

## AUDITION SCENE 1 - Lummis, Belasco

LUMMIS (off)

Where is he?

EDDIE (OFF)

They're in the middle of rehearsal. You can't go in there.

LUMMIS (OFF)

You can't tell me where I can go. Out of my way.

(entering in a rage)

Where is he?

(LUMMIS sees BELASCO)

Ah, there you are, Belasco!

BELASCO

Dayton. What are you --

LUMMIS

How dare you! You have completely ruined this evening!

BELASCO

Ruined? What do you mean?

LUMMIS

It's deliberate sabotage -- that's what it is. Don't even try to deny it.

BELASCO

I have no idea what you're talking about.

LUMMIS

Is that so? Then how do you explain this?

(LUMMIS thrusts a piece of paper towards BELASCO)

What is this?

(slight pause)

I'll tell you what it is -- it's the running order for the awards ceremony. And tell me, Leon, tell me where my name is? Let's see. Is it on page one? No, not there. Let's look at page two. Not there. What about page three? No, it doesn't seem to be there either. As a matter of fact, Leon, my name isn't on this list anywhere. And I wonder how that happened because it was there yesterday.

BELASCO

I didn't have anything to do with that.

LUMMIS

Well, somebody removed my name.

## AUDITION SCENE 2 - Lummis, Conlin

LUMMIS

Well, somebody removed my name.

CONLIN

(entering)

I told him to take your name off that list.

LUMMIS

CONLIN!

CONLIN

I got a long memory, Lummis.

LUMMIS

But that was years ago --

CONLIN

There ain't no statute of limitations on getting even.

LUMMIS

I told you I didn't know Lillie was --

CONLIN

(with cool dominance)

You -- I don't ever want to hear you say her name. You get me? You don't ever say my sister's name again.

LUMMIS

Sure thing, Jimmy. Whatever you say.

CONLIN

Yeah, whatever I say. Just you remember that.

## AUDITION SCENE 3 - Conlin, Belasco

CONLIN

Not so fast. We got a little business first.

BELASCO

Oh, right. Business. Yes, well, what can I do for you?

CONLIN

These awards you're giving out tonight...

BELASCO

The Walter Chappell awards.

CONLIN

Yeah. So who's gonna win what?

BELASCO

I don't know. No one knows until the envelopes are opened.

CONLIN

(removing a package from his coat pocket)

You mean envelopes like this?

BELASCO

How did...? Those aren't the real envelopes, are they?

CONLIN

You catch on quick. I'm betting you can figure out what you're supposed to do.

BELASCO

Substitute those for the real envelopes.

CONLIN

Very good.

BELASCO

But I can't do that -- it wouldn't be right.

CONLIN

(putting the envelopes back in his coat)

Oh -- well, okay. You don't wanna do it -- you don't gotta.

BELASCO

Thank you, Jimmy. I really --

CONLIN

Now, as to that dough you owe me...

BELASCO

Yes?

CONLIN

Your note is due now.

BELASCO

But...Jimmy. You know I can't...I don't have it.

CONLIN

Then I guess you ain't got a choice.

BELASCO

Why do you care who wins?

CONLIN

I don't -- but I represent someone who does.

BELASCO

Who?

CONLIN

Getting kind of nosy, ain't ya? You know all you need to know.

BELASCO

(a revelation)

You don't know, do you?

CONLIN

I know enough.

BELASCO

Doesn't it bother you to not know who you're working for?

CONLIN

Hey, some guy calls me up, tells me what he wants, asks me how much, I tell him, and an hour later I get a package with a fistful of greenbacks -- I ain't too bothered.

## **AUDITION SCENE 4 - Florence, Foster**

FLORENCE

Oh, wonderful! I can't begin to tell you how thrilled all of us are that the mayor will be here tonight in person. The mayor's presence will make this the event of the season.

FOSTER

I'm sure it will be, ma'am.

FLORENCE

Of course. After all, this is the twenty-fifth annual presentation of the Walter Chappell awards for excellence in theatre.

FOSTER

(This is awkward small talk for FOSTER. He just wants to do his job.)

Is that so? Twenty-fifth, huh?

FLORENCE

You've heard of them I'm sure. They're usually referred to as the "Wallys".

FOSTER

(FOSTER has no idea what she's talking about, but he wants to avoid prolonging the conversation.)

Oh, yeah, sure.

(change of subject)

Say, do you think I might be able to take a look around the place. Check all the doors -- that sort of thing?

FLORENCE

Why certainly, Lt. Foster -- I'll show you around myself.

FOSTER

(quickly)

NO!

(recovering)

I mean, I'm sure you must be busy. Maybe there's somebody else who could show me around.

FLORENCE

Nonsense, Lt. You might have questions. Besides, this will give me a chance to tell you more about the "Wallys".

FOSTER

(on par with a train wreck)

Oh, that's swell.

FLORENCE

Where would you like to start?

FOSTER

(under his breath)

How d'ya get outta here?

FLORENCE

Beg pardon?

FOSTER

(as FOSTER & FLORENCE exit)

The exits. I need to know where the exits are.

FLORENCE (OFF)

Of course.

FOSTER

(to himself)

A pushy dame. Why does there always hafta to be a pushy dame?

## **AUDITION SCENE 5 - Sedan, Belasco**

(As FOSTER exits, ROLFE SEDAN enters. He is well-dressed and should convey a feeling of mystery and danger. He probably sounds foreign of indeterminate origin.)

SEDAN

I need to talk to you, Belasco.

BELASCO

(to himself)

It's a never-ending stream.

(changing gears)

Look, Mr. Sedan -- I know we need to talk but, now's really not a good time.

SEDAN

You can't keep putting it off, Belasco.

BELASCO

(ushering SEDAN out)

I know, I know. And I promise -- I swear to you we will talk later.

SEDAN

Okay, Belasco. Just remember -- for some people "later" never comes.

## **AUDITION SCENE 6 - Belasco, Harry**

BELASCO

What?

(grabbing the tickets)

Let me see those. Well, here's your problem gentlemen -- these are tickets for the Royale Theatre -- this is the Royalton.

HARRY

Does that mean you don't have a matinee performance of PANAMA PETE?

BELASCO

It means we don't have any performance of PANAMA PETE. You're in the wrong theatre.

HARRY

Oh. Well, what are you showing?

BELASCO

Nothing.

HARRY

I see. What's that about?

BELASCO

Look. We're not doing a show. We're getting ready for an awards ceremony which will be held here -- on this stage -- tonight. Which means I'm really kind of busy.

HARRY

I see.

(slight pause)

Say, what's --

BELASCO

All right! If you must know -- they're the Walter Chappell Awards.

HARRY

The Wallys!? Really? I don't suppose you've got an extra "Wally" that I could have.

BELASCO

That you could have!?

HARRY

All right -- I'd be willing to pay for it.

BELASCO

WHAT?!

HARRY

WAIT!

(crossing back to BELASCO)

It just occurred to me -- are you a director?

BELASCO

(not quite sure where this is going)

Yes. Yes, I am. I'm Leon Belasco.

HARRY

Aha! I knew it! Nigel, picture and resume, please. Someone might not be able to make it tonight. If you need me, I'll be at the Royale Theatre.

BELASCO

Why, thank you. I'll keep that in mind. Good-bye

HARRY

Wait a minute -- I should let you know that after the theatre, we'll be having dinner at Micucci's.

BELASCO

Well, that's very thoughtful of you. Good-bye.

HARRY

Oh, and I should tell you that after dinner, we'll be in the men's department at Maxwells -- they're having a sale.

BELASCO

Really? Well, that's good to know, but I really don't think I'll have time. Good-bye.

HARRY

Of course, Maxwells will be closing at 9 p.m., so if you need me after that --

BELASCO

Look, Mr. Hamswinger, I cannot even begin to imagine the circumstances under which I'd ever call you for anything.

HARRY

It's Hunsacker. Harry Hunsacker.

BELASCO

Out! Out! Out! I don't ever want to see you here again! Do you understand? Never!

HARRY

When you say "never"-- what do you really mean?

BELASCO

(apoplectic)

Why...you...I'm...and then...

## **AUDITION SCENE 7 - Gloria, Mary**

GLORIA

(to MARY)

Well, aren't you the little "suck-up"?

(Mocking MARY)

"Would you like a cookie, Mr. Belasco? I went over to that bakery during our break." Don't you ever get a little tired of yourself?

MARY

That's not "buttering-up"-- I was just being nice.

GLORIA

Just being nice? Look, Precious, no one's nice to anyone unless they want something.

MARY

Do you enjoy being so cynical?

GLORIA

Yes -- lots.

## **AUDITION SCENE 8 - Florence, Harry**

FLORENCE

(to HARRY)

You probably don't remember me, but your Uncle Robert and I used to be bridge partners. Of course, after he became the district attorney -- well, he's just been so busy. I'm Florence Rice.

HARRY

Oh, yes, of course I remember you. Uncle Bob said you were the best bridge partner he'd ever played with.

FLORENCE

Really? I always thought he was the best bridge partner I'd ever played with. He had this way of making it look like he had no idea what was going on, but the whole time he was always two moves ahead of everyone. An absolutely brilliant player. You know I ran into him just last week at the dedication ceremony for that new building -- the really tall one -- and he said you were a detective.

HARRY

World famous detective and aspiring actor. My associate, good friend, and paid employee, Nigel Grouse.

FLORENCE

How splendid. I can't tell you how glad I am you're here to handle this awful business.

Harry, can you help us?

HARRY

Well, I was planning on going to the sale at Maxwells...

## **AUDITION SCENE 9 - George, Mary**

GEORGE

(exiting)

This is kind of exciting, isn't it?

MARY

(exiting)

I'll say.

GEORGE

(exiting)

You know, I've got to remember all of this for the next time I play someone who's suffered a great loss.

MARY

(exiting)

Oooh, good idea! I'm sure that's what Eddie would have wanted.

GEORGE

(exiting)

Who?

## **AUDITION SCENE 10 - Gloria, Nigel**

GLORIA

(to NIGEL)

Perhaps while we're waiting, Mr. Grouse, you could tell me more about your excellent...nightvision.

NIGEL

Possibly...later. I'm working on a case right now.

GLORIA

(exiting)

Suit yourself. It's a limited time offer.

(NIGEL has a reaction out towards the audience.)

## AUDITION SCENE 11- George, Mary

GEORGE

What was it you had to tell me?

MARY

Have you given any thought to who the killer might be?

GEORGE

No. That's what we have the detectives here for.

(GEORGE has a thought)

Why, have you?

MARY

Yes. I was in a play last summer --

GEORGE

Really? Where?

MARY

At the Stone's Throw Summer Playhouse.

GEORGE

That's the one in Albertsburg, isn't it?

MARY

Yes. Well, in this play, all these people were trapped in a ski lodge and there was a homicidal maniac trying to kill all of them with these razor-sharp ski poles. There was a detective, but the maniac got him, so all of us had to try and figure out who the killer was. If we hadn't done that the killer would have done us all in.

GEORGE

What were the reviews like?

MARY

Most of them were very good -- and a couple of them said I was someone to "keep an eye on."

GEORGE

That's great.

(pause)

Did you have something you wanted to tell me?

MARY

Yes. How much do you know about...

(checking to see that they're alone)

Gloria?

GEORGE

Well, she's a terrific kisser --

MARY

Not that sort of thing, Mr. Casanova. I mean, do you think she might be the type to murder someone?

GEORGE

Oh, sure.

MARY

I knew it.

GEORGE

I think she'd be very convincing as a murderer -- I'd cast her.

MARY

I'm not talking about in a play -- I'm talking about for real.

GEORGE

You mean...really kill another person?

MARY

Yes.

GEORGE

Well, I don't know. It's hard to say.

MARY

Do you think she'd kill someone to get a part in a play?

GEORGE

Absolutely.

MARY

Good enough.

GEORGE

Ooh, you're right, Mary. Gloria is going to try and kill us all. We've got to do something.

MARY

I'm going to go take a look in her dressing room and see if I can find anything.

GEORGE

You think Gloria killed Ernie?

MARY

Eddie. And I think it's possible.

GEORGE

You're not going to leave me here alone...with a murderer, are you?

MARY

You're the lookout. She has to come through here to get to her dressing room. If she comes in here, you have to keep her here.

GEORGE

But --

MARY

(exiting)

Remember -- you've got to keep her here.

## AUDITION SCENE 12- Sedan, George

SEDAN

(tapping GEORGE on the shoulder)

Excuse me.

GEORGE

(GEORGE nearly comes out of his skin.)

Ahhh! Don't kill me, please don't kill me. I'm just an actor -- I don't know anything. I swear.

SEDAN

Don't worry -- I'm not going to hurt you. I'm looking for Mr. Belasco.

GEORGE

Oh, Mr. Belasco. It's him you want. Well, he's in the green room.

SEDAN

Thank you.

(starting to exit)

Oh, is he alone?

GEORGE

No -- he's sitting in a room full of people.

SEDAN

I see. Well, in that case, my business can wait until he's alone. There's no need to involve anyone else at this point. We don't need a witness.

(starting to exit the way he came in)

You seem awfully nervous. Is there something wrong?

GEORGE

Wrong? No, nothing's wrong.

SEDAN

That's good. You know, being nervous is very bad for your health.

GEORGE

I'll keep that in mind.

## **AUDITION SCENE 13- George, Gloria**

GEORGE

There's nothing to worry about -- I will not be afraid. There's nothing to worry about -- I will not be afraid. There's nothing to worry about -- I will not be afraid. There's nothing to worry about -- I will not be afraid. There's nothing to worry about -- I will --

GLORIA

(entering from behind GEORGE)

What are you chattering on about?

GEORGE

Aaaah! Oh my God, Gloria -- it's you!

GLORIA

Yes, I realize that.

GEORGE

And you're not the killer.

GLORIA

What are you talking about?

GEORGE

I just saw the murderer -- and it's not you.

GLORIA

Of course it's not me.

GEORGE

But I didn't know that. Well, now I do -- but Mary and I were talking and she asked me if I thought you might be capable of killing someone and I said I wasn't sure but then she asked me if I thought you might kill to get a role in a play and I said "certainly" and then the more we thought about it -- well, it seemed like it might be possible that you killed Edgar --

GLORIA

Eddie.

GEORGE

But then I saw this man a few moments ago, and I just know he's a murderer. He looked exactly like a murderer. He wanted to know where Leon was. I tried to resist telling him, but there was something hypnotic about his eyes -- I had to tell him -- but when he found out that Leon wasn't alone he said that his business could wait -- until they were alone -- and there were no witnesses.

GLORIA

That doesn't prove anything.

GEORGE

It's proof enough for me.

GLORIA

For all you know this man could be his tailor.

GEORGE

Only if he was measuring him for a coffin!

GLORIA

That's just speculation. But I've got something that isn't.

GEORGE

What?

GLORIA

Guess whose resume lists under her abilities, "...proficient with handguns."?

GEORGE

Let me see that.

(GLORIA hands him the resume)

Wow. So Mary might be the killer.

GLORIA

She certainly seems to have some of the skills required. Where is she?

GEORGE

She went to search your dressing room.

GLORIA

To search my dressing room?

## **AUDITION SCENE 14- Conlin, Lummis**

CONLIN

Go on, Lummis -- tell 'em.

LUMMIS

But Jimmy --

CONLIN

You want me to tell 'em? You not even man enough to do that?

LUMMIS

No, Jimmy -- I'll tell them.

(gathering his strength)

My father is -- was a phamacist and I used to help out with filling the prescriptions. Jimmy's sister used to come into our store every day to see Frankie -- he worked behind the soda fountain. If you could have seen her -- she was beautiful -- not just pretty -- she was like an angel -- she had this glow -- every guy in school would have done a month's worth of detention just to go out with her -- and, I guess I was luckier than most of them, I got to see her every day. Every day. It was a blessing and a curse. To see her everyday and know that she didn't see me. She didn't see anyone but Frankie. She wasn't special to him. Frankie was -- well, Frankie seemed to always have girls. He didn't care about her. Not really. She was just another girl to him. So I made sure she caught him with one of his floozies and I was right there to hold her hand. All those years I never thought I'd ever get her to notice me and there I was -- comforting her -- holding her hand. You have to understand -- I was afraid that she'd go back to seeing me as just part of the store. I had this idea that if ... if we ... if we could be a little foolish together that ... that she wouldn't want anyone else -- so I could always say she was my girlfriend. So I put something from the special locked cabinet in her soda -- something that I thought would make her ... make her want me -- as much as I wanted her.

(LUMMIS is overcome with emotion.)

CONLIN

Go on. Finish.

LUMMIS

I can't, Jimmy. I can't.

CONLIN

No guts. It makes me sick just to look at you. What's the matter? Don't you want to tell them where my sister is today? My baby sister. Don't you want to tell them how you got Lilly hooked on that junk you gave her? Don't you want to tell 'em how that angel ended up workin' the streets because of you?

LUMMIS

I didn't mean to give her too much. I didn't know.

CONLIN

And how is it you got off scot free? You wanta tell 'em about that?

LUMMIS

My father sold his drugstore and used the money to buy off the judge.

## **AUDITION SCENE 15- Belasco, Mary**

BELASCO

Mary! What are you doing here?

MARY

Shouldn't I be asking you the same question? I followed you here.

BELASCO

(nervous)

I was concerned about the envelopes with the winners names. The accounting firm dropped them off earlier and I thought with all this confusion -- well, I wanted to make sure nothing happened to them.

MARY

That's not what it looked like, Leon. It looked like you took envelopes out and put a different set in.

BELASCO

Look, Mary, the truth is I'm in deep to Conlin. He offered to forget about it if I ... well, if I switched the real envelopes for the ones he gave me.

MARY

The "Wallys" are fixed?!

BELASCO

Never before. It's just this one time.

MARY

It doesn't matter, Leon. I can't believe that you would even think of doing such a thing.

BELASCO

Don't you understand, Mary? Conlin's got me over a barrel. Betting's illegal -- if I go to the police I end up in jail. If I don't do this, then Conlin ... well, I don't want to think about what he'd do.

MARY

Why does it matter to Conlin who wins?

BELASCO

It doesn't. But he's working for someone who does seem to care.

MARY

Who?

BELASCO

I asked him -- he didn't know who.

MARY

So you're in a real bind.

BELASCO

Yes. That's it exactly. I knew you'd understand.

MARY

Of course I understand, Leon. But this does make for an interesting situation, doesn't it?

BELASCO

What do you mean?

MARY

Well, you're getting something out of this, Conlin's getting something out of this ...

BELASCO

And?

MARY

What do I get?

BELASCO

What do you get? For what?

MARY

Keeping quiet.

BELASCO

I see. Et tu, Mary. What do you want?

MARY

I don't want to spend the rest of my life in the chorus, Leon. I figure a supporting actress "Wally" might be my ticket out.

BELASCO

I can't --

MARY

Don't bother telling me you can't, Leon, because obviously you can.

BELASCO

But how do I know if whoever Conlin's working for didn't rig this whole thing just so they could pick the supporting actress winner.

MARY

I guess that's a chance you'll have to take. If I talk, it scotches the whole deal. Play it my way and it might just work.

BELASCO

(almost with admiration)

It would seem I underestimated you, Mary. You definitely don't belong in the chorus -- you ought to be a producer.