING OF PLATES, ETC.

LINA: Madame Anoushka, would you care for something?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Perhaps one bite. I can't resist a scone.

LINA: Gigi?

GIGI: Nothing for me, thank you. Oh, but it does look delicious.

BARB: I'll have the egg salad and a petit four.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES. FOOTSTEPS.

CHEF ANDRE: I will set the tea at the far end of the table, as you are having your Turkish coffees first, but here is the clotted cream. Imported from Cornwall.

LINA: I thought Rosemary Berkshire preferred Devonshire clotted cream.

CHEF ANDRE: Preferred, yes. But her palate is not as sophisticated as she likes to believe. At least when it comes to clotted cream. Bon appetit, ladies. And Michael.

GIGI (to DORINDA): And Barb.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Please pass plate with one cucumber sandwich and one scone. Ooh, no cream.

BARB: Sure thing, Ma.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: I'll have two gluten-free scones and some clotted cream!

LINA: How much clotted cream would you like?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: The amount you choose will be the correct amount.

LINA: Ooh, the predictions are starting already. Here you go, Madame Anoushka.

SFX: CLINKING, ETC.

MICHAEL: Well, I, for one, am ready to begin this spiritual journey! I cannot wait to ask my questions.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Then let us start. Mother, you have poured the coffee?

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Yes!

MADAME ANOUSHKA: All right. Who... Who would like to begin?

MICHAEL: Well, for old time's sake, how about your old friend and devoted stylist?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: So be it. Michael Miller--

MICHAEL: Just Michael.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Mother, please bring 'Just Michael' his coffee. And Michael, I want you to set your intention. What do you want to know?

MICHAEL: The first thing I want to ask is--

MADAME ANOUSHKA: No, do not tell me! You will ask the question to the great world beyond. I will read your coffee grounds, and that will provide the answer.

MICHAEL: Oh. So, how will I know if you're right?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: You will know. You will know. Now, still yourself, focus on your intent, and then I will have you drink the coffee in exactly three sips.

MICHAEL: OK.

SFX: THREE DISTINCT SIPS.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: And then when you finish, turn the cup upside-down on the saucer.

SFX: CUP HITTING SAUCER.

MICHAEL: Now what?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Thinking of your question, swirl the saucer three complete turns clockwise.

SFX: MICHAEL BEGINS SPINNING THE CUP.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Clockwise! And swirl, Michael. We must loosen the sediment.

SFX: THE CUP IS TURNED THREE TIMES.

MICHAEL: All right, all right.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: And keep thinking of your question.

MICHAEL: There. Done.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Now, please pass me your cup and saucer.

SFX: SLIDING ACROSS THE TABLE, PERHAPS CLINKING A BIT.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: As I read this, Michael, keep your question in mind.

GIGI: Can we know the question? Oh, think it'd be more fun if we know the question.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: I cannot know the question to give my best reading.

DORINDA: But you're clairvoyant, right? Don't you know the question anyway?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: The spirit world works in mysterious ways.

GIGI: So, can he tell us?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: All right, I'll cover my ears and make some noise, and if Michael wishes, he can share his question with you.

MICHAEL: Yes, that will be more fun.

SFX: MADAME ANOUSHKA SINGS TO HERSELF, NOT LISTENING.

MICHAEL: My question is whether my hairdryer line will get off the ground and be a success. There's so much competition out there!

DORINDA: That's a good one!

GIGI (claps in excitement): See, this is more fun!

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Are we good? Good. All right, Michael. Let me see what the cup says. Hmmmm. First of all, I look at three sections of the cup to represent your past, present, and future. The bottom is the past, and that is very thick, very full, which speaks to your groundedness as both a person and a stylist. Your foundation is strong. Does that speak to you?

GIGI: Oh, yes!

MADAME ANOUSHKA: I was asking Michael.

MICHAEL: Yes, for sure.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Now, I'm looking at the sides of the cup. See how there are little dots? Dots mean money or messages. You will be receiving one or the other in your present. Any time now. Does that resonate with your question?

GIGI: Michael, weren't you gearing up the courage to ask- (whispering) Rosemary Berkshire to invest in your you-know-what?

MICHAEL: Come on, come on, Gigi. Don't get me too excited. It's the future we need to see.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Ah. Well, this is where the coffee is less certain, shall we say? You see these lines? The vertical lines are your life goals, but not one of them made it to the rim. Now that doesn't mean you can't achieve these goals, but under the current circumstances, there is no spark. They are unlikely to be reached at this time.

DORINDA: This sounds like the Magic Eight Ball you had when you were a girl, Stacey: Outlook not so good. Ask again later.

STACEY: Mom, lower your voice. Michael looks upset.

MICHAEL: So, what am I supposed to do, Ruth? I mean, Madame Anoushka?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Eh. Keep plugging away, Michael. Perhaps there are a few details that must be ironed out first.

MICHAEL: Great.

DORINDA: Don't be upset.

MICHAEL: Who's upset? Would you be upset if you were working and working towards--

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Michael, the cup is simply saying--

MICHAEL: I need a glass of water. Lina, can you point me towards the kitchen to grab a glass of water?

LINA: I can ring Chef Andre.

MICHAEL: That's not necessary.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS TOWARDS THE DOOR.

LINA: Then just follow the hallway to the right; it's the second archway to your left.

MICHAEL: Thank you.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING AS MICHAEL LEAVES.

GIGI: Well, that's unfortunate. I hope all of our readings aren't so gloomy.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Well, what was his question?

DORINDA: Aren't you supposed to know?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: In this case, I just read what the coffee grounds tell me.

GIGI: He's trying to start a hairdryer line, and he was about to ask Rosemary Berkshire to finance him.

MADAME ANOUSHKA (tisking): Ha! Michael is horrible at business. I told him last week it's terrible idea. Anyway, who is next?

GIGI: Oh, me! Me!

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Barb, since this is taking so long, perhaps you could bring new coffee. These cups have gone cold.

BARB: I'm not your servant, get it yourself.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: You'll do as I say, or you won't get your allowance.

BARB: Of course, Madame Anoushka. Anything you say.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: I can do it.

BARB: Hold tight, Ma. I'll do it.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: There is tea kettle in kitchen.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS TO DOOR.

BARB: Got it.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES BEHIND BARB.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: All right, Gigi.

GIGI: Now I've never had Turkish coffee before. Is it like American coffee? No calories?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: No. Now please do the same as I asked of Michael. Drink your coffee, and--

GIGI: Yes, yes, I know. (sips coffee down in three swallows) Ok, think of the question. Swirl, swirl, swirl.

SFX: SWIRLING AND CLINKING.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Excellent. May I see your cup.

SFX: SAUCER IS SLIDE ACROSS THE TABLE.

GIGI: Well?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Ooohh. This is interesting. In your case, the past is not so solid. There is a disconnection.

GIGI: Well, he is my second husband.

DORINDA: He's your third.

GIGI: The second one was so short, I don't count it.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Please, please. Do not respond until I am finished. I do not want to taint the reading.

GIGI: All right, all right.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Now, the same dots I saw on Michael's cup appear in yours. There is something unfinished. Some sort of message that needs to be sent or received. What is different, however, is that I am looking and seeing letters. See that? It looks like a "P".

GIGI: "P"?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: And some others. An "A," an "N." Does Panama mean anything to you?

GIGI: Like a Panama hat?

MADAME ANOUSHKA: No, like the country. And I'm hearing a message: something seaward.

SFX: LINA AND DORINDA GASP.

DORINDA: The C-word?

LINA: That's inappropriate.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: No, seaward. Look towards the sea.

GIGI: Oh, like, like, I'm supposed to open my haberdashery on Berkshire Bay? On the water? You're right Dorinda (claps her hands), there are too many haberdasheries downtown.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: I see nothing of a haberdashery in this cup. Nothing at all. Are you sure you were concentrating on your question?

GIGI: Well, I had two.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING. FOOTSTEPS.

SFX: MICHAEL AND BARB ARE LAUGHING.

DORINDA: Michael, you seem to be feeling better.

BARB: I talked him down.

MICHAEL: A little distance helps, right? I mean, we're just having fun. This isn't real.

MADAME ANOUSHKA (outburst): How dare you say that?!

MICHAEL: Barb told me. It's your mother who's the real clairvoyant. You've just taken her act to the next level.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: Barb! That is inaccurate. And where is my fresh Turkish coffee?

BARB: Shoot. I forgot it. Michael and I got to talking.

MADAME ANOUSHKA: As usual, I have to do everything myself! I'll be right back! (calming down her tone) Please, do figure out whose fortune I will be reading next. And don't forget, I will answer separate questions--or follow-up ones--with the Tarot cards and pendulum after we finish with the coffee grounds.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS, THEN THE PATIO DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING.

DORINDA: She's got a little fire in her.

GIGI: I'll say.

LINA: I had no idea our high tea would turn into this!

GIGI: Well, Michael saying this isn't real wasn't very nice.

MICHAEL: Maybe not, but it's true, right, Barb?

BARB: Every word.

GIGI: She's your sister!

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Adopted.

STACEY: Mother Anoushka, all due respect, but adopted children are your children.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: It is in name only. No paperwork. But she was better for act. Very lucrative.

GIGI: Act?

DORINDA: I knew this couldn't be real.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Oh, it is real. My powers are real, but Ruth is better at... Well, Barb lacks... Oh, what do you call it, Barb?

BARB: Je ne sais quoi.

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: Stage presence. Not to mention gift. I teach, I explain, but without gift, there is nothing.

GIGI: So, were you feeding her lines when she was reading my coffee grounds?

MOTHER ANOUSHKA: I cannot give away secrets.

SFX: ELECTRICAL SHORTS, BUZZING.

GIGI: Why are the lights flashing?

DORINDA: Are you exhibiting your powers?

LINA: Nothing like this has ever happened before! The house is brand new!

MICHAEL: It's sunny out. There's no bad weather, no lightning strikes.

SFX: PATIO DOOR OPENING, CLOSING. WET FOOTSTEPS.

STACEY: Mom, what's that smell?

DORINDA (sniffing): I'd recognize that stench anywhere: it's 3B Sunscreen.

SALVADOR: Hey, babe.

LINA: Salvador! You're tracking water everywhere!

SALVADOR: I think you'd better check the warranty on that margarita maker. It's already on the fritz!

GIGI: Did you see the lights flicker?

SALVADOR: No, but the pool is popping, if any of you ladies brought your suits.

SFX: THE PATIO DOOR OPENS HASTILY.

CHEF ANDRE: Mrs. Halston! Mr. Halston! Come quickly!

SALVADOR: What is it, Andy?

LINA: It's Andre, and he's a very esteemed chef, Salvador.

CHEF ANDRE: It's Madame Anoushka. I think she's dead!

SFX: EVERYONE GASPS.

LINA: Where is she?

CHEF ANDRE: In the kitchen! On the floor!

SFX: CHAIRS PUSHING BACK, HURRIED FOOTSTEPS.

STACEY: Mom, what do you make of this?

DORINDA: One: Barb is correct--Madame Anoushka has no powers, otherwise she would have been able to predict her own death. And two: I predict this was a murder.

SFX: CLINK

Mansfield Mysteries

Featuring:

Melissa Hughes Ernest as Dorinda Mansfield
and
Melissa Zeien as Stacey Mansfield

With:

Kristin Althoff as Barb
Doug Despin as Chef Andre
A.J. Laird as Salvador Halston
Tina Paukstelis as Gigi Montgomery and Mother Anoushka
Joan Roehre as Lina Halston and Madame Anoushka
And
Christopher Wild as Michael Miller

Produced by Nicholas Hoyt and Paul Reese
Associate Produced by Drew Owen
Written by Amy Hanson and Michael L Johnson
Sound Design by Paul Reese
Directed by Nicholas Hoyt

A special Thank You to Amber Miller for all of her contributions.

This season is dedicated to the memory and honor of Dutch and Sandie Hoyt.

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