

The Players (all 137)

Loretta Swift (2) – owner of the bar
Paco Nahoor (4) – bartender at the bar, likes Star Trek
Sugar Muffins – shy, aspiring stripper
Maxwell Folgers (2) – Norm
Ted – mailman of the bar
Extra #11 (2) – extra
Claire (1) – extra
Harmony/The Distraction (2 each) – Maxwell’s wife/Mr. Mallard’s sidekick
Mr. Mallard – Local superhero
Molly Muffins – Sugar’s Mom
The Pope (4, one real, three brick) – has a cool hat
James Doohan – In the sound booth
Billy Bob Thorton – Wants to keep the money
God – A high tenor
God’s Hand – Future career in kabuki
Ice cream vendor – also captain of the Titanic
Mariachi Band – notorious drive-by experts
Sign Guy – evil
Sign Girl – also evil
Scene 7 – Statler
Scene 8 – Waldorf
Scene 2 – a rip-off of Hand Duet from Thumb Wars
One Damn Injun – damn him
Pappy – Paco & Ted’s Father
Announcer – has one lifelong dream
Mother Sister Mary Lou Iguanas Barbie Nuclear Meltdown Ramirez (nun) – likes the taste of mint
Cleetus, the ultra secret bricklayer – unknown
Egyptian Sparrow – a god and Beckett enthusiast
Half Moon – a god, breathes quite a bit
70 Ninjas – not made of cheese
Jack – the 71st ninja with the high cholesterol intake
The Pinney Patrol – four people, sorta like jury duty
Chinese Hostages – six people, sorta like jury duty
Rod Serling – black and white
Pool Table (2) – bumpers’ action a little worn out
Jesusmon – gotta catch ‘em all
Edward Albee – absurdist playwright
Edward Gorey – cartoonist, recently dead
Edward VI (2) – one the real deal, the other a really good pencil sketch
Edward Scissorhands – Johnny Depp if you can get him
Edward Piercedlung – Steve Buscemi if you can get him
Edward Shrubs – Sir Laurence Olivier
Edward Ma – Chinese
Loretta “Edward” Fulton – born out of wedlock
Edward Epilogue – his initials are EE, like the poet
Pappy’s Dog – you

Confusing the Audience

Act 1, Scene 1

Time: Present Day

Setting: a bar in Detroit

[Loretta comes out before the curtain opens. There is just a spot on her.]

LORETTA. Most kids want to be a teacher or a neurosurgeon when they grow up. Not me. I always wanted to own a bar. Well, not just any bar, the best bar. I wanted this bar to be so great that the Pope himself would eat off the floors. Well, not literally. I mean, what kind of demented person would serve the Pope his food on the floor? Maybe in some foreign countries it's tradition, but not here in Detroit. I'm only saying this to give you an idea of the setting and the plot. I'd like to narrate this whole play for you, but I have to go. I'm in it. *[she exits]*

[lights come up to a bar scene. There are several people on barstools and a few select people at tables. Paco is behind the bar, mixing drinks. Maxwell is at the barstool, looking pretty ratty and tired]

MAXWELL. Gimme some more! *[slides glass across bar]*

PACO. Maxwell, you crazy? Ain't you had enough?

MAXWELL. No. I want more!

PACO. But this is your fourth refill. State law says I shouldn't fill any cat's bowl more than twice. That's four there. Two too many. Two. A powerful number. One more than one. A half dozen-

MAXWELL. State Law doesn't say anything about cats.

PACO. Listen, who's got the bartending license here?

MAXWELL. Just shut up and fill it.

PACO. *[sighs]* What's got your eye?

MAXWELL. No more of those walnuts! You forgot the nutcracker last time and I'm getting quite a headache. How about some pecans?

PACO. *[grabs a bag of peanuts and empties it into cup]* Pecans empty. Like space. The final frontier. *[then in an announcer voice]* These are the voyages of the Starship Peanuts.---

MAXWELL. You okay back there?

PACO. Whose bold mission is to search out new and different stomachs. *[Maxwell grabs bag of peanuts]* Aaahh! Shields up! *[he ducks under counter. Loretta comes out, dressed in a business suit type thingy. She's carrying some paperwork and is expecting someone]*

LORETTA. Paco! Has she come yet?

PACO. [*peeks head above counter*] Who?

LORETTA. [*startled*] Sugar Muffins.

PACO. Who?

LORETTA. The girl who wants to dance for us.

PACO. Dance?

LORETTA. The exotic dancer we're interviewing today?

PACO. No. And by the way [*walking over to her and putting his arm around her*] can I interview her?

LORETTA. No. Stay out of sight as much as possible.

PACO. But---

LORETTA. Why don't you practice now?
[*Paco goes back to the bar, grumbling, while Ted, the mailman walks in.*]

TED. Mail's here! [*Sugar Muffins walks by, carrying a small bag, wearing a trenchcoat*] So's the female!

LORETTA. Thanks Ted. [*then, to Sugar*] Sugar Muffins?

TED. No thanks, 'Retta. I prefer eclairs.

CLAIRE. I'm Claire!

TED. [*Walks over to her*] Hey baby. [*They sit together*]

LORETTA. Sorry about Ted. He's rather. . . .eccentric. Uh, can I take your coat?

SUGAR. NO! No, not yet.

LORETTA. Oh, I see. So, would you like to sit down and order drinks so we can begin the interview?

SUGAR. Interview?

LORETTA. Yeah. Before you dance.

SUGAR. Dance?

LORETTA. Yes, dance. What do you think you would do at an audition?

SUGAR. Well, I brought a tape with me----

PACO. [*coming from the bar*] Can I interest you ladies in a drink? [*to Sugar*] Scotch, brandy. . .
[*to Loretta*] Drano?

SUGAR. Bowl cleaner?

LORETTA. Pine sol?

SUGAR. Ajax in Guava Juice?

LORETTA. How about a pint of nitro-glycerine?

SUGAR. Or 2 shots of lighter fluid?

LORETTA. Why not make it liquid nitrogen, on the house.

SUGAR. Nah, too much caffeine. [*pause*] Better just make it two waters.

LORETTA. Paco, two waters please?

PACO. [*stunned*] Um... sure thing. [*gets the ladies two waters*] Is that all?

LORETTA. That's it. [*to Sugar*] You know, it's so difficult to find good help these days.

TED. [*stands up from table and begins to X to door*] Well, I'm all shot. [*he exits*]

LORETTA. [*back to Sugar*] Now, Miss Muffins, you understand what you will need to do if you are hired for this position, right?

SUGAR. [*unsure*] Uh, I just saw an ad in the paper. . .

LORETTA. The Pope is expected to visit Detroit on one of his papal rounds next week. We expect him to stop by the bar.

MAXWELL. [*eavesdropping*] You honestly think the Pope is coming here?

LORETTA. Sure! Why not? We're as good a bar as any.

MAXWELL. Don't you think it's sort of sacrilegious for the Pope to see Sugar dance naked?

SUGAR. Naked?

LORETTA. What do you mean?

MAXWELL. Well, I'm just thinking. . . . maybe the Pope shouldn't see naked women.

SUGAR. Naked?

MAXWELL. I'd gladly take her in for the night, so as to alleviate. . .

LORETTA. What about your wife?

MAXWELL. She died in a horrible blimp accident last Tuesday. It was all over the news. Really tragic. [*to Sugar*] I'm mourning. Help me!

SUGAR. [*to Loretta*] Naked?

MAXWELL. Well, it's a little early, but sure.

LORETTA. Just ignore Maxwell. He's got the social grace of a couch.

PACO. [*running wildly past them, flailing his arms*] Dilithium crystals are draining!

LORETTA. Sugar, tell us a little about yourself.

SUGAR. I always wanted to be a wild dancer. I had the body. . .it's just.well, my siamese twin never wanted to get into exotic dancing. She wanted to be an accountant. Can't imagine why. [*murmurs of agreement from crowd*] Her dreams soon became crushed after realizing she had far too much personality to become a slave to numbers. She committed suicide in my sleep. I didn't know she had died for three weeks. There I was, hauling this rotting corpse around with me, wondering why I always had too much lunch packed for school every day. Everyone started calling me Little Miss Half-Dead Girl. It was so humiliating. When I finally found out and had the corrective surgery, I kept having those awful Martin Short dreams. You know, the one where he is in your closet, putting on your dresses. [*murmurs of agreement from crowd*] I stayed out of the limelight after that. I couldn't bare to face people again. So, obviously, I wanted to get into exotic dancing, but I could only do it alone. I'm very shy, you see. People frighten me. Except you, Miss Swift. Can I call you Loretta?

LORETTA. I guess so.

SUGAR. Well then, Rodney, it's been a tough time for me. You know that. You can see it in my eyes. It's awful. But I'm a new woman. I have the bravery of a military-man, and the cunning of an ocelot. I'm ready for the world.

LORETTA. [*dramatic pause*] Would you like to dance for us now?

SUGAR. You mean, in front of everyone?

PACO. Naked?

MAXWELL. Excuse me, Miss Muffins, if it would help, I'd gladly be your partner.

LORETTA. You are married, remember?

MAXWELL. WAS! Do you *have* to keep bringing that up! She fell down an abandoned mine shaft! We dropped food down to her every day, but the wolves followed. . . and [*starts to cry*]

HARMONY. *[entering, carrying a purse]* Maxwell? *[walks over to him]* How did I know I'd find you here?

MAXWELL. *[does double take]* She's back from the dead! Paco, phasers on kill! FIRE! *[Paco takes out the beer tap and sprays Harmony with it. Soon, she's soaking wet and looking rather angry. Maxwell runs over to pool table and dives over it]*

HARMONY. Every time I come here!

PACO. Is it raining?

HARMONY. Just give me a licorice whip. On the rocks. *[Paco does so, and while he's preparing this, he listens to what Harmony has to say]* I married Maxwell in 1941.

PACO. Dun dun duuuun!

HARMONY. He was much sweeter back then. He'd come to my house with a dozen Lords a'leaping. Where did the old Max go? *[Paco points to behind the pool table]* I sort of miss the romantics. I miss the intrigue. I miss Maxwell Folgers. . . .my husband. *[her watch starts beeping, and she looks up, startled]* Damn, a call! *[she rushes to bathroom, where she meets guy who changes sign]* Where is the lady's room? *[He folds the flap up]* Thanks. *[she runs in. There is an uncomfortable silence in the bar. Ted walks in, and as he's about to speak, everyone in the bar shhhh's him. He walks aside, and seconds later, Harmony, dressed as The Distraction, emerges]* Is he here? *[no one in the bar knows what she's talking about]* You know what I hate about being a sidekick? You're always at the beckoning call of the hero, but he's never on time. Like, there was this one time when the monkeys got loose, and I get the urgent call on my Distracto-Watch. I rushed down to the park, and when I got there, was Mr. Mallard there? Noooooosireee. So I had to take a sackful of monkeys. . . .

MR. MALLARD. *[bursts into door, striking a triumphant pose]* Quickly, The Distraction, we need to go! Let's get into my car!

THE DISTRACTION. Your what?

MR. MALLARD. Oh, you're not going to make me say it, are you?

THE DISTRACTION. There isn't much time!

MR. MALLARD. Oh, fine. Quickly, get into the Webbed Wonder Wagon! *[snickers are heard from the bar]* I hate saying that. *[he exits]*

MAXWELL. *[peeking head up from behind pool table]* Is she gone? *[he looks around]* Good. *[he walks over to The Distraction]* I get so sick of her. My wife, that is. It's really a shame that she died. In 'Nam. She was diffusing mines and. . . .well, you know.lightning struck her. Bam! Dead in seconds.

THE DISTRACTION. Maxwell!

MAXWELL. How do you know my name? Who are you?

MR. MALLARD. [*poking head in door*] The Distraction! Quickly! Stop dallying with the civilians!
[*both exit*]

TED. [*entering with box, to Loretta*] It's curtains for you!

LORETTA. Thanks. [*takes box from Ted, and opens it up. She takes out the curtains*] Paco, when you get a chance, can you replace those old drapes?

PACO. Slick, man.

LORETTA. [*everything begins to settle down. She turns to a very confused-looking Sugar*] Are you ready now?

SUGAR. Can I have some clarification?

LORETTA. What don't you get?

SUGAR. Do I really have to dance naked?

LORETTA. How about you just do your routine and we'll watch?

SUGAR. Uh, [*hesitating*] can I just freshen up a bit?

LORETTA. Sure. Take your time.

SUGAR. [*walks to the bathroom area and sees the man in front of the door. She gives him a curious look, and asks*] Where is the lady's room? [*he flips the sign to say 'women'*] Thank you.

EXTRA #11. Who is that guy?

TED. That's not a guy. That's the pool table. Paco, kick me out a tune! [*Paco kicks piano*]
Thanks. [*Paco sits down at piano*]

PACO. How about something. . . savvy? [*He starts to play the Pool Table Song. The extras are listening to Ted sing, and start to bob and tap the tables a bit. Loretta puts her head down in mortified anger*]

LORETTA. Not again!

Ted

IT'S A POOL TABLE, IT'S MADE OF FELT.
IT'S A POOL TABLE, IT IS REALLY SVELTE.
SO POOL TABLE, I'M DOWN ON MY KNEES
POOL TABLE, POOL TABLE, PLEASE.
IT'S A POOL TABLE, IT'S LEGS ARE WOOD.
IT'S A POOL TABLE, SOLID AND GOOD.
SO POOL TABLE, I'M DOWN ON MY KNEES,
LET ME CHALK UP MY POOL STICK PLEASE.

Chorus
WE REMEMBER THE DAY WE GOT YOU
YOU WERE SO YOUNG, SO PURE, SO NEW,
FIFTEEN BALLS, SIX POCKETS, ONE CUE.
WHO LOVES YOU POOL TABLE, YOU KNOW WE DO!

Ted
POOL TABLE, DO YOU MISS YOUR FRIENDS?
POOL TABLE, ARE YOU EVER LONELY?
DON'T LIKE 'YIELD SIGNS', DON'T LIKE DEAD ENDS,
POOL TABLE, WILL YOU BE MY ONE AND ONLY?

Chorus
WE REMEMBER THE DAY WE GOT YOU
YOU WERE SO YOUNG, SO PURE, SO NEW,
FIFTEEN BALLS, SIX POCKETS, ONE CUE.
WHO LOVES YOU POOL TABLE, YOU KNOW WE DO!
WHO LOVES YOU POOL TABLE, YOU KNOW WE DO!

[calm returns to the entire bar after riotous applause. Chorus takes their seats and act as if the song never happened. Loretta slowly lifts head up off table. By now, Sugar has emerged and is amazed by this spectacle.]

EXTRA #11. No, I meant the guy back. . . .there. . . .never mind.

TED. Well, I think that's my cue to leave. *[he exits]*

SUGAR. *[hesitantly]* Loretta, I'm changed.

LORETTA. So are you ready?

SUGAR. *[to herself]* Well, here goes nothing. *[to Paco]* Do you know Beethoven's Fifth?

PACO. Smooth. *[tape of Beethoven's 5th rolls as Paco mimics playing. Sugar starts to gyrate shyly as people in the bar all turn their attention to her. Loretta is jotting down a few notes. Seductively, Sugar takes off her trenchcoat to find. . . .another trenchcoat. She dances more, starting to take the second one off when her mother, Molly Muffins walks in. Mortified, Sugar runs into the bathroom. Unfortunately, a man had already entered, so the sign guy says:*

SIGN GUY. Hey! *[Sugar runs out the bathroom and out front door]*

LORETTA. What was THAT all about?

PACO. *[standing up and heading back to the bar]* Must've been the Cardassians that scared her off.

LORETTA. *[to Molly]* Can I help you, Miss. . . .?

MOLLY. *[proudly]* Mrs. Molly Muffins!

LORETTA. [pause] Any relation to. . . ?

MOLLY. Sean Connery? No.

LORETTA. I meant Sugar Muffins.

MOLLY. Oh, they sound alike. [*all activity in the bar stops and everyone pays attention to this dialogue*] Yes, I'm Sugar Muffins' mother.

LORETTA. Your name is Molly Muffins?

MOLLY. Golly stuffins! [*everyone continues to stare at her in suppressed-laughter awe*]

LORETTA. [*clears throat*] So Sugar Muffins is her REAL name?

MOLLY. Heavens to betsy no! That's her stage name. . . .you know. . . . for when she dances. Her *real* name was Banana Nut Muffins. But she changed that.

EXTRA #11. [*coming from background right up to them*] I couldn't help but overhear your conversation. Can you repeat that last part again?

MOLLY. Sure thing! [*she walks to the door, stops, turns around, and walks back to Loretta*]

LORETTA. [*the whole scene is a bit faster but everything is otherwise the EXACT same as the first time*] Can I help you, Miss. . . ?

MOLLY. [*proudly*] Mrs. Molly Muffins!

LORETTA. [pause] Any relation to. . . ?

MOLLY. Sean Connery? No.

LORETTA. I meant Sugar Muffins.

MOLLY. Oh, they sound alike. [*ad-lib in the bar like, "You know, that didn't make sense the 1st time". . . .etc*] Yes, I'm Sugar Muffins' mother.

LORETTA. Your name is Molly Muffins?

MOLLY. Golly stuffins! [*everyone continues to stare at her in suppressed-laughter awe*]

LORETTA. [*clears throat*] So Sugar Muffins is her REAL name?

MOLLY. Heavens to betsy no! That's her stage name. . . .you know. . . . for when she dances.

EXTRA #11. Wait! That's it! What did you just say?

MOLLY. From my entrance again?

EXTRA #11. No! Just the last line!

MOLLY. That's her stage name. . . . you know. . . .for when she dances.

EXTRA #11. So you *know* about her dancing?

MOLLY. [*cheerily*] Of course I do, Extra #11. Why, I'm backing her up 120%

LORETTA. [*in disbelief*] You realize we're not talking about tap dancing lessons here, right?

MOLLY. Gee willikers no! We're talking about hard-core erotic dancing, right? I'd be *mortified* if my daughter took up tap-dancing. [*followed by an unearthly long pause*]

PACO. [*coming over to Molly*] You're a very silly character and I'm afraid you're going to have to leave. [*picks her up and walks her outside. Reappears moments later and nonchalantly returns to the bar*]

LORETTA. [*to Paco*] Paco, we've only got seven days until the Pope comes and this place looks like Mount Vesuvius.

PACO. My God, you're right! Mom, I'm home!

LORETTA. Look, we need alot of stuff. Take this down.

PACO. My pants?

LORETTA. No, write what I'm about to say down. I need some air fresheners in here. Also, you've got to straighten up the place. Don't forget to hang those drapes.

PACO. Drapes?

LORETTA. Yes, monkey boy. We have one week and you're wasting time listening to me! [*pause for thought*] Wait a minute...

[*Curtain closes*]

SIGN GIRL. [*walking across the stage carrying a sign that says: SCENE TWO: TEN MINUTES LATER*]

[*curtain re-opens. Every one gets up off the floor and begins dusting themselves off. Howls of a mariachi band are heard outside and can be seen in the window. Paco, Maxwell, Mr. Mallard, and Sugar Muffins are at the bar, all wearing different outfits [except Paco] Sugar has donned a different color trenchcoat, Mr. Mallard is wearing "civilian clothes" and Maxwell is wearing a nice outfit.*]

SUGAR. [*looking out the window*] Phew, that was a close one.

PACO. [*at bar*] Yeah. Drive-by Mariachi's.

MAXWELL. What is this world coming to?

TED. [*finds 55 cents on the floor*] Fifty-five cents!

MAXWELL. That's IT? I'm glad I'm not buying.

MR. MALLARD. Is it my line yet?

EVERYONE. [*except Mr. Mallard*] NO!

MAXWELL. How about a round? I'm buying?

PACO. Why so happy all the sudden?

MAXWELL. Since the Pope is coming to Detroit, "Napkins".

PAKO. Damn, they spelled my name wrong in the script here. If I ever get my hands on the guy who typed this line, I'll give him lots of money???. What the hell? There is no continuity. Can we start this scene over?

EVERYONE. [*except Mr. Mallard*] NO!

MR. MALLARD. Is it my line now?

SUGAR. Yes.

MR. MALLARD. NO!

SUGAR. You were supposed to say it WITH everyone. Geez, what are you getting paid for this gig?

MR. MALLARD. I'm wearing tights.

SUGAR. Wow, I don't get to wear tights... In fact I don't get to wear much more than these trenchcoats. [*to the audience*] I know you're all wondering what I'm wearing under this coat. Well...

[*curtain closes*]

SIGN GIRL. [*walks across with sign saying: SCENE THREE: TWO HOURS LATER*]
[*curtain opens. Very few extras. Sugar is filling out paperwork at a table. Paco is at the bar, washing some glasses. Maxwell is, as usual, at the bar, drinking and eating nuts. Mr. Mallard is playing pool.*]

MR. MALLARD. C'mon. I'll take you all on! I'm a superhero-slash-pool shark.

MAXWELL. What should we call you when you're not in your costume?

MR. MALLARD. Mr. Mallard is fine. It's my real name, actually. Michael Raymond Mallard. M.R. Mallard. Mr. Mallard. Get it? [*silence fills the bar*]

MAXWELL. What, exactly, IS your super power?

MR. MALLARD. I don't know yet. But I'm willing to find out. Mind if I set you on fire?

MAXWELL. Sugar's on top of that one.

SUGAR. Hey!

MR. MALLARD. You know, if she were in distress, I'd have to kill you and save her.

TED. *[entering, wearing a dress, carrying a box]* I'm in distress!

MR. MALLARD. Very funny, Ted. You. . . *[looks at Ted]*. . .are one sick puppy.

TED. No, this is one sick puppy. *[takes out a wallet photo of, presumably, a sick puppy. Everyone who sees it gets grossed out]*

MAXWELL. How do you DO that?

MR. MALLARD. That's a great ability you have there. That's almost super-power status. *[puts arm around Ted, as if trying to sell]* How would you like to be a sidekick?

THE DISTRACTION. *[entering from bathroom in her Distraction outfit]* Ahem.

MR. MALLARD. Yes?

THE DISTRACTION. Aren't you forgetting someone?

MR. MALLARD. But this man has a super power that could really redefine the crime-fighting industry!

THE DISTRACTION. Oh come on, Michael, the man has a knack for coming up with bad puns. What good could that possibly do?

TED. I could pun-ish evildoers with my fantastic phonetics.

THE DISTRACTION. This guy's not even a good mailman! He spends all his time delivering stuff to this bar.

TED. *[taking can out of box and spraying the air with the mist]* Ah, Pope-ourri.

PACO. Don't you have a job?

TED. This job just isn't working. *[everyone takes 6.5 seconds to ponder this.]*

THE DISTRACTION. You see? Worthless. I, on the other hand, am a valuable asset. I have the uncanny ability to distract people. *[there's a long pause]* Can everybody stop looking at me? *[everyone on stage goes back to their business. She turns to audience.]* You too. *[she goes into the bathroom, and the sign deal ensues]*

PACO. *[walking over to Sugar]* What you got there?

SUGAR. It's my W-4 form. I got the job.

PACO. Good to hear! That's great.

SUGAR. I didn't actually dance. Loretta said it wasn't that important.

PACO. Dance is a misleading art form anyway.

TED. I don't know. The mister usually leads. [*he smiles and exits*]

SUGAR. I'm just happy. This is my aspiration. And everyone here is really nice.

PACO. We're just glad to have you on board.

SUGAR. [*reflective pause*] You know, you're not as insane as everyone says.

PACO. [*continuing as if uninterrupted*] And here is your uniform and phaser. We will now call you Ensign Muffins.

SUGAR. But...

PACO. And it will be your duty to swab the decks. [*he starts stomping around and saying Argh alot like a pirate*]

SUGAR. Where's my place of residence?

PACO. Off stage.

MAXWELL. You could stay with me if you want. It's awfully lonely at home after...

SUGAR. After your wife died?

MAXWELL. No, after my dog died. I would have been fine if it were just my wife.

PACO. How'd your dog die, Maxy baby?

MAXWELL. He died trying to save my wife from that frozen pond. Valiant mutt he was. He forgot about his electric collar, though, and....ZAP! Twitched for hours.

[*a phone rings, and instinctively, everyone in the bar dives to the ground, like in a bomb scare. The phone, after a few rings, stops, and everyone regains calm and goes on merrily*]

EXTRA #11. [*stepping forward while people are getting back up, spot comes on him, and the rest of the bar dims*] Maybe this isn't the best time for this, being that we're in the middle of a scene and all, but there's a few things I just need to release. I didn't always want to be an extra. In fact, I was in Cats on Broadway. I was Mephistopheles. I made it big time. Of course, the company I was with didn't tell me they moved the show to the Wintergarden Theatre. So there I was, in costume every day, performing genius ad-lib because none of the cast showed up. And every night, during my climactic death scene, Jacob would come out with his Multi-colored trenchcoat and Egyptian guards

would throw me off stage. I figured it was the cast pulling a little prank at first. Then I saw the playbill. These Cat guys were good at pulling pranks, let me tell you. They even changed the music, slightly. Very slightly. So then I started playing off the Joel's Trenchcoat actors. You know, I occasionally grabbed a spear, sang Jellicle Cats over "Close the Doors", and started having visions which I would shout randomly at the Pharaoh. The audience seemed to love it, laughing and shouting, but the critics. . .well, they didn't seem to like the final production. I guess they didn't like Andrew Lloyd Webber's newest revisions on Cats. Sorry, tangent. Well, that brings us to the present, where I'm struggling to get a better role than "extra #11". I'll settle for Extra # 3 or 4. If I could just have a few more lines to show my talent.

[spotlight goes off, lights come up to the bar]

Hey! I wasn't done yet!

PACO. Well, that was odd. *[everyone looks at Paco questioningly]* What???

SUGAR. Why is it a W-4 form anyway?

MAXWELL. Why don't you come over here and I'll explain it to you? *[Sugar walks over to him]*

Well, I . . .uh. . .don't know. You can sit back down now. *[she walks back]*

[blackout...wait for applause to die down. The following lines take place during blackout amidst bumping sounds]

SUGAR. Paco, what happened?

PACO. Computer, lights!

SUGAR. What's that?

MAXWELL. That's my hand!

[lights come back up. Paco is offstage, and Maxwell's hand is on Extra #11's leg. Sugar is fighting off a bear with a whip and stool, and the bear scrambles off stage when the lights come on. Maxwell runs back to his seat.]

EXTRA #11. Damn, almost got another line!

PACO. *[peeking back on-stage]* Just a bum fuse, daddy-o. It's taken care of.

SUGAR. It's improper English to end a sentence with a preposition.

PACO. Of taken care, it's.

[blackout...Paco screams. During the blackout, the pool table is removed]

LORETTA. *[after a minute, she peeks head through curtains. No sign girl there. So she hesitantly walks on stage and addresses the audience]* Sorry, the sign girl was supposed to be here. Has anyone seen the sign girl? Cute little thing. . .walks around with signs. So, I guess I have to kill a little time until she gets back. I'd dance, but well, I don't have a trenchcoat. Well, allow me to summarize what's happened so far. As you know, the Pope is scheduled to come to Detroit next week. And the bar's almost ready, but not entirely, otherwise we'd lose Ted. Sugar got the job as the "live

entertainment”, and Mr. Mallard and The Distraction stopped a viscous traffic jam. But there’s a whole lot more to these events than what you see on the surface. For instance, Paco is a symbol of the suppression of creativity. His love for Star Trek and beat poetry are often scorned by average societal members. Contrastly, Sugar is representative of the suppression of expression, a digression from the progression and succession of feminist aggression. Ted exhibits the suppression of everyday sentences. And Mr. Mallard displays the suppression of everyday clothes, while his counterpart, Harmony Folgers, suppresses her husband, Maxwell, who should just be on suppressants. *[looks around for the sign girl again]* Hmmm, still no sign girl. I guess that makes me the connecting element of the story, the protagonist which you will. I am the stable element constant throughout. . .er, the connection, making me very protagonistic. *[looks around again]* And, to summarize the summary, some Sumerians were somewhere sometime in summer. Can you tell I’m not good under pressure? *[piano music starts]* No I will NOT sing! *[piano music stops]* So far, preparations have been made, the Pope is flying PWA, and the pool table has been stolen. *[looks at script]* What the hell? *[runs behind the curtain]* Who the hell stole my pool table?

EXTRA #11. Not until the curtain’s open, *[insert real actress name here]*.

[curtain opens to show SCENE 4]

LORETTA. Who the hell stole my pool table?

MOLLY. *[entering]* I didn’t do it!

PACO. You’re a very silly character and I’m afraid you’re going to have to leave. *[picks her up and carries her out again]*

LORETTA. *[freaks out and, if necessary, convulses]* No pool table. I need a pool table. What’s the Pope going to play on? No pool table on the bar. Can’t play on the bar. No bar pool. No diving on the bar.

TED. *[walking in]* She’s gone off the deep end.

LORETTA. Need swimmies. Can’t float on the bar.

PACO. You’re a very silly character, and I’m afraid...

LORETTA. Touch me and you’re fired.

ALL EXCEPT TED. *[to Ted]* Why are you here?

TED. Special delivery!

MAXWELL. *[after a beat]* That’s it? No witty little epithet Ted? No whimsical little pun to make us wish you weren’t here? No comic relief to offset the disappearance of the pool table?

TED. *[holds up a ‘one minute’ finger and walks into the bathroom. Silence is heard for a minute. Then, you hear a slap, a baby cry, and cries of “It’s a Girl!” Ted re-enters, taking off gloves. He leaves.]*

SUGAR. Well, it's sure a good thing the Pope's not here.

LORETTA. Because Ted just delivered a baby in the bathroom?

PACO. Because there's no more pool table?

MOLLY. [*sticking head in*] Because Maxwell's not wearing any pants? [*he really isn't, and smiles*]

SUGAR. No! There aren't any more nuts!

LORETTA. [*equally frantically as before*] Augh! Someone stole the nuts! No nuts on the bar! No pool nuts cue! Pool my nuts with a bar! No diving in the nuts!

TED. [*reentering*] Look's like Loretta's a few nuts short of a bowl.

MOLLY. [*seeing Ted*] You're a very silly character, and I'm afraid you're going to have to leave. [*carries him out*]

CLAIRE. Extra #11... what's your sign?

EXTRA #11. I don't know. What's yours? [*Claire pulls out sign that says "I ate all the nuts"*]
Where did you get that from?

CLAIRE. The sign guy. Wait, where is he?

LORETTA. Someone stole the sign guy? [*flipping out*] No sign guy in the pool! No diving in the sign nuts! No signing the pool guy!

PACO. [*slapping her*] Bones, bring this one to sick bay.

LORETTA. You're fired!

PACO. But... but... [*sad music starts playing*]

LORETTA. I said if you touched me you'd be fired.

PACO. What happens if I tripped and nicked you on the way down?

LORETTA. Still fired.

PACO. So, I'm really fired?

LORETTA. Pack up your stuff and leave.

PACO. This isn't some elaborate joke? No witty repartee?

LORETTA. Paco, it's time. You have to go.

PACO. [*to Maxwell*] Well, Mr. Folgers, it's been a pleasure serving you. Your wife is lucky to have

you.

MAXWELL. She died in. . . oh, what's the use? [*crying, he hugs him*]

PACO. Miss Muffins, you are beautiful, talented, and I'm sure one day, you'll light up the stage with your. . .dancing. May you get all the success you deserve.

SUGAR. Oh, Paco, I'm going to miss you. [*kisses him on the cheek*]

PACO. Claire, Extra # 11, I never got to know either of you really well, and I wish you had ordered a drink. But I love you guys.

CLAIRE. I always loved watching you mix the drinks.

EXTRA #11. This bar just won't be the same without you.

PACO. And last, but certainly not least, [*turns to Loretta*] Ted. [*Ted enters*]

LORETTA. Do you just WAIT outside the door?

PACO. You've been like my brother, Ted.

TED. You have a brother named Ted?

PACO. Yes, but that's not important. I'm going to miss you. [*Ted and Paco hug*] Well, good-bye everyone. Loretta, I hope some day you reconsider. [*no reaction*] I guess I . . . [*he exits*]

THE DISTRACTION. [*entering with Mr. Mallard*] I just saw Paco outside crying. What's going on?

LORETTA. He's been fired, The Distraction. I was tired of his nutcase antics.

MAXWELL. [*picking up a canister of nuts*] No, *this* is a nutcase.

TED. Hey! That's my line!

CLAIRE. I'm going to go comfort Paco in his time of need and costume change. [*exits outside*]

LORETTA. If anyone needs me, I'll be in my little office. [*exits, not to office, but to bathroom*]

MAXWELL. [*walking over to The Distraction*] I can't help but notice your perfume. It's so. . .captivating.

SUGAR. Yes, Miss Distraction, is your outfit made of kevlar?

EXTRA #11. [*pulls out yo-yo*] This yo-yo you gave me is great, The Distraction. [*for entire duration of scene, he is just playing with the yo-yo*]

TED. That reminds me, I have to go walk my dog. [*he exits*]

MAXWELL. The Distraction, can I speak to you for eternity?

THE DISTRACTION. You have two minutes to explain yourself.

MAXWELL. You have to stop using your powers, The Distraction. I can't stop thinking of you. I . . . I think I'm falling in love with you.

THE DISTRACTION. Don't you have a wife?

MAXWELL. Well, there she was one day, repairing the chimney on that rickety old ladder, and . . . and . . . crows . . . came . . . ate . . . popcorn . . . microwave . . . Reddenbacher . . . ah, forget it. I can't think of anything but you, The Distraction. Do you have a first name I can use?

THE DISTRACTION. Harmony.

MAXWELL. That was my wife's name, well, before she . . . popcorn. Where was I?

THE DISTRACTION. You were complementing my wonderful figure.

MAXWELL. Yes, yes. Your body is a work of art!

SUGAR. A Monet.

MR. MALLARD. A DaVinci.

EXTRA #11. [*Without looking up*] A Salvador Dali.

LORETTA. [*Exiting the bathroom and crossing to her little office, but nobody notices her because they are engrossed with The Distraction*] No bathroom in the office. No pool man in the bathroom. No swimmies in the nuts.

THE DISTRACTION. And, I believe, you were complimenting my hair.

MAXWELL. And what lovely locks you have!

TED. [*entering yet again, holding up a bagel*] But do her locks go as well with my pumpernickel bagel as this cream cheese? [*he exits*]

MAXWELL. The Distraction, I can't take it any longer.

THE DISTRACTION. You should work on this whole seduction thing. It's really hardly working.

MAXWELL. All right. [*he exits and re-emerges seconds later in a full suit with flowers and a smoking pipe, speaking like Sean Connery*] Well, madam, you look enchanting this evening.

THE DISTRACTION. Good start. Work it. Work it.

SUGAR. Hey, aren't you...

MAXWELL. Girl, you make me sweat.

THE DISTRACTION. That's not exactly what I meant....

MAXWELL. All I wanna do is zoom a zoom zoom zoom and a boom boom.

THE DISTRACTION. Now that's blatant plagiarism.

MAXWELL. It is not. The Distraction, we the people of the United States of America...

CLAIRE. Oh! I know that one! It's a great pick up line!

SUGAR. I once performed it at a 3rd grade talent show. I won hair.

EXTRA #11. *[to Claire]* We the people of the United States of America... *[Yo-yo doesn't come back up.]* You broke my yo-yo.

SUGAR. The Founding Fathers broke your yo-yo?

THE DISTRACTION. Hold on, everyone. Someone was about to start having an affair with me! All right, fine. Next person that speaks wins.

SUGAR. Next person? What does that mean?

THE DISTRACTION. DAMN IT! All right, come on. *[they exit into the bathroom]*

MAXWELL. Get me some need-nuts, Paco. Damn... No nuts. No Paco. No sex. I'm hungry. *[an icecream truck pulls in from SL]* That'll do. I'll have one Frog Face Popsicle.

EXTRA #11. I'll take a Frozen Lemur Surprise. *[it gets handed to him]* Thank you, and drive carefully. *[the ice cream truck pulls off and runs into the iceberg]* Ah, now THAT'S irony.

[the rest of this scene is done in mime]

MAXWELL. No it isn't.

[nevermind.]

LORETTA. *[re-entering]* All right, I go crazy for a FEW minutes and look what happens. You call this a plot? Okay, now I have a monologue so everyone go away. *[they all exit and the curtain is drawn]* So the plot so far: The pool table's been stolen. The nuts are gone. Both meanings. I.E. and q, no more Paco, no more nuts. Maxwell has fallen for the Distraction who is presently in the bathroom, um... sweetening. The ice cream vendor is in the hospital because someone left their iceberg laying around. And I've fallen into a coma. Oh yeah, this is my dream sequence.

[harp music is heard when the curtain opens, and TED and MAXWELL come out in matching pink leotards and prance around like school girls. They each take a basket of flowers and eat them, and the POPE walks by. He waves and gives a thumbs up. The stage is cleared]

[SCENE 5]

[the DISTRACTION is lying on a table, her clothes rumpled. MAXWELL stands from under the table, hitting his head because you can't stand when you're under a table... unless of course, it's a really big table. But that's a really big table. Unless you're a smurf. Which MAXWELL is. Oh, I suppose we should have mentioned that earlier.]

MAXWELL. I don't know why, but I suddenly hate Gargamel.

THE DISTRACTION. We can't! You're married!

MAXWELL. I mean, sure Papa is a nice guy and all, but Smurfette? What the hell? Where does she bathe?

THE DISTRACTION. It isn't right! Your wife. She's so innocent and perfect!

MAXWELL. And I swear, if I open up ONE more Jokey present, I am gonna go ballistic.

THE DISTRACTION. Don't you see? Look at this. Look! *[she forces him to look at his wedding ring]*

MAXWELL. I understand what you are saying, Azrael, but you're a cat and you shouldn't be able to talk.

[The Distraction leaves before her cue.]

THE DISTRACTION. Okay. I have to go. Sorry. *[she pushes him aside and strides out the bar door]*

MR. MALLARD. *[entering through the same door she just left]* Quickly, The Distraction, there is a squirrel invasion in downtown Detroit. Car manufacturers are complaining about...she already left didn't she? She never waits for her cue. *[he exits]*

PACO. *[entering]* I've made three-thousand dollars outside panhandling.

MAXWELL. I miss the plot...Paco, thank god you're back. We must set out on a quest. A large quest. One of such boldness that would shock Mr. Clean. Paco, we're going to look for a plot.

[The bar swings open to become two large mountains with a small road running between them. The road leads to Tri-tri-lala, famed city of fortune and continuity]

PACO. You talkin' slick there, Jim. Mind if I call you Jim? That's your explorer name. I'm now Admiral Paco.

MAXWELL. What happened to the bar?

PACO. It's a modern theatrical convention. *[addresses audience]* Aristotle was supposedly credited for the three unities, which is entirely false. But these unities are the unity of time, space, and action. Aristotle would hate us.

MAXWELL. *[shrugs]* Well, we might as well go to Tri-tri-lala, famed city of fortune and continuity. It's our only hope to get the pool table back and restore me to my native size and color.

PACO. *[entering]* I swear I already entered.

[With great processional, the two wander into Tri-tri-Lala, adequately getting smaller according to perspective.]

MAXWELL. Well now that I'm back to my native size...

TED. *[entering]* And here is his native color. *[holds up an Indian]*

[Ted is shot and left bleeding at the edge of the stage]

PACO. Savvy... One to beam up?

JAMES DOOHAN. Aye Kipt'n. *[TED gets beamed up to the sound booth]* And we'll make sure he doesn't bleed to death.

PACO. Phew.

[Close up, Tri-tri-Lala. The camera dollies in to see the markets of Tri-tri-Lala. Paco and Maxwell look about, at the local colors, as that Native American Ted brought in stalks them waiting to scalp them, I think, as all those damned Injuns are warrant to do.]

EXTRA #11. *[entering]* Hey Paco, I'll have a beer. Wow, this place is great!

LORETTA. *[entering]* Of course Extra #11. Thanks to the loss of the pool table, I finally got some time to make the renovations I've always wanted to the bar. Looks real too!

EXTRA #11. And all you did was put up curtains? I want to be an interior decorator too.

COMMERCIAL VOICE OVER. And now you can! With new "EASY INSIDES" you too can become a wiz at interior design. Just buy the book, open, and enjoy new furnished living spaces like your mom could only wish to enjoy. Lotsa lovin' sold separately.

[suddenly]

PACO. *[after having handed Extra #11 a beer that he got from behind the bar/mountain]* They say wit is a brilliant show of intelligence. *[runs into mountain]* That's what they say, cats.

MAXWELL. Wait! Everything is solved. The Pope would love to see this!

LORETTA. Maxwell, we still have to get that pool table! And it's doubly important now that I'm somewhere passed out hallucinating all this because of all the liquor I accidentally ate with my Mr. Rogers doll.

SUGAR. *[entering totally naked]* I heard someone mention the Pope. I'm ready to strip. *[she strips]*

ALL. Eww.

[With utmost urgency a plot is restored on the players, along with a new stage, script, and 500,000 dollars in a briefcase]

HARMONY. *[entering]* I think we should turn the money over to the police. It's the best thing to do.

MAXWELL. I'm sure glad they decided to keep this line in.

BILLY BOB THORTON *[appearing from the heavens]* Well I say we keep it. The money's ours by right of God. *[Sam Raimi's titanic-proportioned foot steps on the whole cast and butchers everything except for whatever Paco can mention in his next word...]*

PACO. Everything? *[Damn...]*

SCENE 6 – Heaven

GOD. *[sighing]* I was *this* close. Ah well. *[goes back to singing his scales]*

SCENE 7 – Same as scene 5.

SCENE 8 – Thank god this will remain on the shelf.

SCENE 7. How's it going, Scene 8?

SCENE 8. You stop that. No one will ever be able to do this if you keep talking you... concept!

SCENE 7. You're just upset because I'm longer than you.

SCENE 8. Why you oversized... grrrr! *[Scene 8 exits]*

SCENE 7. *[nervously]* Are we allowed to go out of order? We'll see...

[curtains open to reveal the bar back to normal, except for the live lobsters]

MOLLY. *[entering]* I'm a very silly character and I'm afraid I have to leave. *[exits]*

[BLACKOUT. INTERMISSION. LIGHT FOG.]

ACT II

[Paco is sitting in a dark alley, some type of alley that may be found in Tri-tri-la-la. He is loudly smoking a cigarette.]

PACO. I am, therefore I am. I sought, therefore I sunk. I tank, therefore I go boom.

[A bum passes, shifting the atmosphere like the wind or a very bad ice-breaker such as “Now THIS is what I call a scar” and then they pull out their seven month old fetus and it’s not at all funny really. It’s actually rather scary. And sad. The bum is sad. He stops and talks to Paco.]

BUM. There you are, me boy. Got a nickel for yer pappy?

PACO. If you expect me to get all sentimental, Dad, after not having seen you in thirty years, then you’ve got another thing coming. *[They wait for a while. Ted comes in and delivers a package without saying anything. Both Paco and the Bum look content.]*

BUM. Been waiting for that delivery for just over ten years, but that damn postman never leaves the bar. Guess the bar must have been destroyed in the earthquake. Or Nam. Or at the rebirth of Tri-tri-la-la, may God shine heaven upon me buttocks.

PACO. If you expect me to get all sentimental, Pop, after not having seen the bar in thirty minutes, then you’ve got another thing coming. *[Ted comes in, dressed as Another Thing]*

BUM. Do you have another package for me, son?

TED. Aye. *[Hands him an eyeball]*

BUM. If you expect me to get all sentimental, Ted, after not having seen me other eyeball in thirty days, then you’ve got anoth...then you’ve got...you.

[A GUNSHOT. Bum falls dead. Loretta steps out from SR, a sawed-off double barrel shotgun smoking in her arms.]

PACO. Loretta! We’re saved! And you’ve saved me from that cursed fate that the damn witch woman told me about. My eyes are safe! Too bad I already slept with mom, though.

TED. Well, he went out with a bang. *[he exits. Loretta aims for Ted and shoots, but misses]*

LORETTA. Paco, I only have seventy bullets left in this gun, so the guy who stole my pool table better not be more than seventy people. Are you willing to help?

PACO. Do you mean I get my job back? Oh, Momma! You’re the greatest!

LORETTA. Look, I only had sex with you because you said you give minty orgasms.

PACO. Sure do, toots. Now, lets fight our way out of Tri-tri-la-la, may God shine heaven upon me buttocks, and find that pool table.

[71 ninjas jump out onto the stage. They count off.]

LORETTA. Damn! We’re foiled!

TED. *[comes in and covers each ninja with foil as they count off]* So are the ninjas.

PACO. Good job, brother. Now we’re a family again! Someone drag dad to a hospital. I can’t wait

till Christmas!

[Molly Muffins enters]

PACO. Oh, hi Aunt Molly.

MOLLY. I brought you all my famous fruit cake and Wake-the-dead elixir. Oooh. Looks like your pappy could use some of my fruit cake.

MAXWELL. *[entering]* Oh, Loretta. My wife sends her regards and says she's sorry she missed the family reunion, but she was doing a television documentary called "Swimming with Electric Eels" and, you know, drowned.

LORETTA. No! Not Grandma Harmony! Wait a minute. You're the family member we never acknowledge. We don't acknowledge you!

PACO. We don't acknowledge you!

MOLLY. We don't acknowledge you!

PAPPY. I'm dead! And we don't acknowledge you!

[A nun enters.]

TED. SISTER!

71 NINJAS. Mother Sister Mary! It is we your children seventy one! Please save us from the clutches of this foil and we will tell you of a plot so foul that we will no longer be able to speak in perfect unison!

TED. Speaking of plot so foul, what are we going to do with Pappy?

PACO. Shut up Ted. *[Paco puts two fingers (his own or otherwise) between his lips and blows, emitting a whistling sound. A feathery vehicle speeds onto the stage]* Mother! To the Webbed Wonder Wagon!

WEBBED WONDER WAGON. Come to me, my children.

ANNOUNCER. *[appears in front of everyone with a PowerPoint presentation set up with the family trees lined up.]* Before this goes on any further, a brief explanation. The mother's eggs are fertilized by the father's sperm, while the milkman's video camera rolls. The leper... *[he gets the hook]*

[The 71 ninjas begin breaking free of their foil cages. They scream and wave violent things like the letter x when used incorrectly. Loretta sees this, grabs one of her sons, preferably Paco, and gets in the Wagon. They speed off through the backdrop.]

MOLLY. All right, who is the leader of you ninjas?

EXTRA #11. *[stepping forward]* I am.

MOLLY. But why, Extra #11? Why?

EXTRA #11. More lines.

MOLLY. I must get away and warn my daughter and her lover and her lover's mother taking with her, her lover's brother before they – too late!

[the Ninjas tear apart Molly Muffins getting her type O positive blood all over the first three rows of the audience]

TED. Oh, don't go to pieces.

OR IF PACO. Auntie M!

[the Ninjas jump on Ted or Paco as the curtains pull closed quickly]

ANNOUNCER. *[reentering with hook still around his neck, sort of stuck at a 90° from his neck]*
What could have caused a man like Extra #11 to have turned on his friends? It begins with the vas deferens, where the semen travel like water buffalo on a frantic rampage until they travel all the way to the ovum, where they will celebrate by poking eggs until protrusion...*[another hook pulls him off]*

SCENE 2

[The curtain opens to reveal Sign Guy's secret layer in his secret Lair. The ultra secret bricklayer is with him as well as the Sign Girl. They stare at a holographic projection of a theater inside which is this stage and this secret place and this holographic projection... until eventually at a scale of 1google meters = 1 mm, there is a map. Sign Guy points to this map with a large pole.]

SIGN GUY. And here is where we will bury it!

[The ultra secret bricklayer discreetly lays some mortar and a brick]

SIGN GIRL. Ingenious! And in three days time, it will rise from there. This plan is flawless!

SIGN GUY. Yes. I am a wonderful brilliant mastermind of criminal genius and backgammon. With the pool table gone, we'll be able to simply abduct the Pope. The fools will be so busy trying to fill the space where the pool table went, they won't even notice when we replace the pope with the mold that Cleetus the ultra secret bricklayer is building.

[the ultra secret bricklayer finishes his wall. It looks a bit like the Pope. Sort of. If you're very blind. Or dead like Pappy.]

CLEETUS, THE ULTRA SECRET BRICKLAYER. Look over there! *[everyone looks, and he starts building something else with the bricks.]*

SIGN GUY. There's only six problems with our plan. 1) The ninjas. 2) Mr. Mallard. 3) Inflation. 4) The Webbed Wonder Wagon. And 6) Counting.

SIGN GIRL. That's why I've taken the liberty of employing Sugar Muffins as a spy. And I also made you turkey. You like turkey, don't you? Gobble gobble?

SIGN GUY. I prefer Libya. Make me some of that.

MAXWELL. *[entering]* I got you the blueprint of the city like you wanted, boss.

SIGN GUY. Excellent you worthless pile of biological smurf. If you keep this up, I may give you the deed to Czechoslovakia. It's worthless now, but boy does it make Monopoly more fun.

SIGN GIRL. I hate being interrup...

SIGN GUY. Yes, yes you do, my precious little pet. Shouldn't you be making some Libya?

[Cleetus, the ultra secret bricklayer does something so subversive, even the stage directions are unaware of it.]

MAXWELL. Is there anything else for me to do, your turbulence?

SIGN GUY. I'm giving you a top-secret mission, Maxwell. Go outside and everything will be revealed.

[Maxwell exits as Cleetus the ultra secret bricklayer laughs quietly, distracting the audience from his building another story on his building]

HALF MOON. *[entering with EGYPTIAN SPARROW]* You have done well with yourself Cleetus, the ultra secret bricklayer. It is time we bring you more power. Henceforth, you shall be able to walk without noise. Always. You will be unable to control this. Even when you want to stomp loudly at a sporting event, no noise. This will aid you in your task at hand.

EGYPTIAN SPARROW. You will destroy the world for us, Cleetus, the ultra secret bricklayer. Get us the pope, and we will worship you as the sun dies.

[they fade out. Zjoom. Zjoom zjoooom...]

ANNOUNCER *[comes out with two hooks stuck to his neck]* Before we hear Cleetus the ultra secret bricklayer's response, let me make things a little clearer for everyone. We basically have a team system here. The first system, we'll call them Team A, will be denoted with yellow pinneys. These are the 'good guys', Mr. Mallard, The Distraction, Molly Muffins, Loretta, Pappy, and their two sons Ted and Paco. The next team, or Team A, wears yellow pinneys. They, the 'bad guys', are the Sign People, The Egyptian People, Maxwell, Sugar Muffins, and Cleetus, the ultra secret bricklayer. The third team, denoted by wearing yellow pinneys and are henceforth referred to as Team A, is the 'ninja guys'. These consist of Extra #11 and the seventy other ninjas. But where do Claire and the nun fit into this? The ovulation cycle facilitates the sperm to slide into the fallopian tube like crazed cheetahs... *[third hook takes him off]*

[A flash of light and suddenly Scene 2 is transformed into-]

SCENE 3

[The Master's Dojo. Taiwan. Extra #11 is teaching the Ninjas tricks with his Yo-yo. Everyone is wearing a yellow pinney]

EXTRA #11. Remember: focus, determination, pinney. Focus, determination, pinney. Don't be like Jack, don't have a heart attack. Good job! *[his cell phone rings]* Yes sir? Of course, sir. We're down to seventy now sir. Yes. Jack died. Cholesterol we think. What's that sir? Sir, the cell phone isn't picking you up. Sir, I should tell you that we've completely annexed from you and the United States of America. We are going to find the pool table ourselves and play pool till we grow fat and slovenly like Faith Hill. What's that? You can't hear a damn word I'm saying? *[he hangs up]* Boys! We've declared our independence. This is independence day. We can't fight without freedom! It's time we pull together our brothers and fight like siblings against the injustice of our forefathers! It's time we kill the pope.

70 NINJAS. *[in unison]* Weeeee!

JACK. Sorry I died on you, guys.

HARMONY. *[entering wearing a yellow pinney]* Hello, boys.

ANNOUNCER. *[entering]* What's this? It appears Harmony Folgers is with Team A, not Team A as we had suspected! Pinney Patrol, change that woman's pinney! *[The Pinney Patrol enters and replaces her yellow pinney with a yellow pinney]* So The Distraction is fighting evil alongside Mr. Mallard as usual, but her alter-ego Harmony Folgers is not a Team A fighter, but a Team A conspirator! Why would she do this? *[To audience]* To be honest, I collect hooks. *[looks around for a second]* When the vaginal secretions...*[he gets the hook]* Ooh, a red one!

EXTRA #11. Harmony Folgers. Glad to have you fighting with evil for once. Something else you should know. I've been breeding these ninjas for the past seventy decades of my life. The first ones were strong but stupid. The second set were fat but ugly. The third set were wet and sticky. But the fourth... If you'll take a look at my punnet squares *[retrieving his punnet squares]* you will notice that they are all related. Since I bred them, and there are no females, the result must mean that we are disturbed. I thought you should know this.

HARMONY. I thought I should tell you...wow, nice pinney. I thought you should know that I have a new weapon we can use that I'm not going to let The Distraction use against us. It's ...*[leans in closely]* retractable heads. I've shown it to some of the ninjas. *[twenty of the ninjas heads suddenly disappear in their shirts]* Neat, huh?

EXTRA #11. Good work, Harmony. Ninja Number Eleven, as you are my favorite for reasons that will remain unknown, I have a special assignment for you. I want you to infiltrate into Team A's headquarters and find out their next moves. Go. Now! And pull your head back out, you're going to bump into things.

NINJA #11. But how will I find the secret layer in the secret Lair?

EXTRA #11. Not that team A, you peanut brittle! You are no longer Ninja #11. You will switch numbers with Ninja #33. Now, as Ninja #33, you shall try to find your way into the secret layer of the secret lair using our very advanced tracking device known as velcro. Newly made Ninja #11 – find

Team A and bring me a way to bring about their downfall. I'd laugh maniacally now, but I've recently been having a minor itch in my throat and it sets me into coughing fits. I apologize for the inconvenience.

NEW NINJA #11. *[he exits, and immediately comes back on]* Ha! Team A! I've discovered your evil plot! I am trained in the skills of Kamikazi! *[he falls on his sword and dies]*

EXTRA #11. Fine then. Ninja #1, clone yourself and go with your brother to find Loretta. Bring me her head.

[the stage clears, except the body of New Ninja #11, which is impaled on a sword. It magically rises and, in a light and sound display that clearly denote that it is the passage of a ninja to Ninja Heaven, floats over to seat 4 in row C. If an audience member is already in this seat, have New Ninja #11 say—with plenty of spooky reverb—that he is sorry but he must now take their position. Have the New Ninja #11 sit on their lap, even if they can't see the rest of the play.]

SCENE 4

[In the Pope's Veranda]

POPE. Cancel my trip to Detroit. I have to play golf.

SCENE 5

[Under the Pope's Veranda]

CHINESE HOSTAGES. Help us! Help us!

SCENE 6

[the extremely spacious interior of the Webbed Wonder Wagon (cathedral like. It's the luxury model) The following cast members are onboard: Loretta, Paco or Ted, Mr. Mallard, Bum's corpse, and The Distraction]

LORETTA. Oh my! We must go back for my other son!

MR. MALLARD. Yes! He was so good at what he did!

THE DISTRACTION. And he was a boy. Just like your other son who is here.

LORETTA. *[to either Paco or Ted]* You're awfully quiet.

[Paco or Ted shrugs]

MR. MALLARD. I bet he misses his brother.

THE DISTRACTION. That's probably it.

[The blue screen changes to reveal the alley in Tri-tri-la-la though this is a play, so it looks just like a

blue screen. The ninjas are gone.]

THE DISTRACTION. *[aside]* I have this nagging feeling that I'm physically not able to be here at this moment and still have a sense of linear possibility.

PACO OR TED *[whoever isn't here]*. I really wouldn't worry about that. Strange powers are a foot.

PAPPY. *[rising]* You hush up. There's nothing abnormal going on whatsoever. *[goes back to being dead]*

LORETTA. Look! A graveyard where we can put Pappy. *[They throw Pappy over the side]*

[for the remainder of the scene, a frame-within-a-frame continues in the upper-right hand corner of the stage depicting scenes of Pappy's youth and all the good times he had with his dog]

MR. MALLARD. Where is our destination?

LORETTA. An alley in Tri-tri-la-la. According to prophecy the path begins where the plot ends. I think we missed it a half hour ago. It was clearly labeled "Scene 1."

MR. MALLARD *[the one that IS here]*. I have an idea! Why don't we just return to scene 1, or possibly the cut scene where I get my medal of honor from that naked Swedish lady?

[Jump cut to Scene 1. The pool table is back in place and the contestants are set up like they were earlier except for the big wheel of prizes. All of the future characters walk in on their past counterparts.]

SCENE 1B

MAXWELL PAST. Gimme some more.

MAXWELL PRESENT. Am I really that fat?

PACO PAST. Maxwell, you crazy? Ain't you had enough?

PACO PRESENT. Can they see me Rod?

ROD SERLING. Yes.

EXTRA #11 PRESENT. *[entering with his ninjas]* I'm sorry to break up your little stroll down really freaky lane, but as you can see, I'm at the bar doing nothing, so I needed to break up this little shindig. *[TED takes out a melon spoon and carves a hole in his shin]* Ninjas, feel free to get yourselves some drinks. We might be here for a while, now that we know where the pool table is. *[Most of the ninjas order rum and cokes, but a few of them like more upper-class drinks like Manhattans and Blueberry Daiquiris]*

LORETTA PRESENT. He's right. There's the pool table. I guess we don't have a problem now. And with the added revenue of all those ninjas getting drinks we might be able to fix Pappy's ulcer so that he'll stop being a drunken bum and won't die an act later.

MAXWELL PAST. No, I want more!

PACO PRESENT. But this is your fourth refill. *[to PACO PAST]* I told you you'd never amount to anything.

[PACO PAST leaves crying only to reenter as PACO FUTURE.]

PACO FUTURE. And this is what you will be, Paco, if you don't learn to buy the McDuck children a turkey next Christmas. Ah-ha-ha-ha!

PACO IMPERFECT. *[entering]* Non cognare, ego in Latin. *[exits]*

[SIGN GUY enters followed by his Egyptian Gods, SPARROW and HALF MOON, carrying POOL TABLE PRESENT.]

SIGN GUY. Ha ha! *[coughs]* I have the pool table present! Soon I will join it with pool table past so the temporal portal will open up, allowing me to snatch the Pope before he golfs on Saturday! Cleetus, do your handiwork. *[He's not here, thou.....oh, I'll be damned. There he is, over by POOL TABLE PAST. My bad. CLEETUS THE ULTRA-SECRET BRICKLAYER doesn't seem to move]*
Excellent.

LORETTAS PAST AND PRESENT. You can't get away with this!

LORETTA PRESENT. Hey, you don't say that!

SPARROW. At last the time is upon us.

[SIGN GUY flips his sign to read "Temporal Portal." HALF MOON jumps through and in seconds, he comes back with the POPE. In the corner of the stage, sitting like STATLER AND WALDORF are SCENE 7 and SCENE 8. They are commenting on what's going on.]

SCENE 7. Oh bloody hell, this is dragging.

SCENE 8. What's scene 1 have that we don't?

SCENE 7. Well, he has got a song. Or was that Scene 2?

SCENE 2. *[entering the booth with a beer in hand]* Don't look at me, guys. I said my "napkins" and now I'm out of here. *[he leaves but it seems to be through a tunnel]*

THE POPE. Oh, it's this again, is it? Damned Egyptian Gods tinkering where they don't belong. Jesusmon, I choose you! *[The Pope throws a little cartoon ball out of which Jususmon, legendary Catholic Pokemon emerges. Jesusmon shakes his head and dies for our sins.]*

TED PRESENT. Ooh, Popemon!

SPARROW. That's right Loretta and Mr. Pope. All your plans for future are destroyed. There is absolutely no way that the Pope will visit the bar now! *[Answers a phone call from me.]* Hello?

[Hello. This is Sparrow I'm speaking to. I just wanted you to know that you were wrong about that.]
What? Who is this? *[The whole Pope not visiting.]* I'm going to hang up and star six nine you Mister!

CLAIRE PAST. *[stepping out]* Sparrow, hold on a minute! I have a confession to make. I'm not Claire Past. I'm Claire Present. There is no Claire Past. *[confusion, probably]* It's a ruse. I was just a distraction set about so Cleetus the Ultra-Secret Bricklayer could finish his experiment. *[Oh, crap, he left a while ago and reentered with a 20' model of the Pope. Sorry, shoulda caught that, but I was on the phone]* Cleetus, can we have a demonstration?

CLEETUS THE ULTRA SECRET BRICKLAYER. Folks! This is my new, fully automated, Pope-O-Matic. It's designed for just one purpose. *[The Pope-O-Matic falls and crushes the Pope.]* That. This however was just a demonstration as the Pope just crushed was just a brick version of the real Pope. *[it was? Oh. Right.]* Now with my even larger Pope-O-Matic, I will crush the Pope!

MAXWELL PAST. State law doesn't say anything about cats! *[Everyone glares at Maxwell past. He gives up the charade.]* I have a confession to make. I'm not Maxwell Past. There is no Maxwell Past. I'm the Pope. *[he gasps]* Wow, I haven't gasped in years.

MAXWELL PRESENT. It's true. In fact, I'm the one that started all of this hubbub about getting a stripper in because... well, it's been a while since... you know... my virginal wife turned to look back and was turned into a pillar of salt. Not that I minded. She was still my wife. I took care of her. Loved her. But you know, we went to the beach one day, and... boom! Someone snuck a trojan horse inside her trachea and the Romans made her implode. Well, I just about lost my faith and became a drunken British smurf. Didn't know I was British, did ya? You must be wondering who the guy in the Papal hat is. Tell him.

HARMONY PAST. Me?

THE DISTRACTION PRESENT. I think he means me.

HARMONY PRESENT. He might mean me.

THE POPE. No. I'm the one with the Pope hat. *[all four of the Harmony/Distraktion women take off their Pope hats]* I'll explain it all.

CLEETUS. Too late! It's been released!

[A 40 foot Pope-O-Matic falls and crushes the Pope, only to rebound and bounce off into Tri-tri-la-la, landing somewhere in an alley, it's landing softened by the flesh of one drunken Pappy. But that's neither here nor there. Well, I suppose it's there, but that's not important I guess. Unless it becomes so later. I hope so. That would be neat.]

ANNOUNCER. *[entering with four hooks on him]* Meistro. *[Music plays, something very grand and spectacular]* And now, the moment I've waited my entire life for.....*[spins around really fast]* I'm a pinwheel! Look! I'm a pinwheel! *[in the process, he kills every ninja, most of the PAST characters—you figure out who—and critically wounds two techies, both of whom had promising families in the works]*

POPE. I guess it's kind of obvious at this point, but I'm the Amazing Rubberman, Mr. Mallard's old partner back when we actually fought crime. I still fight crime as the Pope, I guess, but it's a bit less glamorous. Anyway, that's why I look so old but haven't died. I'm made of rubber.

[Lights suddenly blackout except for a spot on POOL TABLE PAST. It's going to speak, and bear in mind, it's not supposed to be a voice-over. The pool table NEEDS to visibly say the following:]

POOL TABLE PAST. Things have gotten out of hand. It started out as a nice little ditty about people loving me, wanting to keep me safe, and yearning for the Pope to play on me. Now it's gotten convoluted with ninjas and deaths and pinneys. *[The Pinney Patrol mimes doing something in the blackout, but we're really not sure what]* Scene 8, rescue us!

SCENE 8

[Post-apocalypse. The bar is almost completely destroyed. Most of the walls are gone and in the back ground we can see the mountains of Tri-tri-la-la (May god shine heaven upon me buttocks) erupting in lava. The native colors are attempting to swim because they're dumb and the lava is red and they are red and maybe I told them I threw a bead in there so those damned Injuns could die swimming in that hot muck. So what? They killed my father. Bastards. Oh yeah, only the divinities are alive. SPARROW, HALF MOON, PACO, SUGAR MUFFINS and LORETTA.]

LORETTA. All. All is gone.

SPARROW. What I wouldn't give for a window.

PACO. I wouldn't give a window to you.

SUGAR MUFFINS. Shall I wheel you toward the sun, mum?

LORETTA. I'd like to orbit you now.

SUGAR MUFFINS. Yes, mum. The pool table, mum?

SPARROW. Do you listen *at all*? It's gone, dude.

HALF MOON. Yes. I go. *[He stays, damned liar. Probably an Injun, with a name like Half Moon.]*

PACO. I keep thinking we're being kept from knowing all. *[PACO loses a leg, but it probably won't happen because he's not reading this.]* Like I really feel like something should be different now.

LORETTA. Am I by the window now, mum?

SUGAR MUFFINS. You are mum, mum.

NUN *[entering]*. Did someone call me?

LORETTA. We have called for none.

NUN. Yes. I am here, love.

SUGAR MUFFINS. She is not love. She is mum, nun. You are none too fun, mother.

NUN. Sister. Then we are family.

PACO. You're the one I slept with!

NUN. That was the mintiest orgasm I've ever had.

PACO. Damn straight.

[The NUN and PACO exit and go on to lead a very happy life together, even if they come back on in this play some more and do things that don't seem to have anything to do with leading a very happy life together. Anyway, on with the dialogue.]

SPARROW. I need to breathe.

HALF MOON. Not rightly. You work to breathe. I work to breathe. Better to say I work to die. I work to die. How sad. Did someone bring me a window?

[Ted enters, carrying a window.]

TED. Boy was that apocalypse a pane.

SUGAR MUFFINS. Boy it, uh, certainly is hot. Would either of you gods like to help me off with my trenchcoat?

SPARROW. I need to breathe to work. Or I work to need to breathe. Or I breathe to work to need. Not rightly. Were we here just a moment ago? I can't remember.

SUGAR MUFFINS. Boy, if someone doesn't open that window, I might have to remove this trenchcoat I'm wearing.

HALF MOON. Here, yes. Or another place like it. Or a place unlike it but we can't tell the difference. It doesn't matter. I'm waiting until I learn to not inhale. Have you seen him?

SUGAR MUFFINS. I sure would like to expose my breasts to you!

LORETTA. *[butting into the conversation]* Hey guys, I breathe too. Whatcha talkin' about? We're in a place, yeah.

SPARROW. Him? Is that who we're here for? He was here for a moment. But he wasn't real. Just rubber. Didn't breathe either.

HALF MOON. Rubber doesn't breathe.

TED. *[looking down at his rubber shoes]* No WONDER my feet sweat! *[exits]*

CLEETUS. Actually, on an atomic scale, rubber does breathe. How come no one ever talks to me?

SPARROW. I fear not only not being heard by you, I fear not knowing you're there to ignore me.

PACO. One more to beam up, Scotty.

[SPARROW disappears into the sound booth.]

HALF MOON. This is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the strangest game of musical chairs I've ever played. Whenever you stop talking... *[trails off into silence, and soon he disappears into the sound booth]*

PACO. Thanks, Scotty. Oh, and make sure to be ready to get anyone else that lapses into the absurd.

[Scotty beams everyone but the audience into the sound booth.]

SCENE 9.

The sound booth.

EDWARD ALBEE. Welcome to my house.

EDWARD GOREY. Hello my friends. I was so lonely before. They kept me in a box and made me keep illustrating you in case you needed an understudy.

EDWARD VI. Forsooth, I feel silly.

A PENCIL SKETCH OF EDWARD VI. You think YOU feel silly?

EDWARD SCISSORHANDS. It's getting crowded. I fear my hand is in your lung.

EDWARD PIERCEDLUNG. Yup. Sure is.

PACO. Neat! I found the pool table again Ma!

LORETTA, NUN, PAPPY, and THE POPE. Me?

PACO. No, Ma.

EDWARD MA. Me?

PACO. Um, Loretta.

LORETTA "EDWARD" FULTON. Me?

PACO. No. And when did you get here? And what's poking my lung?

EDWARD SCISSORHANDS. Sorry. I thought you were a shrub.

EDWARD SHRUBS. No, over here honey.

MAXWELL. Hey guys. Guess what? I'm the pope! Doesn't anyone care about that? The pope guys! Care! Damn. Fine. I'm Pope Edward.

EDWARDS. YAY!

EDWARD EPILOGUE. I know I'm early. My invitation said 8:45. It's been a trying time here in the sound booth, as the weight limit is roughly 17 kilograms. I think happy endings are important. Despite almost a hundred people dying, there's happiness everywhere you look. *[which is probably not at Cleetus the ultra-secret bricklayer]*

LORETTA. That's true. Like in an aqueduct.

SUGAR MUFFINS. Or in an abandoned mine.

HARMONY. Or up in a tall redwood.

EDWARD EPILOGUE. That's right. Happiness is everywhere. It is both here and there. *[wink]*

PAPPY'S DOG. Not with me though. I'm just a memory devoid of breathing, neither exhaling nor inhaling -

[A gunshot and Half Moon blows the smoke from his 12 gauge.]

HALF MOON. Didn't want to start that again.

TED. It was time for his shot.

EDWARD EPILOGUE. It certainly was. Well, I've had fun. *[waving around his blueberry daiquiri...wait, where'd he get that? When did Cleetus learn to bartend...I'm so confused]* I can't imagine a more fitting way to close this ceremony than having the sound booth collapse.

[The sound booth collapses. You're welcome.]

ROUGHLY 70 NINJAS. So... the moral of the story?

TED. 2 Eds are better than 1.

[Curtain Close. Around a brick wall. Damned Cleetus. He got the fire escapes too. Man. And the exits. Um...]

LORETTA. Ladies and Gentleman, since we are stuck here, we're going to perform the entire play once more, but this time backward.

HAND OF GOD. I can talk! *[It lowers onto stage, and begins making hand shadow puppets against the curtain.]* See, it's Abe Lincoln! *[does another]* This one is tougher. It's Mesopotamia. Here's my best one. *[does another shadow]* It's transcendental thought.

POPE. Quick everyone! Into the Webbed Wonder Wagon!

[Everyone gets into the Webbed Wonder Wagon which then speeds off, disappearing in transcendental thought. The audience, however, is trapped for eternity. My apologies.]