

Meet the ~~Teacher~~ Creature

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About the play:

Six small-town high school teachers get together one evening to enjoy a mafia-mystery dinner-party-game. Their real-life character flaws lead to deadly disaster and the teachers end up in a flight of wit and Internet savvy to save their own careers and lives. Funny, frank and foetal-position suspenseful - it will keep audiences guessing until the final breath.

Setting:

Small town, North America. Present day. Autumn. The play takes place in an open-concept kitchen, dining area, living room - in the first home owned by a young teacher.

Characters:

(all Teach at the same high school)

Cate: Early career English teacher. Desperate to always do the right thing. This is a woman who would never take 1 extra item to the express checkout aisle in the grocery store.

Saul: An early career History teacher still only working part time. Always looks for the humour in every situation. Lives for a practical joke and lives with Cate much to the chagrin of his Jewish mother.

Betty: Nearing retirement, teaches Computer Keyboarding. Drives a pink El Camino and enjoys wine by the gallon and cigarettes by the carton.

Dani: Middle-aged Language teacher. A romantic and a culture snob. In love with Phil but resigned to nothing every coming of it.

Phil: Middle-aged Science teacher. Figure skating judge. And Val Kilmer fan.

Ralph: Head of the history department. Retires in two years. Crusty, pedantic and usually the brunt of the other teachers' jokes.

MEET THE ~~TEACHER~~ CREATURE

Act 1

(Saul enters the front door carrying bags from the liquor store. Cate is in the kitchen in her bathrobe with a towel wrapped around her head.)

SAUL: Ahhh, the unmistakable aroma of—

CATE: Thank God, you're finally here!

SAUL: Garlic. What? There was a line-up... *(sniffs the air)* And cheese, Parmesan, no, Romano, and something else, something... minty?

CATE: You took SO long, I was starting to worry! *(looking at his shopping bags)* What's that?

SAUL: *(Holding out one of the bags to Cate and putting the other on the counter.)* The wine, it's great—

CATE: *(Pulls a box of wine out of the bag in horror.)* Oh, no-no Saul?! Why is the wine in a gigantic box? We can't serve this. Oh my God! How could you do this? Chianti isn't spelled with a "K".

SAUL: "My mamma always said, 'Life was like a box of chocolates. You never know what— *(Impersonating Tom Hanks, Forrest Gump)*

CATE: But we still have to be able to drink it. And now, this is it, our wine for the entire evening! We're having this party to try to secure *you* a fulltime job in the history department. Our friends are all coming to help—

SAUL: Cate—

CATE: You *know* that's why we're doing this. I wouldn't have invited Ralph Hickey over for any other reason! You need help schmoozing. Otherwise we could have played cards with the others, like normal! You have to stop messing around like this! I'll decant! *(Cate grabs a few jugs out of a cupboard).*

SAUL: Decant? Whatever. Hey, I know how to schmooze. *(He looks around for something to do).* What can I do to help? Cate, do you have a task for me?

CATE: Uh *yeah*, only about a hundred. I'm way behind. Why don't you open the murder mystery kit and follow the map inside which shows the seating plan. Everyone gets a little script and a place card. Just follow the map and set up the table. (*Filling a pitcher from a box of wine*) Did you honestly think we needed two of these things? That works out to a litre for each of us...you bought a gallon and a half of bad wine. I can't believe you bought boxes of Kianti with a "K".

SAUL: You should leave the wine in the box, otherwise all we have are jugs of bad wine without the gag. (*Saul opens up the mystery kit and starts at the head of the table*). You know, regardless of trying to schmooze Hickey with a dinner party game - you shouldn't have cast him as the Mafia Don. He's no actor. (*Saul sets out the first booklet and place card. Then as he speaks, shakes off his overcoat revealing himself in his murder mystery costume—a shiny colourful tracksuit, like something worn by an Italian racecar driver.*) He'll wreck it and you know even though he's head of the department, I honestly don't think he has that much power over whether I get a fulltime position at the high school or not. You should have invited the principal, perhaps the entire board instead.

CATE: The principal likes you. Ralph Hickey does not.

SAUL: Hickey doesn't like anyone apparently. He'll never, never give me a good word. It's said that he's Hitler of the History Department.

CATE: Saul... (*She sighs*)

SAUL: What? You hate him!

CATE: If you want to teach at another school you can! But you'll be facing *an hour* commute each way and it's an awful drive. I know Ralph is evil. But he'll be out of there very soon. He retires in a couple years.

SAUL: Some say a couple of years too late. Maybe he'll drop dead before then. (*Saul pulls a gun from inside his tracksuit jacket and pretends to shoot*)

CATE: What the— Oh it's a toy. For a sec I thought you'd bought another stupid gun.

SAUL: I didn't buy the first one, you know that, don't be like that!! (*looks at toy gun in his hand*) My stepdad couldn't brag about me being a substitute teacher - he thought "marksman" sounded better.

CATE: (Doorbell) I've gotta get changed. (yells exiting) Get, the, door!!!

SAUL: "Should I ice her? Should I marry her?" (Jack Nicholson Prizzi's Honour)

(Doorbell. Saul opens door)

BETTY: I know I'm early. Was I supposed to enter in character? I can go back out and come in again. But I'd rather not.

SAUL: No-no Betty just come-in. It doesn't matter. Can I take your coat?

BETTY: (Shrugs off her old fur coat revealing her sagging-aging body in a spandex leopard skin cat suit.) What d'ya think?

SAUL: Well I never...it's great... great costume! If only the students in your typing classes could see you now—

BETTY: Keyboarding. I teach computer keyboarding. I think I could pass for the wife of a Sicilian mobster.

SAUL: (Sarcastically) In a mystery kit.

BETTY: (Slaps the back of his head). Stop laughing at me you *cugine*.

SAUL: What, what's that?

BETTY: Ha! I did my research. *The Sopranos* still have a website with *mobspeak* on it. Who plays my husband?

SAUL: (Handing Betty a glass of wine) Hickey.

BETTY: What? Cate cast our mystery parts, didn't she? Why the hell would she do that to me!? I don't want to have to flirt with that old fart.

SAUL: (Batting his eyelashes) Please Betty for me. Cate thinks we need to schmooze Ralph Hickey. (He whispers) She wants me to work local, doesn't want me having to commute. She thinks I'll die in a car wreck.

BETTY: She needs to stop being so paranoid about death. A person can't live like that. It could happen when you least expect it! You could die in a car wreck a mile from your house, or be hit by a car walking a mile from your house, or you could suddenly have a brain aneurysm, or a freaky

infarction. Can't I switch parts with someone? What about Dani? Let her play my part. I don't want to be Ralph Hickey's wife.

SAUL: We cast you as Don Vibrato's wife because you are the best performer out of the lot of us. You actually don't have to flirt with him or anything. You don't even sit by him. Dani has to. She's his uh...Goomba!

BETTY: Goomah.

SAUL: Yeah right, goomah! Dani plays the Don's goomah. You're just his wife.

BETTY: Damn, I wore the wrong costume. I probably should have worn a widow-dress, all black, maybe even black support hose with black sensible sandals.

SAUL: You're not a widow. He's not dead.

BETTY: Someone should correct that. *(She chugs her wine)* Hickey almost had my job last month. He's like a gator in the Everglades just lying in wait for me. And last month he almost succeeded. Did you know it was him? Told admin that I'd been drinking before teaching.

SAUL: Really? I knew you'd been ratted out, but I didn't know it was Hickey. I'd be drinking too, if I had to teach that extra special lot you have this year.

BETTY: *(Rolls her eyes)* If Principal Carlson wasn't such a nice man—I'd have been given my walking papers. Goodbye full pension! I don't know what I'd have done, if it wasn't for Pete.

SAUL: Yeah, Carlson's a great guy, great guy! We're incredibly lucky to have him as our boss.

BETTY: And Ralph Hickey is a complete prick, *facia bruta* *(Translation: Ugly face)*. Actually, I think I'm going to enjoy this. *(Doorbell)*

(Saul opens door and sees the new arrivals; Phil and Dani.)

SAUL: Don't worry about being in character yet, we're talking about Ralph behind his back.

(Phil and Dani enter)

DANI: Oh but I had a really good opening line. Skip it, I'm saying it anyway. *In bocca al lupo!*

PHIL: This means?

DANI: Into the wolf's mouth. Italians use it in the same way as we use the expression, "break a leg". *(Dani sheds her coat and tosses it to Saul. She's in a spandex cat print cat suit and stilettos).*

BETTY: Great minds!

DANI: *(Looks at Betty and howls with laughter).* Where did you get yours?

BETTY: What this old thing? God Dani, I've had it for years. But this is my first chance to wear it outside my own house.

DANI: Check out Phil. He's so handsome in a tuxedo. *(To Saul)* What are you supposed to be? An Italian astronaut?

PHIL: *(Walks around the table examining the seating plan. To Saul)* Ahhhh, I see I sit beside your lovely partner.

BETTY: Does Hickey know that you and Cate aren't just housemates but in fact share the same bedroom? That's the type of thing he'll hold against you. It'll be more disastrous for you than when your mother found out. *(Pours herself more wine)*

PHIL: Red alert! It would be worse for me if Hickey found out I'm gay. I'd never invite Ralph into my home. You're crazy.

DANI: Mmm. It's like inviting Caligula to dinner. You're very brave Saul. You must really want that job.

PHIL: Who does Hickey play in the mystery?

SAUL: The Don. Juliano Vibrato.

PHIL: What's for dinner?

SAUL: Uh, minestrone & garlic bread, then a vongole I think—of course yours won't have clams, cuz you're a veggie. Actually, Cate's been pissing around with the menu for a couple of days.

BETTY: Cate's cooking? *(Betty makes eye contact with Dani and they grimace.)*

PHIL: Sorry, I'm a pain to feed. I'm not even certain about clams. They're only bivalves! Not exactly a self-aware species, but still I'd prefer not to eat them.

SAUL: Don't worry about it... Cate's sort-of-a vegetarian too anyway...well not like you. Cate's off again on again, every other week. Which is way more of a pain because no one ever knows which week it is. And when it's a veggie week, she becomes some freaking Fundamentalist Vegetarian.

BETTY: Vewwy dangewous people.

SAUL: Hey! But there's a really great tasting Tiramisu for dessert. Speaking of which, I almost forgot, the kit instructions say I'm supposed to set the setting with some mood music. *(He turns on Louis Prima's Angelina.)*

BETTY: *(To Dani)* How many classes did you teach today?

DANI: Ahhh-ck...Fridays, hell day. Three grade nine French classes, plus I had to finish up my Spanish marks. Saul, what type of wine is this? Maybe we should un-cork the bottle I brought. *(Speaks as she goes to her bag and pulls out a bottle and hands it to Saul.)* It needs to breathe for a while. This bottle is actually from a village not that far from the murder mystery setting of Castellemare, Sicily. *(Saul struggles opening Dani's bottle)* I've had this bottle resting for the last five years. It really should have been breathing already, though... we must wait a bit before sampling. The wine needs a chance to open up for us. I was reading that Castellemare really is a hotbed for the Cosa Nostra. Oh, for crying out loud, Saul, give it to me!!!

(Dani takes over, opening the bottle deftly as Cate enters in her animal print cat suit.)

CATE: Ta-Da! *(She looks around. Phil and Saul are practically crying with laughter.)*

BETTY: Crap, it's *Josie and the Pussy Cats*.

SAUL: Or feral cats.

BETTY: *(Smacks Saul on the back of the head again.)* How did you get your hair so big Cate?

DANI: Mine's bigger.

CATE: I could go put a mini-skirt on.

SAUL: Don't. It's funnier with the three of you like that. It's supposed to be a joke, a laugh.

CATE: Phil, you look absolutely gorgeous!

DANI: I love a man in a tux.

BETTY: *(Whispers loudly)* Hickey's here.

CATE: Okay everyone get into your characters so we don't have to make small talk with the man for real.

BETTY: I'm already tired of holding my gut in.

CATE: Betty get in character.

(Betty retrieves her fur coat and puts it around her shoulders.)

DANI: *(Dani pulls a cigarette already in its holder from her bag)* Do you mind? *(She asks her hosts)* Just for the effect. I don't smoke of course but I thought my mystery character would.

SAUL: Sure, that's great.

(Cate scowls at Saul and he shrugs. Cate finds a couple dishes to serve as ashtrays.)

BETTY: Well if she gets to smoke, I get to smoke. *(Betty lights up her own cigarette)*

CATE: We don't own ashtrays! *No one* has ever smoked here before!

(The doorbell rings and Saul answers it. Ralph enters. The others are gob-smacked. Ralph cuts the perfect figure for a Sicilian Don, in a fine suit with coat draped around his shoulders, fedora and extra large reading glasses.)

PHIL: *(Greets Ralph)* Don Vibrato.

(They air kiss both cheeks and do some major back thumping)

PHIL: I'd like to introduce you to a friend of mine. *(Gestures to Saul to come over)*. Don Vibrato, this is Thomaso Tenor.

SAUL: *(Shaking hands with Ralph)* Uh, uh, uh very pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Vibrato. It's truly an honour.

PHIL: *(Snaps his fingers)* Gina! *(He looks at Dani)* Gina will make you comfortable Juliano. *(More back thumping)*

DANI: *(Getting up, not in her mystery character)* Oh, right, I'm supposed to be the Don's squeeze... *(She gives Cate the evil eye and then in her mystery character greets the Don)* Sono il tuo schiavo.

(The Don kisses her hand)

BETTY: *(Snidely)* Language teacher. What did you say to him?

DANI: *(Over her shoulder)* I only took a once-a-week Italian-survival course, five years ago. But I can make it sound good.

RALPH: *(To Dani)* Gina you look very beautiful this evening. Radiant. Like a Boticelli, *La Primavera*.

BETTY: *(Clears her throat)* Hi honey. *(She says to Ralph)*

RALPH: *(To Betty)* Ahhhh, Maria. I did-a not know you'd be here this evening. Fetch me a glass of vino.

BETTY: *(Obeyes. Whispers to Cate.)* He's enjoying this too much.

DANI: *(Overhears)* I'll say, because last I checked the women in Botecelli's *La Primavera* are all fat!

CATE: *(To Dani)* You're not fat! Gina, would you help me bring the ravioli to the table?

SAUL: *(Shrugs to Phil)* I dunno, I thought we were having minestrone. *(quietly)* It's actually been weeks, she's been pissing around with the menu for weeks.

BETTY: *(To Saul)* I'm confused. Who is Cate supposed to be?

SAUL: Okay, Cate is your daughter Bambi, and my.... oh wait...all you are supposed to know at this point, is that she is your daughter Bambi.

BETTY: And who is Phil supposed to be?

SAUL: He's the Don's Lieutenant or under-boss, Roberto Baritone. He's Vibrato's right hand man and he wants to marry your daughter Bambi but she.... oh wait, I think that's all you are supposed to know at this point.

BETTY: Saul did you cheat? Did you look to see who did it?

SAUL: I didn't cheat on purpose.

BETTY: It's too bad the thing is set in Sicily instead of Jersey or Chicago. I can do a Jersey-Italian accent.

PHIL: Please everyone take a seat at the table. *(He indicates to the Don that he is to take his place by pulling the chair out for him.)*

SAUL: *(has had a bite of ravioli and gags)* "Soylent green is made of people! You've got to tell them! Soylent green is people!" *(Charlton Heston in Soylent Green)*

(Betty smacks Saul. Dani snorts with stifled laughter. Cate doesn't get it)

PHIL: Am I supposed to read this introduction now?

CATE: Yes. Go for it.

PHIL: *(Phil pulls a cue card from his pocket.)* Good evening everybody, and especially our fine guest, Juliano Vibrato. It is always a great honour to have you at table with us. As you all know, this is a sad time. Jonny Alto was recently found in his bed with a Moe Green Special. *(Phil eats)*

DANI: Who was he found in bed with? *(She goes to retrieve the bottle of wine she brought with her from the kitchen where it was resting.)*

BETTY: No-no, not who. I saw this on an episode of *The Sopranos*. A Moe Green Special is when you're shot in the eye, like in the *Godfather*. It means who ever did it, is sending a message.

(Dani/Gina pours Ralph/Don Vibrato a glass of her wine.)

RALPH: *(Runs his hand down Dani's back and smacks her rear-end)* Ho, ho, ho.

DANI: *(Gina giggles)* Oh, Mr. Vibrato. *(As Phil speaks, Dani gives Ralph the finger behind his back and takes her bottle to the kitchen stashing it behind debris on the counter, letting everyone else drink Saul's wine from the pitchers.)*

PHIL: *(Clears his throat)* Please, bon appetite. *(He gestures everyone to start)* Don't let the food get cold. You eat. I'll speak. The reason we are all here today is at the bidding of Don Vibrato. It seems that someone in this room isn't purely trustworthy. It seems someone in this room is responsible for Jonny Alto being hit—

(There's a crash. Ralph is face down in his bowl of ravioli. Everyone sits in silence staring at him. They wait. Then they start to uncomfortably look at each other.)

SAUL: Cate? Is this right?

CATE: I don't know. I didn't read the individual character instructions. I just read the host instructions.

PHIL: Should I keep reading? It doesn't say in my booklet what I'm supposed to do.

(They all look at each other doubtfully)

BETTY: It doesn't seem right that Vibrato's Lieutenant would keep delivering his speech after his boss drops dead.

PHIL: Quite right.

(Silence. Everyone is uncertain how to proceed.)

SAUL: I don't think he should have to stay that way. *(Whispers loudly)* Hey, uh, Mr. Hickey, do you want to go sit somewhere more comfortable? *(To the others)* He could hang out on the couch, 'til we finish the mystery.

DANI: You know this doesn't normally happen in these things. I've done one with the Language department and a couple with the Drama teachers. Normally, we the participants get to solve the murder of an *imaginary* character. I've

never done one like this before. One of us must have some character instructions at this point.

(They all flip through their little script books.)

BETTY: There's nothing in mine about this. There's just the upcoming dialogue and then the three questions I'm supposed to ask. Hold it, this doesn't make any sense. *(Betty notices that the Don has dialogue.)*

CATE: There's nothing in the host manual either.

SAUL: Mr. Hickey do you want to go and sit on the couch and have your dinner & wine, while we figure this out? *(turns off music)* You don't have to spend the entire evening with your face in your dinner you know.

(They all look at Ralph, waiting for an answer.)

BETTY: Oh for crap's sake Ralph, stop being such a method actor and go sit on the damn couch.

CATE: *(Whispers)* Betty, be nice to him.

(Nothing. They all look at one another. Ralph doesn't move.)

BETTY: Well, if he's going to be like that...Phil, Saul, why don't you just carry him? You're making a fool out of yourself, Ralph!

(Phil hooks his hands under Ralph's armpits and goes to pull him up. Ralph's head lolls to the side. Mouth agape. Dani and Cate sit at the table stunned, still uncertain. Betty is flipping through the script.)

BETTY: You know, this really doesn't make sense, because the Don has dialogue right the way through to the end, right past dessert. Ralph, what the hell are you doing? You're messing this up. *(She looks up)* Ralph, cut it out! You're ruining the whole evening.

PHIL: *(Phil has started examining Ralph.)* Oh, oh, shit! He's not breathing!

CATE: Oh, are we all supposed to still be in character? Sorry. *(In her mystery character)* The Don isn't breathing? *(She screams.)*

PHIL: No, no, Cate. Ralph isn't breathing.

CATE: What—

BETTY: What? He's faking. He's holding his breath. Ralph, quit with this nonsense!

PHIL: No, Betty, I'm serious.

SAUL: Quick we have to do something, quick! Oh Jeez! You do CPR Phil. Oh, man, is his heart beating? Is he just not breathing? Do mouth to mouth!

PHIL: *(Shoots Saul a dirty look as he tugs Ralph off the chair)* Help me get him on the floor.

SAUL: *(helping Phil)* Quick, quick-quick. This can't be happening. This can't be happening. Do mouth to mouth.

PHIL: *(snaps)* You do it!

DANI: What are you waiting for, Phil? Give him artificial respiration.

PHIL: *(Leaning over Ralph)*. Wow! He has a strange odour. His breath smells downright peculiar. *(Phil starts to give him mouth to mouth and then sits bolt upright and rubs his lips.)* My lips are burning. Damn, that smell....it's so familiar. Uh, CN CN¹...no not sodium... *(He looks at the other teachers, his face strained, eyes wide.)*

SAUL: Should I call 911?

PHIL: Nuts! No! Potassium. KCN.

CATE: No?

BETTY: What, why no? Yes, call!!! What are you babbling about, Phil?

PHIL: Dani?

DANI: What are you looking at me for?

PHIL: Did you do this? I mean, I know about what Ralph did to you... What was with that wine you just served to him and only him?

DANI: What are you suggesting? God, you don't seriously think I had anything to do with this! Don't be insane!

BETTY: The longer we go not calling for an ambulance, the weirder this is going to look. Is something going on I should know about?

SAUL: (*Accusing*) Betty, you said that Ralph almost lost you your job.

BETTY: OH! How dare you?! Don't be ludicrous. I'm calling 911.

PHIL: WAIT!

SAUL: Betty, I understand if you slipped him some—

CATE: Saul, stop it! Please! Let's call the ambulance.

SAUL: Wow, I can't imagine how awkward this is going to be. The guy was a—

CATE: Don't say it! Don't say how much hated him! You can't tell the emergency crew or the police. Don't mention that you despised Mr. Hickey. Don't crack any bad jokes in front of them, please. Please don't let anyone else outside this room know how much you detested the man.

SAUL: Wow, uh...I wasn't going to say *that*. Wow, *you* all may have felt like that about him. He had some great qualities... Oh man, the police are for sure going to think one of us did this. Cate *you* said earlier that it would be convenient if he just dropped dead! Damn. We're all prime-suspects... there will be an investigation for sure. (*He looks at Phil*) Secrets will become public.

PHIL: You're right. Everyone here is going to look guilty. They might even think we all did it together.

DANI: None of us would do this no matter what kind of *toad* the man was. Would we? Cate you *really* wanted Saul to get that job...

SAUL: (*To Phil*) You're the chemistry teacher. What do you think?

PHIL: Yeah, I think that one of us in this room just poisoned Ralph Hickey with the chemical KCN.

CATE: (*Nearing tears.*) Why do you say that? Stop it!

PHIL: Potassium Cyanide has a very distinct odour. And look at his skin-colour. I'd say he's turning a little pink around the gills.

SAUL: Wow, you're right he is. He's been poisoned.

CATE: No, no, no, no, no. What if we've all been poisoned? Quick, smell my breath. Oh, I don't feel good.

SAUL: Stop being a hypochondriac.

PHIL: The poison works very fast. You're fine.

(Phil covers Ralph with an overcoat.)

DANI: What do we do?

SAUL: We have to call emergency services. *(Looks resigned as he goes to the phone.)*

CATE: Oh dear God, wait!!!

(Everyone looks at Cate.)

BETTY: Now what?

CATE: I didn't do this! Don't look at me like that. I'd never. But Saul? You! *(She's certain it's him.)*

SAUL: What?

CATE: No one touch the phone!

BETTY: Time's ticking. Every minute that passes is now a minute that will lead the police to being involved, and then to their thinking it was one of us. They will want to know why we didn't call right away. Coroner'll determine exact time of death. *(She looks at Saul and then at Ralph's body).* Look, I really like all of you. I've known you all for so long. *(To Saul and Cate)* You two used to be students and now you're fellow staff, and friends. And that man was such a piece of work. I've often thought, "Just drop dead you old fart" but... Crap, crap! Phil, are you certain? Poison?

DANI: What's going on? Why aren't we phoning 911?

SAUL: Because we're uncertain. Because we're all scared that one of us killed the guy, cuz *all of you* disliked the guy.

CATE: More than just dislike. Not just us, you too. You said you hated him, less than a half hour ago. You called him Hitler!!!

DANI: You called him Hitler?

SAUL: You called him Caligula!

DANI: Look, I also really do like you all, but I don't want to go to prison for any of you.

PHIL: Even me?

DANI: Merde! That's not fair. I don't want to go to prison for anyone.

PHIL: What if you didn't have to?

DANI: What do you mean? Christ, did you do this?

PHIL: NO. I just meant...well, we're all smart people... with a lot of different skills. Surely we can figure...

BETTY: No way, Mr. Smith! Forensic science is far too good these days. I watch all those Crime Scene shows. One carpet fiber, one fingernail, one pube. Wait a minute. Nuts. Poison. Cyanide. *(She walks towards the desk with the computer. To Saul.)* Are you booted up and online?

SAUL: Just turn the monitor on. We're always online.

(Betty sits and starts to type quickly. Saul moves behind her and reads over her shoulder.)

PHIL: What's she doing?

SAUL: She's Google-ing 'potassium cyanide'.

BETTY: *She* just had a thought.

CATE: *(Horriified)* Betty, stop! Now our computer will have evidence of an Internet search for cyanide on it.

BETTY: Crap. I hadn't thought of that. See, that's what I'm talking about. Forensics is too good these days. We'd never get away with anything.

DANI: Stop saying “we”. “We” didn’t do anything!

BETTY: That’s what I thought. (*Looking at the computer monitor*) If this is cyanide poisoning—the longer we sit here doing nothing—this is fascinating—it actually clears the system and can’t be detected. Apparently less than half the population has the gene that allows one to smell the chemical. (*To Phil*) So, I take it when you said *nuts*, you smelled a bitter almond-like odour. Let’s all have a sniff of Ralph.

CATE: You’ve got to be joking. Dani, stop, you aren’t actually going to take a whiff of Ralph?

DANI: (*Is down on her hands and knees. Phil pulls back the coat and Dani smells Ralph’s mouth*) Nothing. I don’t smell anything, except Ralph. He has dirty hair smell.

SAUL: (*Smelling Ralph, ignoring Dani.*) Oh, wow, yeah, I definitely smell the poison. Just like marzipan.

CATE: No, oh no. You’re serious? Are you sure?

DANI: I always say such awful things when I’m stressed. I’m terrible at funerals too. I get the giggles. Everything is suddenly funny. Did you hear me at poor old Turnbull’s funeral? I wasn’t sobbing. I was out-of-control laughing. Nothing was funny. Someone farted—

SAUL: Farts are funny.

DANI: I tried to make it look like I was crying. I was laughing.

SAUL: Mmmm. Come here, Cate. Honestly, marzipan. Come here and smell him.

CATE: No, no, I don’t want to smell Ralph! You guys detect almond on him.... well, I really don’t need to sniff the man. Cover him up. (*To Betty*) Could it be anything else?

BETTY: Sounds like cyanide. (*Reading from the computer monitor*) There’s a theory that Rasputin didn’t die, because all the sweets he’d consumed acted as an antidote. I guess Ralph should have eaten the donuts in the staff room today.

DANI: What did you mean about the longer we wait, it clears or something?

BETTY: If we give it enough time, the cyanide won't be detectable in his system.

PHIL: It's water-soluble and breaks down into existing chemicals found in the body.

BETTY: It seems like the perfect poison in a way. I wonder if it's used more often than we know about?

CATE: I don't think you should be using our computer to research about cyanide. If the police do suspect something's amiss, all they have to do is check our most recent Google searches...and they will be led down the garden path right to cyanide and us as murder suspects.

PHIL: Unless! We could just take Ralph back to his house. And we could say he was never here, that's if anyone even asks. We'll act as alibis for each other. We were all here having a nice Italian meal.

BETTY: *(From the computer still surfing the net)* Uhhh, I don't think that's a good idea.

SAUL: It seems it would be better if he wasn't found right away. He probably wouldn't be discovered until Monday, when he didn't show up for his European History class. The longer he goes not-found, the better. Or, maybe somewhere less obvious and dangerous than his house? We don't know Ralph's schedule for the weekend. Maybe we should hide him somewhere else.

DANI: What's going on here?

CATE: Betty, can you stop please.

BETTY: I'll wipe the hard drive when I'm done.

CATE: No! You can't do that. All my midterm marking is on there! ...I mean... a freshly wiped hard drive would be almost as suspicious as recent cyanide searches.

(Saul has been lightly repeatedly kicking Ralph's body.)

CATE: Stop it! What are you doing?

SAUL: Sorry, nothing. Maybe Phil's right—let's just drop Ralph off back at his home. Put him on the couch, watching TV.

DANI: But look how he's dressed. Ralph doesn't dress like that. *(to Phil)* You'd have to change his clothes.

PHIL: Mouth to mouth was bad enough. I'm not changing his clothes.

BETTY: If we put him somewhere cool, it would interfere with them determining time of death.

CATE: Betty!

BETTY: Let me see. *(She starts to madly type)* Someone pour me another glass of wine would ya?

CATE: Oh sweet Lord! You can't do an Internet search called *the perfect crime!* Saul, make her stop!

BETTY: According to this journalist, Elaine Marshall, "the best way to kill someone is with a gun, because the rate of crimes solved is so low that you have a better chance of being struck by an airplane, than getting caught!"

SAUL: *(Hands Betty a glass of wine)*

BETTY: Hope that didn't come from Dani's bottle of Sicilian.

DANI: There's nothing wrong with the bottle of wine I brought, dammit. It was in my character instructions for the mystery. It said I was supposed to give the Don a glass of special wine that I bring with me. Right in my instructions.

SAUL: Let's see them.

DANI: I left them at home. Oh, come off it, there's nothing in the wine I brought.

PHIL: Except for a little cyanide.

DANI: That's not funny! Do I need to prove it to you? *(She pours herself a glass)* Fine. Watch. *(She stops)* None of you dropped anything in this, did you?

BETTY: Jonestown, Guyana. *(Reading the computer monitor)* The cult put the cyanide in grape Flavor-Aid. I'd always thought it was Kool-Aid, but it

wasn't. Never heard of Flavor-Aid. Holy moly, the company still exists. There it is, linked from Wikipedia.

DANI: Now I'm actually scared to drink my beautiful wine that I lugged through three countries and customs!

SAUL: *(To Cate)* What are you doing?

CATE: Clearing the dishes. Oh dear. It's all evidence isn't it. My head hurts. *(She sits at the table)*

(Saul and Phil are looking at each other; they nod in agreement.)

SAUL: Yup, my thoughts exactly Phil. It's all evidence. Let's clear it away and then Ralph.

BETTY: *(Reading from the Net)* There's cyanide in cigarettes? I knew there was arsenic in the damn things. I better stop donating blood. I could kill someone.

(Phil and Saul clear the table)

BETTY: *(Reading from the next website)* Sorry Ralph, too late for an anti-dote. Apparently the victim dies within minutes from ingestion. He probably had a heart attack from it. The cells stop being able to use oxygen. Ha! Apparently if we had intubated him, we might have been able to save him. They make it sound so simple.

(Phil and Saul are now both in the kitchen and they have a quick whispered conference as they drop utensils loudly into the sink covering their conversation. Betty is still speaking.)

BETTY: *(Loudly)* I don't know about you, but after years and years of watching *ER*, I've come to the conclusion that intubating a patient takes a fair bit of practice. You know, I really wouldn't want a student doctor doing anything to any of my orifices.

CATE: *(To Phil and Saul)* What are you doing? My dishes! Be careful! Stop!

SAUL: It's got to be done.

CATE: Why? *(She stops Saul as he dumps the ravioli in the trash).* Come off it, the ravioli is fine. We all ate it.

PHIL: You don't want left-over pumpkin ravioli in your house, in case Ralph's stomach content is finally analyzed. It could lead right to Cate's stovetop and then the computer.

BETTY: You're right. That was pumpkin inside the ravioli? I was wondering what it was. Why was it green?

CATE: Pumpkin, brandy, ricotta & nutmeg, well, it was supposed to be brandy, but I thought Crème de Menthe would be a nicer. Dani, I think you've had enough wine!

DANI: And you're starting to irritate me. It's just not the time to be puritanical.

(Saul goes to the cupboard and pulls out a couple giant black plastic garbage bags.)

CATE: *(Pleading)* Saul.

DANI: *(Snooping around the kitchen.)* Oh good, you bought two boxes of wine. Aux grands maux les grands remèdes. *(translation: big problems require big solutions.)* K-ianti. Cute. You should have left it in the boxes.

BETTY: Bring a box over here would ya, Dani? And my cigarettes, and an ashtray.

CATE: *(Is practically pulling out her hair)* This shouldn't be happening!

(Saul and Phil start to wrap up Ralph in the black plastic)

CATE: What are you doing now!?!

PHIL: I was thinking we dump him in the big mud puddle behind Mickey's Milk Store. Ralph can chill until we figure out what to do. Or maybe we just leave him there until he's found.

SAUL: Yeah, that's good. It's practically a pond right now. And there are always garbage bags in it. He'll blend in.

DANI: What will I be charged with? I think I'll work on the drunk-defense. It'll take some work to get there, though. I'm not a cheap drunk.

CATE: *(Approaches Betty's box of wine with her wine glass held out)* Would someone tie me up, or bump me on the head? My entire life is spiraling

out of control. When the police get to the bottom of this... I think I'll say that I didn't call them because I was scared for my own life.

BETTY: That's a good one. I'm using that too.

DANI: I was passed out. I missed the whole thing.

PHIL: We won't get caught. Saul, grab my keys from my coat pocket. And have them ready. We'll go fast. Let's get him out of here. Cate, open the front door for us please.

CATE: No, I'm unconscious.

(Saul and Phil are hefting Ralph's black plastic draped body and the bag of garbage towards the door)

BETTY: Crap, Cate! *(She goes to the door)*. Don't be seen you two. Do you have a phone?

SAUL: In my pocket.

CATE: Call us.

DANI: Yes, call when you are on your way back.

(Betty closes the door. Silence)

BETTY: Is anyone thinking what I'm thinking?

DANI: We're done for.

BETTY: Crap!

CATE: I didn't do it.

DANI & BETTY: Neither did I.

BETTY: Do you think it was Phil, or Saul?

DANI: Phil.

CATE: Saul. I'm sure it's Saul!

BETTY: I'm thinking maybe both of them.

DANI: *À l'oeuvre on reconnaît l'artisan.*

CATE: The egg something'ed the artist? What's that mean?

DANI: Mmm, well basically it means you can tell an artist by his handy-work. I was just thinking that Phil being a chemistry teacher, might have access to and knowledge of the perfect poison. *(She helps Cate clean up)*

BETTY: *(Back at the computer).* Wo, Wo-there Nelly, listen to all these suicides by cyanide! Most of the famous nazi leaders probably used cyanide to kill themselves, like Goering and Goebbels, and Himmler, Rommel, and even Hitler himself.

CATE: *(Stops what she's doing).* Hitler? Suicide. Oh Jesus-Murphy, we never considered that as an option even. Do you think it's possible?

BETTY: *(Jumps to her feet and starts pacing)* Holy nasty-nazis Batman! We're fools. Wouldn't that be just like that old bastard, to off himself in such a way, that we ended up going down for murder. I swear he's like some old Komodo Dragon just waiting to spill his deadly drool on me.

DANI: Whose is this? Isn't this Ralph's brief case? We should get rid of it. We shouldn't have this here.

CATE: No, no, wait, if he committed suicide, poisoned himself, maybe there's a clue inside. Quick, open it up.

BETTY: *(to Cate)* Phone Saul. It won't be too late. Get them to pull over and wait.

(Cate runs to the phone and dials)

DANI: What a weird assortment of odds and ends, he has in here. I can't imagine he reads "Dirt Rag; the mountain bike forum."

BETTY: He'll have confiscated that from a student.

DANI: Condom?

BETTY: He's not getting any. It's definitely a student's. But he shouldn't have confiscated it.

DANI: What's this?

CATE: Oh, Saul. Bloody-hell. I'll kill him. He hasn't turned his cell phone on. I'll try Phil.

DANI: You check this. *(She tosses Betty a small leather ablutions bag from inside the brief case.)*

(A cell phone rings in the room to the Who's "Who Are You". They listen to identify the owner)

ALL: Phil's! *(Phone stops)*

CATE: Bloody, bloody, hell.

BETTY: Bloody-bloody hell, is right. What's with all these medications?

DANI: *(Stops rifling the brief case)* I didn't know Ralph had any medical conditions.

CATE: What? *(Joins the other two)* What are they for?

DANI: *(to Betty)* Très vite, look them up.

(Betty takes two of the bottles to the computer. Cate follows with the third)

CATE: Well, this one is obvious. I guess that's why Ralph stays away from the donuts in the staff room. He must have type-2 diabetes.

DANI: *Tabernaq!* Do you think that's why his breath had an odd smell?

CATE: I've heard apple juice before, but not almonds.

DANI: Except Saul said marzipan. That's sweet. And diabetics sometimes give off a sweet odour.

BETTY: It gets worse. This bottle is heart meds. And uh...just a sec.... this one is for high blood pressure! I hate to say this ladies, but Ralph Hickey died of natural causes!

CATE: And now Saul and Phil are hiding his body!

DANI: We have to stop them! Oh, I don't have my car. Phil drove me. Betty, you'll have to drive.

CATE: Betty can't drive. She's had too much to drink.

BETTY: *(to Cate)* Fine, you drive.

CATE: I've been drinking too.

DANI: Cate! We don't have a choice, unless you feel like calling a cab, and asking him to wait while we go stop the guys from dumping Ralph Hickey's body behind Mickey's Milk. Oh, and could he make a little room in his trunk...

BETTY: You've only had a glass. One glass of wine!

CATE: Fine, fine. Give me your freaking keys! *(She kicks off her stilettos and puts on her boots, pulling her own cell phone out of her right boot.)* My phone. Don't ask. It's just so I'll remember it, when I go out.

BETTY: *(Betty holding out her keys)* Hurry! They'll be there by now.

DANI: *(Is out the door)* I'm glad I didn't tell them to dispose of Ralph's car somewhere. I was going to suggest it.

BETTY: *(Exits)* Cate ,hurry-up for Christ's sake!

(Cate exits)

(Lights down... Lights up)

(Saul, Phil and Ralph enter with six to-go coffees from Mickey's Milk Store and a package of Italian cookies. Ralph heads for the wine. They see the empty room.)

SAUL: "Houston, we have a problem." *(looks in bedroom)* They're gonna kill us.

PHIL: *(to Ralph)* As soon as they thought you were really dead, as soon as they bought it, you were supposed to leap to your feet! I just don't get how you could keep lying there!

RALPH: I already told you, I couldn't get up... Saul, Cate said you called me *Hitler*. You called me Hitler?

SAUL: No, no, I didn't really that—

RALPH: I knew I wasn't popular, but once I heard how much everyone hated me... I wanted to die. I couldn't move! I thought I did a really good job of dying. You have to admit, my face in the ravioli. Really good! I put a really good word in for you for that fulltime position too Saul—both with Pete Carlson, and with the board even.

SAUL: The Hitler stuff was just set-up for the joke. I was selling the practical joke to Cate. You can't seriously believe... Where are they?

PHIL: Do you think they've gone to the police? *(to Ralph)* You were supposed to jump up and scare the wits out of them.

RALPH: One of you could have stopped it at any time. You see I've never liked practical jokes.

SAUL: It was like, like... It was out of control.

PHIL: I kept waiting for one of you to end it.

SAUL: I didn't know what to do. People, *the women*, kept saying worse and worse things. I was in shock.

PHIL: My cousin, the anesthesiologist that I've told you about, well, he was in the operating room one day. He shouldn't have been, because he had the flu and was munching on codeine and Imodium. They had the patient's abdomen wide open—were just about to stitch the guy up and my cousin let go a silent but deadly fart. The whole operating room thought it was something inside the patient. That fecal had leaked, or the intestine was dead. It went past the time my cousin could own up that his fart was what they were all smelling. The longer he waited and the bigger the fuss the surgeon, nurses, and interns made about the reek, the harder it got for him to admit that the smell was his. They ended up keeping the patient open for an extra hour-and-a-half doing an exploratory, trying to track down the source of the foul stench!

SAUL: It was just like that with this. The longer it went, the harder it was to get out of. If Ralph had jumped up, it would have been fine. *(to Ralph)* You just had to say "boo" at any point. I kicked you even. That would have been a good time.

RALPH: I felt that. I didn't know why you were kicking me. It just made everything worse for me. It was like you were kicking my dead body. I still can't believe how much you all hate me. It hurts you know. I try so hard! All these years...

PHIL: Where are the women?

RALPH: Everyone was ready to cover up my murder. See, it made it impossible for me to do anything. I couldn't stop listening. It was like being at my own funeral, only what I heard... I didn't do anything to Betty to put her job at risk. What was that all about?

SAUL: What's this by the computer?

RALPH: My pills. MY PILLS.

PHIL: They've been sleuthing.

SAUL: Let me see what they were doing. (*He starts typing*).

RALPH: (*Putting his pills back in his ablutions bag*) It's been a most unpleasant evening for me. I honestly feel like going home now. I don't want to be part of the big drama that is going to ensue when the women return. I don't feel up to it. I'm exhausted. What was the business with Dani... Phil why would you suggest that Dani has motive to kill me? Dani called me a *toad* and I've always admired her.

SAUL: And Caligula.

RALPH: She said my hair smells.

PHIL: Well someone reported inappropriate behavior between Dani and a certain male student. It was excruciating for her. She—

SAUL: That was Cate who reported her. The boy in question was having daily Spanish tutorials with Dani. The boy's girlfriend complained to Cate that she thought something was going on between Ms. O'Donnell and her boyfriend, during his tutorials. Cate felt she had to say something to Mr. Carlson. If you ask me, it was a jealous girlfriend. I guess Mr. Carlson concluded that it was nothing because nothing came of it.

PHIL: I wouldn't exactly say nothing. That whole thing was hell for Dani and she'll always have that cloud hanging over her. She'd never do something

like that. I'm surprised at Cate. Dani was convinced it was Ralph who made the complaint. Betty told her it was you, Ralph.

SAUL: *(opening minimized websites on the computer)* Hey, the girls have been very busy. I think they've gone from concluding Ralph committed suicide to finally doing a drug search on Ralph's meds.

RALPH: They'll know I'm diabetic, with high blood pressure, and heart problems. I never wanted anyone at school to know. Especially the students. That's when they start trying to purposely make a teacher's blood pressure go up you know. They did that to old Turnbull in Geography. They'd make him go purple the little shits.

PHIL: Oh, no. Betty, Cate and Dani think you died of natural causes.

RALPH: I practically did. I can't believe you wrapped me in garbage bags.

PHIL: *(to Ralph)* Should you be drinking wine?

RALPH: No. *(Ralph puts his wine down and lies on the couch)*. Uh, Saul, in the car did you say there was Tiramisu for dessert? Maybe someone would bring me a bowl.

SAUL: Man we're screwed – if they've gone to the police...!

PHIL: Well, it won't be pleasant, but the police will be nothing compared to what the women are going to do to us.

RALPH: I honestly feel this wasn't my fault. None of it. You know Tiramisu would really hit the spot right now. It was used as a pick-me-up in Italian brothels in the seventeen hundreds. This catastrophe was not and is *indeed not* my fault.

PHIL: Oh, come off it. When we approached you with the idea, you were right in there. A total keener.

RALPH: I don't know why. I guess it was the first time any of you teachers outside my department involved me in anything. It seemed harmless. I thought it would be fun. It wasn't. I wish we could have just done the murder mystery. I was enjoying that. Hand me my script from the table, Phil? *(In character as the Don)* I'm Juliano Vibrato. I'm not happy because someone whacked Jonny Alto. Gave him a Joe Green Special.

SAUL: Moe, not Joe. A Moe Green Special.

RALPH: Pop right in the eye, someone took out Jonny Alto.

(There's a noise outside. The door flies open. The three men watch the women enter in apprehension. The women are struggling with what looks like a body wrapped in wet black plastic. They enter stooped over and drop their load when they see the men.)

PHIL: Oh, oh, oh I get it. Joke's on us. When did you know? Did you know the whole time? Thank heavens.

BETTY: *(Pointing at Ralph lying on the couch)* What the hell is he doing here?

RALPH: *(Pointing to the bag)* What the hell is that?

BETTY: How the hell should we know!

(The women are frantically looking at each other now.)

DANI: I'm completely confused. And I'm not liking this feeling.

CATE: *(Cold. Trembling)* Mr. Hickey.....? I don't understand. But you're in the bag. We went and fished you out of the pond. What's going on? Mr. Hickey? Saul!?!

SAUL: We didn't dump Hickey in the pond. We just went to Mickey's and bought some coffee and cookies.

RALPH: It was a bad joke ladies. I'm very sorry. I think I should go home now.

PHIL: Stop right there, Ralph. *(to the women)* Tell us exactly what happened.

DANI: Oh, it's inconceivable. I don't know if I should be happy or sad. Oh, à quoi bon? *(translation: what's the use)* We came to the conclusion that you'd made a grand error. Or rather that we all had. Cate, Betty and I realized that Monsieur Hickey had actually taken his own life, with his own hands, with cyanide!

BETTY: Then we found Ralph's bag of pills.

CATE: I can't believe this!

BETTY: We found Hickey's pills and came to the conclusion that he'd died of natural causes. I'm ready to kill you all right now!!! So, then we raced to try and stop you. Cate even phoned you, Saul, and all she got was voice mail. You didn't turn your phone on! And crap, Phil, you didn't even bring your phone. And obviously we're stupid and drunk and here he stands the great Stanislavsky method actor, Ralph Hickey. You have a whole pile of explaining to do, all you rat-bastards.

RALPH: (*Pointing to the body bag*) Except you brought back that *thing*.

CATE: STOP IT! STOP IT! STOP IT! YOU JERKS! (*Kicks off her boots and wet coat*). It's not funny. None of it. I can't imagine why you thought it was. Get out of my house! (*Runs to the kitchen and in a temper starts to clean.*) ALL OF YOU! LEAVE!

SAUL: Cate. Cate! (*follows her to the kitchen*)

BETTY: (*To Ralph*) Yeah, we brought back this *thing*! (*Betty goes over and gives it a kick*). Is this part of your big joke? You had some sand bags in black plastic all ready to go in the back of Smith's truck, and you go dump them in the pond, and then you go drink some coffee in Mickey's, and then what—were you hiding somewhere watching us freeze and hunt the swamp water for your body? Were you laughing? Was it fun for you? Damn-it Ralph, you tried to get my job, it didn't work, so you just want to humiliate me now?

RALPH: I've never tried to make you lose your job. I have no idea what you are talking about.

BETTY: Jesus, give it up already. You told the principal I'd been drinking and teaching. If Pete Carlson wasn't such a wonderful man, I'd be gone!!!

RALPH: I have no idea what you're talking about. You were drinking and teaching? I'm clueless Betty. I'm at the other end of the school from you. I wouldn't even know if you were.

BETTY: You straight assed old fart. You went right to Carlson and told him I was drunk on school property.

CATE: I told Mr. Carlson.

BETTY: What!?

CATE: Betty it was me. I did it anonymously for the students... and for you. (*goes to the oven and removes dinner*)

BETTY: It was you!?

PHIL: So, you brought back something you found on the bottom of the pond? For real?

DANI: What's the matter with you? Look at us. We aren't happy. We were wading around in that cesspool behind that convenience store, on that creepy dark road, because we thought Ralph had died of natural causes.

RALPH: But you ladies would still be sitting here waiting for Phil and Saul to return, if you had thought I'd been murdered by one of you. See this is where I really think I should depart because I really don't belong here.

PHIL: Ralph, stay.

RALPH: Right, Ralph stay. Fuck you.

CATE: Fuck all of you! Get out of my house!

BETTY: Fuck you, Cate!

DANI: What on earth is this heavy black bag we brought back from the pond? Phil!?! I gather you did not put this in the pond! We just brought this back for no reason at all!?!

PHIL: I don't know what you brought back from the pond!

SAUL: (*to Cate*) I'm sorry. It was a joke. Ralph was supposed to drop dead and then as soon as you all were starting to actually think he was dead - he was going to jump up and say "boo". And then I was going to tell you I got the job. (*Bitterly*) Yup, surprise, I got the job. Champagne should be frozen in the freezer by now. I got the fulltime position in the history department. It starts next term.

CATE: What!? I'm freezing and tired and I bet I'm going to get the flu now, or worse. (*Holding up a green chicken leg*) My Chicken Marsala is like bricks. We're lucky the house didn't burn down. And you played a joke that I can't even comprehend!

SAUL: You love George Clooney.

CATE: I have no idea what George Clooney has to do with this.

SAUL: He's the ultimate practical joker. You love him.

CATE: His jokes are apparently funny!

SAUL: Maybe, not always. Did you know that some of his practical jokes take an entire year to accomplish?

CATE: You're not George Clooney. This whole George Clooney thing is irrelevant.

DANI: We brought something back from the disgusting pond behind Mickey's. God! Cate, do you want us to leave it in your living room? Because I'm ready to go home now too. I fully understand that you want us all out. Do you need help removing this trash, because it certainly was a lot of work to bring into your house, and I doubt you can do it on your own?

CATE: I don't care! Leave it! The only trash I want out is Saul.

RALPH: Oh, Cate, no. This is my fault. I was supposed to... I'm not an actor. I wrecked the joke. I was supposed to get up and end it. Don't blame Saul. He knew you had worked hard on this party and he—

PHIL: Okay, (*to Cate*) we'll get rid of this for you regardless of your accepting its presence in the middle of your living room for all eternity.

CATE: Fuck off, Mr Sarcastic!

PHIL: The 'fucks' are over Cate and I wasn't being sarcastic.

CATE: You were!!! *All eternity?* I heard it. I didn't say that. I just said *leave it* and that I wanted you all to go!

SAUL: You really (*Gestures to the women*) found this thing on the bottom of the pond, at the back of Mickey's, and brought it back here thinking it was Ralph?

PHIL: It certainly looks like Ralph did when we took him out of here.

BETTY: Except this thing's wet. The water was frigid. And we went through this whole rigmarole on the way back here, in the car, about the fact that

Ralph's lungs would now have water in them. Which was really going to cause problems, with his natural caused death.

PHIL: Well now, wait a sec, but would Ralph's lungs have had water in them if he had been submerged after he had stopped breathing?

RALPH: HELLO!! You're doing it again!

BETTY: Riiiiight.....Ralph's lungs would only be filled with water if he'd inhaled. But still, there would have been evidence of the pond, some sort of pond debris in his mouth, a specific algae, a type of convenience store fast food only sold at Mickey's, something which would have scuppered us all. And Phil we realized this on our way back to the house. We realized that even though we'd retrieved his body, and even though he'd died of just a natural every day old heart attack, due to his lifestyle—

RALPH: Hello, again. In case you didn't notice, I'm here.

BETTY: Shut-up, for a second, Ralph. We realized that we'd seriously made a mess of things, by dumping his body in the first place—and even though he'd died naturally—we were all going to end up in a lot of hot water with the law. And the local newspaper would have been all over it. They've never had something as juicy as this. Goodbye teaching in this little town.

DANI: What exactly did we bring back with us? It *really* felt like a person's body.

BETTY: Oh, who knows. Let's just put it out on the curb. We thought it was a dead body, so it felt like a dead body.

RALPH: My dead body.

CATE: It was very heavy. And awkward. It might be an animal. A dog or something.

SAUL: It would have to be a Bull Mastiff then.

DANI: It's bigger.

CATE: I saw a picture on the Internet of a Bull Mastiff that's the same size as a horse.

SAUL: That photo is a hoax.

RALPH: It's probably just an old carpet.

PHIL: Oh for crying out loud—let's just open it up.

RALPH: Don't open up a bag of convenience store trash.

CATE: Not on the rug! Move it over to the tile by the sink. Please!

BETTY: I'm not happy with you, Cate.

CATE: You aren't happy with anything.

(Saul, Phil and Dani struggle with the heavy object)

DANI: Give us a hand will you? Move some chairs or something.

(Betty hops to help.)

CATE: Do we really need to do this? I just want to go to bed. I'm done with it. I'm done with the whole thing. You know that mystery kit cost thirty-five dollars! And then the dinner. The dinner. Well it's ruined. I don't want stinky garbage or dead animals left on the tile. *(Heads towards the bedroom)*. Saul, see that it's cleaned up. I'm going to bed. But you're not invited. Take some things and leave with Phil or Ralph, or whoever. I don't care.

PHIL: Well, I'll be.... This really does feel like it's a person. I can't think what else it would be.

RALPH: I don't think we should open the bag.

DANI: Maybe we should call the police right now.

BETTY: And what would we say? We were out fly-fishing amongst the slushy cups and cigarette cartons in the puddle behind Mickey's and caught the big one, but now we're not so sure just exactly what we caught. So we're calling 911...open the damn bag!

RALPH: Fine! Open away! I'm out of here. *(Turns and starts to gather his things to leave)*

(Phil and Saul are opening the bag. They succeed.)

DANI: *(Lets out a wail)* No, no-no-no-no. This can't be happening! Oh, no!

BETTY: Holy mercy.

(Cate returns but stops, terrified to come closer)

PHIL: This isn't a joke.

SAUL: Cate stay back. Don't look!

CATE: Why?

SAUL: I mean it stay there!

CATE: What is it? Is it a dog?

RALPH: Oh, Jesus. Oh, Jesus.

CATE: Stop it! Stop it everyone, I can't take this anymore.

BETTY: Oh, Cate we're not. No one is. Oh, I can't...he was such a nice man. He wouldn't hurt a fly. This is wrong, wrong, wrong.

(Cate comes over)

PHIL: I'm going to throw-up. *(He pushes to the sink and starts retching in it.)*

SAUL: Cate, no, it's Pete...it's it's principal...it's it's Pete Carlson. Stay back. You don't want to see him like this.

CATE: *(looks down on the face and screams!)* Oh, nooooo!!! *(She falls into the fetal position on the floor, sobbing)*

(Rosemary Clooney's "Mambo Italiano" plays)

END ACT 1

ACT 2 (Just where we left off)

- RALPH: Pete's been given the Joe Green Special.
- BETTY: Moe Green. It's a Moe Green Special.
- DANI: We must call the police!
- BETTY: What the hell are we going to say? Think about this for a second.
- PHIL: *(Head still in the sink)*. This is going to look really bad, way worse than before.
- DANI: Do you really think it could be a message? Someone is sending a Moe Green message?
- SAUL: That doesn't make sense. To who? Carlson isn't Mafia. It's just a murder.
- CATE: Just?
- BETTY: This isn't a practical joke again is it? *(She looks at the body. She kicks the body)* Oh, I'm kicking a dead man. I just kicked a dead man again.
- DANI: What do we do?
- PHIL: What if someone thinks we did it?
- SAUL: We have to put him back. I can't think of anything else. We have to go put Carlson back in the pond.

RALPH: I agree.

CATE: But, but, but, we can't. (*Sits up*) Remember what Betty said before? One carpet fiber, one fingernail, one (*whispers*) pubic hair... He was on our rug, Saul! In our house! I didn't even have time to vacuum today.

SAUL: Why would someone do this to Pete? I don't get it. He's the greatest guy, greatest guy.

PHIL: Yeah, he's super.

DANI: We need to call the police and tell them the entire story, the complete truth from beginning to end. From my heart I believe that is the best and safest thing for all of us to do. They need to capture whoever did this...to...to... oh dear.

PHIL: (*Still hanging over the sink*) Let's not jump too quickly. We need to work this out. Because this time, big time, for real, the facts are pointing right to us from the get go.

SAUL: No one here did this. Did we?

PHIL: He's our boss...and here we are...and there he is with a bullet through the eye. I can't think there's a person in the whole school that would do this. But those looking from the outside in won't know the dynamic. The police will start with those closest to him and right now...

RALPH: That's us. And then as was discussed during tonight's previous murder, secrets will become public.

PHIL: And Dani, it won't just be the local press that'll jump all over this sucker. We'll be on every tabloid show across the country, hell, maybe even internationally. It won't matter that we're innocent. The Headline potential for this is too good. They'll dig into our pasts. Television rag shows will pull our mug-shot photos from the damn yearbook and paste them beside the head line—*Do You Know Who is Teaching your Children*—and Betty the Boozer will be born, Dani the Pedophile—

CATE: (*Staring at the bagged corpse*) Horrifying. My yearbook photo is so embarrassing. I had a head cold and my right eye is half-shut. Someone close that bag, please!

SAUL: Yeah, I'll—

BETTY: Oh, you're right Phil. We look bad.

SAUL: We are bad! We're just like our students, but older.

DANI: Could we please take a vote about this? (*puts up her hand*) Vote, vote. I still want to call the police. We could tell them our concerns about the media.

BETTY: You can't be that naïve. The police lights will be flashing out front. The yellow tape will come out marking this as a crime scene and the local media will arrive. And then it will be on the Internet. Think about it Dani; *Teacher Touches Students During Tutorials?*

DANI: But I didn't. That awful girl with the continually infected eyebrow-piercings that awful-ugly girl made it all up!

SAUL: She is pretty awful. Her pierced-tongue clacking on her teeth bothers me more than her red oozing-eyebrows. I can't understand a word she says.

PHIL: She wears her pants so low on her hips, that I'm constantly surprised that her pubic hair doesn't show.

BETTY: She shaves her chin too.

PHIL: Those hip-hugging low-riders aren't a flattering look for her. And isn't that look long passé?

CATE: Cut it out, all of you! Poor Stacy has very low self-esteem.

BETTY: What happened with Stacy's complaint?

CATE: (*rolling her eyes*) As usual, Carlson hasn't done anything!

DANI: Wrong! That hideous girl won't back off, regardless of her boyfriend supporting my story, the true story! Pete gave it a couple of weeks but according to the law he has to report it to the police and to Social Services. And that's what he'll be doing on Monday, or was going to do...

CATE: I'm scared. Somebody shot Mr Carlson. With a gun. Shot him.

RALPH: Executed him, I'd say to be precise. That's how it appears. Pete was executed. It's different. Maybe it happened during a convenience store

heist. Where did those cookies go...or Cate, I hate to ask but isn't there some dessert? A Tiramisu?

DANI: Convenience store robbers don't stick around and wrap bodies in plastic. Mon Dieu! Saul owns a gun. You're a member of the Sharp-Shooters Gun Club. You know people with guns. I'm not saying that you necessarily—

CATE: What are you insinuating? Saul adores Mr. Carlson. He's always saying what a great guy he is.

BETTY: Oh, he's lying.

SAUL: How do you know I'm lying?

BETTY: Because you always say it twice. You say *great guy great guy*. It's your poker tell. Whenever you're lying about something, you repeat it.

CATE: How dare you accuse him!

BETTY: Crap. I'm not saying Saul did this. (*to Saul*) Of course you didn't, of course you didn't. But Dani has a point about you knowing people with guns. You're always going to that gun club.

SAUL: Oh, man! My gun's gone missing.

EVERYONE: What!?

SAUL: (*he opens the body bag again to look at the wound.*) I locked it in the trunk of my car this morning. I only teach a half day today and was going to the gun club this afternoon.

CATE: You brought your gun onto school property!?

SAUL: Well, I didn't have time to go home first, because of all the errands you gave me! And I have that stupid shooting competition in two weeks, which I wouldn't even go in, except my humiliating results might end this whole "my son is a marksman" business with my stepdad. I know I locked the gun in my trunk! (*he closes the body bag*) I drive over to Sharp-Shooters, open my trunk and nothing. I was certain I'd brought it with me to school. I was pretty tired this morning. I was up to four marking. Anyhow, I went home to check the cabinet. Nothing. I tried reaching you on your cell Cate, I left a message asking you—

(Phil's cell phone rings. They all sit in stunned silence waiting for it to end.)

CATE: Are you going to go see who it was?

PHIL: It seems a tad late for me to get a call. What time is it?

BETTY: *(Looks at the computer)* 12:06.

PHIL: Nobody calls me this late. Unless it's bad news, like somebody died.

DANI: You'd better check to see who it is.

PHIL: *(Shaken.)* All right. *(He goes to retrieve his cell phone.)*

BETTY: That scared the crap out of me. I need more wine.

CATE: I don't think you should....

BETTY: *(Gives Cate a foul look.)* Dani, did you bring more cigarettes?

PHIL: That's weird. I just missed a phone call from you, Cate.

CATE: What?

PHIL: Look. That's you.

CATE: My phone!?! *(She runs to her coat.)* I must have dropped my phone. I don't believe it.

DANI: When? Where?

CATE: I don't know, oh, shit, shit, it must have been by the pond somewhere. I kept bending over and standing up, when we were lugging the body over to Betty's car. It's not in my pockets.

BETTY: Monster crap, there was a sopping-wet bullet-holed body in the back of my pick-up. And it wasn't even in a Glad no-leak baggie. It was in some gigantic no name plastic garbage bags. Oh, boy. My whole vehicle is a great big piece of evidence. Even if I hose it out and pour bleach in the back, they'll find something. *(to Cate)* Are you sure the phone was dropped out by the pond somewhere?

CATE: Yes, it has to have been there. When we were trying to lift Mr. Hickey, I mean Mr. Carlson, out of the water into the back of your car, or your truck, or whatever that Franken-vehicle is.

BETTY: Excuse me! It's a first generation El Camino.

CATE: I was wet and covered in sludge. I took my coat off and shook it out before I got into the driver's seat.

(Betty's purse starts to ring to the tune, 'I Will Survive')

BETTY: That would be me. I should answer it!

EVERYONE: No!!!

BETTY: Cate's phone is calling.

DANI: Maybe she'll leave a message.

BETTY: Not yet, maybe it's too soon, just a second. No...no...nope, still nothing. No message.

CATE: Why would my phone be calling you?

PHIL: My guess would be whoever found your phone is going through your address book.

CATE: Or they're checking the list of numbers that most recently called me. I heard from all of you this afternoon at some point.

(A phone rings to the Marseillaise)

PHIL: Dani!

RALPH: Answer it. Let's see who this is.

EVERYONE: No!!!

DANI: *(Flips open her phone)*Yes..... Chi è? *(whispers to the room)* He said Buono Sera. *(Into the phone)* Who's calling so late?... Ma che minchia *(Italian. translation: what the fuck. Dani mouths "oh no" to everyone listening)*

EVERYONE: What?

DANI: Shhh. Excuse, what did you say?..... *(pause)* You found a cell phone... Who's asking?..... You're breaking up I'm afraid. Losing you. I can't hear you. Sorry, please repeat... *(hangs up.)* Non! He wanted to return the cell phone. He wanted Cate's street address, said he'd just drop the phone off. He asked me who owns the phone with your number, Cate. He's looking for you!

PHIL: Odd time to make a lost-&-found phone call. A normal person would have waited until the morning.

CATE: It might have been the police.

BETTY: Nah, police could trace the physical address for the phone's owner in a jiffy. They wouldn't need to be calling all the numbers stored inside the phone. Why would they bother anyway? The only evidence of a crime is in this living room. The phone is nothing. Just a lost cell phone. Hardly what I'd call police business.

RALPH: Maybe I should go turn my phone on. They'll probably be trying to reach me at some point. *(He goes to get his briefcase)*. We might be able to get some more information. We need to talk to this person.

SAUL: I guess I should turn mine on too. I wonder who took my rifle? That bullet hole in Mr Carlson's head definitely could have come from my weapon, but close range, like really close.

CATE: I don't like this. Someone is looking for me. Someone who was at the pond. Do you think it could be whoever shot Mr. *(whispers)* Carlson?

SAUL: Doubtful, it's probably just some teen we teach. Some kid smoking pot behind the convenience store found your phone.

PHIL: A teenager smoking *pot* behind *that* store after midnight wouldn't be the student that would try to find the owner of the phone. They'd ring up as many charges on Cate's cell as they could before the service was cancelled, and then they'd dump it somewhere.

DANI: It wasn't a teenager that I was talking to. It was a grown man. And a teenager wouldn't have said Good Evening in Italian. Why Italian? He sounded like that movie star that plays mobsters all the time.

BETTY: Ralph, it's time you purchased a new phone.

PHIL: That dinosaur will give you a brain tumor!

RALPH: It may be big, but I can punch the right numbers on it, and reception never cuts out. I get reception anywhere. I could call the moon with this thing. It's perfect. I'm not getting one of those tiny things you lot have. I don't need to take bad photographs with my phone or watch movies on my phone. I'm the only one in *this* room who knows when my phone rings. It rings, I don't have to wait and listen to hear what horrendous tinker-bell electronic sounding song it's trying to bleep to determine that it's mine. My phone rings like a telephone! There have been great inventions through history...the loom—

DANI: I can't for the life of me think of that actor's name. He's always in those *Goodfellas* type movies.

RALPH: What actor?

DANI: The man on the phone sounded like the movie star. Not DeNiro or Paccino, but he always plays wiseguys and mobsters in films...tu sais...

BETTY: Joe Pesci.

PHIL: Nicholson?

DANI: Oh, definitely not Jack. I'm not really up on Hollywood movies. I tend to watch foreign films. But the man I'm thinking of plays Mafia mobsters—

CATE: Well that's entirely unsettling. I prefer the teenager theory. A Mafia mobster is far more disconcerting.

BETTY: (*to Cate*) You must know who Dani means. You're always showing movies in your English classes rather than teaching.

CATE: Hey! What's that supposed to mean? Just because there aren't any typing movies out there, don't get bitter because teachers in the arts can show films with validity—

PHIL: I, uh, showed the kids *The Saint* with Val Kilmer after midterms last week. Great science movie. All about cold fusion you know—

CATE: Isn't there talk of cutting the course you teach altogether, Betty? Aren't they just going to offer a keyboarding segment in the computer classes instead soon?

PHIL: Val Kilmer played so many wonderful characters in *The Saint*. He's fantastic. A fabulous character actor. The film is a real showcase for him.

DANI: Saul does a really good Jack Nicholson impersonation. Ooo do *The Shining*.

CATE: There's a dead body in this room!!!! A murder victim!!! And we all know him!!! He has a family!!!

(Thoughtful silence)

CATE: This is always what I have to say about the effects of alcohol. No, Betty, just listen to this. I'm nervous to fly on a plane, right? Scared of crashing and dying. But give me two shots of Scotch and I don't care if we go down in a firey-bomb. Alcohol has a powerful drug-like effect. Mr. Carlson is lying on my kitchen floor with a bullet hole in him, a bullet has torn through his eye socket and made mince of his brain and we're sitting around talking about Val Kilmer.

BETTY: Well, young one, I wouldn't even be functioning right now if it wasn't for alcohol.

SAUL: "The force is strong within you" Betty. *(Darth Vader)*

BETTY: You'd have to cart me away if not for wine. Whatever you have against booze is your problem with it honey. It's my very useful crutch and I'm gonna keep on using it until my liver outweighs a Rottweiler. Alcohol makes me stronger, funnier, faster...

SAUL: The Six Million Dollar Betty. *(does Bionic sound-effect)*

PHIL: I'm not so sure that in this day and age that six-million-dollars would buy one a Bionic-Betty.

BETTY: Bite me!

SAUL: The Six Million Dollar Toe. That's all you'd get.

BETTY: It's not imagined. Alcohol truly enhances my performance. I'm going online again Miss Cate Mallone so I can find the actor who has the voice like the mobster using your cell phone—the man who is right now looking for you! He's looking for you Cate! I'll bet he's the man that shot Pete Carlson and now he's looking for you.

RALPH: So, Cate told Mr. Carlson that you'd been drinking on the job. I can't believe he turned a blind eye. That doesn't seem like him.

CATE: He didn't do anything!

BETTY: Oh yes he did do something! I could lose my job, my full pension. I'm supposed to be going to AA and I'm not! He demanded to smell my breath today! And I refused. He's going to report me. Or was going to...

PHIL: That's motive.

BETTY: Excuse me?

CATE: I don't understand how our pension works. It's confusing.

DANI: I have a CD Rom that explains it. You can borrow it.

RALPH: This is really good. Splendid job, Cate. *(He's eating the pudding)*

SAUL: I made it last night.

RALPH: Does anyone else want a bowl?

DANI: I wouldn't mind a shot of the Tia Maria that went into the recipe as long as it was Tia Maria or Kaluhua and not Crème de Menthe again.

SAUL: I said—I made it.

DANI: I need something to make the Mickey's coffee palatable. I never go to Mickey's. That shop has always given me the willies.

CATE: Mickey gives me the willies. *(Resigned, she hands Dani the bottle of Tia Maria)*. I went there once before tonight and never again. Mickey leered at me.

SAUL: I've rarely been to Mickey's. It's not on my route to anywhere.

PHIL: Is it on anyone's route to anywhere? I can't imagine how they make end's meet out there.

SAUL: I can see how you thought Mickey might have been leering at you. He has one of those eyes that points in the wrong direction.

CATE: It wasn't that eye that was leering - it was the other one!

BETTY: They have cheap smokes at Mickey's though, cheapest in the area. Suspiciously too cheap.

PHIL: Oh! I have a message. *(he listens)*

DANI: Betty, weren't you going to look up the cast for *Goodfellas*?

PHIL: Shhh, I can't hear. Sssh, everyone!

DANI: *(looking over Betty's shoulder)* No, not Ray Liotta! Has he had plastic surgery? I thought he was pock marked. Or maybe he's been airbrushed. Oooo... do an image search for Nicole Kidman. She's pure white now. Where did her freckles go and what's with her forehead? But even worse, type Burt Reynolds.

PHIL: Thanks to the noise in here. I have to play it again, people.

BETTY: What the hell has Burt Reynolds done to his face? It looks like he's stapled his forehead to his ass.

PHIL: People! It's our Mafioso. Wait, I'll start playing it again on speaker. Listen.

VOICE: Hey. *(clears throat)* I uh, just saw three babe,s uh fishin' around in the pond behind Mickey's Milk. *(clears throat)* I think one of them may have lost something like, uh, her phone. I have no problem swinging by her place and returning it. *(clears throat)* So, listen here Phil Smith, you figure skating cheaten' fanook... I got no idea why you know these women cuz they're way outta your league. So, call this number back and tell me the street address for the babe who owns this phone.

DANI: Armande Assante!

BETTY: Ha ha ha, that so totally did NOT sound like Armande Assante! More like Sylvester Stallone.

PHIL: Whoever he is, he knows who I am!

SAUL: I'm shaking. Look at my hands.

RALPH: What's a fanook, why'd he call you that?

PHIL: I feel sick again. (*He goes back to the sink and retches*).

CATE: Yes what's a *fanook*? Maybe it's a clue.

BETTY: A *fanook* is someone who is gay. It's Mafia slang. They hate homosexuals. Scared to death of them I reckon. It's the real life Mafia calling!

PHIL: He knows that I'm gay?

RALPH: You're gay?

PHIL: Oh Christ. Yes, Ralph, I'm gay. Gonna report me?

RALPH: Well not if you don't report me.

EVERYONE: What?

RALPH: I thought I was the only 'one' on staff.

PHIL: You're?

RALPH: Hell, yes. Why do you think such a catch as me has never been married after all these years? And now some places have rightly made it legal but, well I like living alone now. In fact I quite like my own company.

PHIL: Really? You're?

RALPH: Cat's outta the bag. What do you say we keep each other's secret? (*Ralph starts to dial his phone.*)

DANI: Phil, oh dear... Mr Carlson said something that really upset you the other day. Didn't he say that having a homosexual on staff makes him nervous —

PHIL: I hate what he said! Just because I'm gay doesn't mean I'm some perverted freak who lusts after children.

(Everyone looks at DANI)

DANI: How dare you all look at me! It's not true! *(to Ralph)* Finally. Finally someone's calling the professionals. Thank you. I'll feel so much better when the police arrive.

RALPH: *(Into the phone)*. Ahhh, Buona Sera. This is Juliano Vibrato...

EVERYONE: *(Sotto voce)* Ralph!

RALPH: Yes, I said Juliano Vibrato of Castellemare Sicily. I understand-a that you've found a mobile phone. Can you tell me where-a.....At Mickey's.....Excuse?... Was I just out at Mickey's with my, my crew?

BETTY: *(From the computer)* Yes, crew! Your crew is your men, your footsoldiers. I've pulled up a mobspeak glossary. Juliano would probably call his footsoldiers *buttons*.

RALPH: Yes, with my lieutenant... and-a my young button. *(whispers)* Betty you sure, *button*?

BETTY: Yes! If he gives you a hard time call him a jamook. If he talks about us babes again, you call us Goomahs.

RALPH: ...Three *goomahs* fishing around in the pond huh?

BETTY: Jamook.

RALPH: Listen to me you, you, jamook. You didn't-a see a thing, if you knows whats good for your health-a, you didn't see anyone at the pond. You didn't see no pink El Camino. And you didn't-a see me or my crew in the store. Capiche? Yeah? You like-a being in once piece. You like-a your arms and your legs?.... Buono.... Ciao. *(Hangs up)*. He saw you women pull Pete's body from the pond.

CATE: Oh no!

DANI: Ralph, what on earth do you think you are doing? Maudit! *(translation: damn)* Tu es completement débile. *(translation: you are a complete imbecile)* Have you completely lost it?

RALPH: I left a message on Cate's phone earlier today, but I left it in character, as Don Vibrato. He'll have played it too—

DANI: Oh, me too, *(to Cate)* I left you a message in Italian, as Gina.

BETTY: I wonder if he knows who put Pete's body in the pond? Cate, how can he access your voice mail? He shouldn't be able to play your messages without your password.

CATE: I taped my password and number on my phone.

BETTY: That's not very secure.

CATE: I have so many numbers that I have to remember. Too many numbers, pinwords, passwords. My whole life feels like it can't be accessed without a password!

PHIL: Oh, God! We were spotted at Mickey's too, not just the women! That's why this man asked if your crew was at Mickey's tonight. Look how we're all dressed. We look like the Mafia. We look like wiseguys and Goomahs! That mobster man has seen all of us at Mickey's. *(Phil turns and buries his face in the sink again).*

CATE: Maybe Mickey is connected. Maybe he launders money or something.

BETTY: It would explain the cheap cigarettes. See, I knew we should have played cards like we do every Friday night.

CATE: But the point of the party was to woo Mr. Hickey into liking Saul, and Mr Hickey doesn't play cards.

BETTY: Well Trivial Pursuit then.

RALPH: Oh, I'm good at that.

CATE: It was Dani's idea to do the mystery game. She loves them. She's always doing them with the English teachers who also teach drama. They never invite me. It's Dani's fault we're dressed like the Mafia.

DANI: It's not my fault! And I do the mystery dinners with the teachers in your department who also happen to take the students on the Europe trip with me every year! And it wasn't me who dropped a cell phone at Mickey's tonight!

CATE: Are we involved in a Mafia hit or something? Did the Mafia kill Mr Carlson? Do we have their body?

DANI: Oh-oh, Mafia! Phil, do you have those two new Italian kids in one of your classes? That sister and brother. You know the DiBenedetto twins.

SAUL: Yeah, the DiBenedetto twins...Carlson suspended them!

PHIL: So? (*he vomits*)

DANI: There's something suspicious about them. Maybe they're Mafia kids. What type of marks did all of you give them?

PHIL: (*over the sink*) Oh, come on. No one is going to get whacked for suspending those kids. Hell, I failed the two of them. They're a chemistry accident waiting to happen.

CATE: You failed them? Both of them? I think the boy is actually smart, but the girl, all she does in class is self-groom.

PHIL: I think it's outrageous to assume they're Mafia kids just because they're Italian. It's bigoted. Offensive.

DANI: How dare you say I'm a bigot!

RALPH: Why are those two kids going to this school now? I never heard the details regarding this.

CATE: They're staying with their Aunt because—

BETTY, SAUL: Because their parents had to go away for a while!

PHIL: Come on! You're being ridiculous. All of you. No one would kill Carlson for suspending those kids.

RALPH: I failed them. And I'm still here. I'm starting to wish I'd just passed them though. I'll have to teach the dumb duo all over again.

CATE: Well I passed the boy, more than passed but—

BETTY: WAIT! (*to Phil*) Pete Carlson judges the kids you coach. He's a figure skating judge. Maybe the Mafia got to him!

PHIL: That was the Russian Mafia, not the Italian, and it's not the Olympics. No one is going to want to kill Pete because he failed their ten-year-old on a junior dance.

BETTY: Well, it was a thought.

PHIL: Oh, oh, oh.

EVERYONE: What?

(The landline rings. They all look at each other in a panic.)

CATE: Someone answer it! Before it goes to voicemail and then all those Mafiosos have to do is look up my last name in the phone book, and then they'll have my street address!

SAUL: Shit! *(Quickly grabs the phone)* Hey, it's Thomaso Tenor answering for Roberto Baritone.....say what.....Oh! Mrs. Carlson! *(He looks at the others in complete terror)*....Sorry, just a second Mrs Carlson! I think the battery on the remote phone is going. I have to go get the phone in the kitchen, in the kitchen. One sec. *(He puts her on hold)* It's Pete's wife! She's on hold. I lied. We don't even have a remote phone.

CATE: What are you going to say?

SAUL: Jeez, I don't know. What am I to say? It's Pete's wife. She's wondering if we've seen him. She's worried to death. He never does this.

DANI: Je n'y crois pas. *(Translation: I don't believe this)* Now, now it's time we call the police.

RALPH: Pick up the phone and tell her you have no idea where Principal Carlson is. Tell her you didn't teach any classes after lunch today.

SAUL: Uhhhh Mrs. Carlson, uh, sorry, I was just listening to the *Three Tenors* when I dropped off to sleep. I must have sounded crazy there for a second. You know, I can never decide who really killed the three tenors: Pavarotti, Domingo or Carreras but my bet is Placido shot them down. Though now that Placido is dead—

DANI, CATE: *(whisper)* Saul!

SAUL: *(hand muffling phone)* What? Oh, I said it wrong. It's Plathido.

PHIL, RALPH: Saul!

SAUL: *(into phone)* What Mrs. Carlson? You're looking for Pete! That's weird. I wish I could help you. But I don't know, I uh...well, I didn't have a full day of classes today. I left the school early.....yeah, no, I understand.....no, really it's no problem that you called so late.....oh, you only got her voice mail? Well, probably most of the staff are sleeping and don't want to answer their phones so late. If you *want* I can *wake* Cate.....no, no-no.....it's okay to have phoned.....Right. Yeah, no, sure, call Mr. Pitts. I'm certain he won't mind.....sorry I'm no help, bye.

BETTY: Now we have a bigger problem than Beverly.

PHIL: What could be bigger?

BETTY: The school librarian lives five houses down the street, and all our cars are parked out front, and Saul here just told Beverly to go ahead and phone Arnold Pitts. All Arnie has to do after the phone call is look out his window - and he'll see my car parked on the street.

CATE: Oh, this is bad. Arnie Pitts is a busy body—

SAUL: The kids call him Arm Pitts.

DANI: That's because he smells.

PHIL: The average bad smell has a weight of about 760 nanograms.

BETTY: Stink has a weight?

RALPH: Fascinating.

CATE: Arnie's a nut-bar.... I'm positive we're not through with Mr. Pitts.... And shit, Pete.... Pete's on my floor with a bullet through his eye!

DANI: We should call the police and tell them the truth about how we ended up with Pete's body.

BETTY: The police won't believe a word of this.

DANI: Why won't they believe us? From the very start of this nightmare, I said we should just tell the truth—

BETTY: Don't you dare follow that statement up with something in French. Every time you do that, I have the suspicion you're saying something not nice, but we don't understand it. It's rude!

SAUL: I think we should pretend to be Mafia too, Mafia cleaners in fact, and go dump Pete's body somewhere. We could leave Carlson's corpse on the side of a rural road for the cops to find. Yeah. Is everyone cool with leaving Pete in a ditch?

CATE: No! I'm not fine with dumping Pete somewhere like that. We can't leave him on the side of the road with carpet fibers from my house!

DANI: Cleaner? Saul?

SAUL: A cleaner comes in and tidies up a murder, or a hit—

CATE: Like Harvey Keitel as *Victor the Cleaner* in *Point of No Return*? God, what did they call him in that film, a *disposal artist*? Harvey Keitel scared me to death in that movie.

BETTY: Seeing his penis in *The Piano* scared me more.

DANI: *Point of No Return* was alright I suppose, but the French film, the original, *La Femme Nikita*, with Anne Parillaud and Marc Duret was far superior to the Hollywood copycat ...there was a cleaner in the French film too, a very terrifying individual—

CATE: I liked the Hollywood version.

BETTY: But a cleaner leaves no trace. They dissolve the body with acid in a tub. They don't leave it for the police to find.

CATE: We can't do that! Our plumbing is terrible.

(*The landline in the house rings. They all freeze.*)

CATE: I've changed my mind. I really want the police to come take Mr. Carlson away. I want forensic teams to engulf my whole house. I don't care what they cover with print dust, what they find on my rug or computer.

Someone get the phone before it goes to voicemail. I don't want the mob to find us....

PHIL: *(Goes to answer the phone. He looks at call display.)* Not good. We're screwed. It's Mr. Pitts. What do I do?

SAUL: Let it go to voice mail! Don't answer.

PHIL: Oh, hell, sorry, I'm going to hurl again!

CATE: NOT IN THE KITCHEN SINK! Go use the toilet.

PHIL: *(As he exits)* Cate, I always feel awkward using your bathroom—

CATE: Just go! Don't use our kitchen sink!

(Phil exits)

BETTY: Thank Jehosafats, he's finally gone. I kept trying to think of an excuse to get him out of here so we could talk about him.

CATE: Why? Do you think he did it?

SAUL: No, she doesn't. She's mad cuz Phil said she had motive.

BETTY: SHE—

DANI: You know, Cate, I too always feel embarrassed using the toilet facilities at your house. I usually hold it all evening because I don't like having to walk around your bed to get to the washroom. It feels like I'm invading something private. And last time when I was in your bathroom, I saw your vibrator!

CATE: DANI! ...It's not—it's a back massager.

DANI: *(mouths the word "liar")*

BETTY: It suddenly strikes me that we haven't known Phil that long. He's new.

DANI: He's been here 15 years!

BETTY: That's new for here!

RALPH: I have to admit that I also wonder if we really know Mr. Smith.

BETTY: (*to Dani*) You said he was furious with Carlson. Just how angry was he?

DANI: I've never seen him like that. He even threw a chair after his meeting. He turned into a maniac.

SAUL: Now this is much more plausible than the figure skating corruption, or angry parent scenario.

BETTY: I don't know, at Meet The Creature Night, this past fall—there was an angry parent that I thought might do me bodily harm.

CATE: Yeah, but that mobster knows Phil. He even knows he's gay. That's weird. Betty, why don't you do an Internet search for the name 'Phil Smith', who knows...

BETTY: It's such a common name. I don't see...all right. Here goes nothing.

RALPH: It occurs to me, Dani, that it was Cate who reported you regarding Stacy's boyfriend. Cate was the one who went to Carlson with Stacy's claim.

DANI: (*to Cate*) It was you!? I could lose my job! I could go to prison and I would never! Ever!

CATE: It would be wrong for me to ignore the accusation.

BETTY: (*Regarding her internet search*) It's like I thought. Okay, there's a Phil Smith who plays trumpet for the Philharmonic. Not our Phil. And then there's an ABC journalist. Not ours. There's a university prof that does something with cyclones. And there's a magician in Maine and a real-estate agent in Prescott and there's even a Phil Smith in the NFL, he's six foot one inches.

DANI: (*to Cate*) Pete was shot! Saul owns a gun. And Saul is the one who is now missing his gun. You're the only one who has access to his gun Miss Goody Two Shoes! And you complained that Carlson hasn't taken action on any of your complaints. What are you, some kind of vigilante?

CATE: What?!

DANI: I think it was you Cate! I don't think Phil did *anything*!

EVERYONE: Sssshhhh.

CATE: Betty, why don't you check and see if he's on Facebook.

BETTY: Phil's not on Fecalbook. But all my students are. I have a fake profile so I can spy on the kids. They think I'm sixteen and am going to be moving here. You should read what the boys are saying about that new girl on staff who teaches gym. Crap, she's so young, she looks like she should be a student, not a teacher.

SAUL: A hot new gym teacher? Now that's what I'm talking about!

CATE: Stop with the stupid jokes and wisecracks. You're not Jerry Seinfeld or or Adam Sandler and you're definitely NOT George Clooney. There's nothing funny in this situation.

RALPH: I'm so very incredibly surprised that Phil is gay.

SAUL: He's not.

RALPH: I knew it! I have excellent gay-dar. I always know.

DANI: What do you mean Phil's not gay?

SAUL: Oh... man!

BETTY: Ooooo, I just saw a certain Phil Smith's Mr Johnson and it wasn't pleasant at all.

RALPH: Let me see. *(Ralph goes and looks)*

CATE: Don't open up adult sites on my computer! Now the police will think we're porn freaks too! Stop it. Get off that website!

DANI: *(waiting for her explanation)* Saul!

SAUL: Oh, man! I saw Phil making out with Mrs. Carlson.

EVERYONE: WHAT? WHERE? WHEN?

DANI: When was this!? Are you sure?

SAUL: Blinded sure! It was gross! They were in Phil's SUV in the skating arena parking lot.

DANI: When!?

SAUL: September.

BETTY: Well I guess I don't need to keep searching for clues about our Phil. I'd say that's motive! How much do you want to bet that confrontation Phil had with Carlson, wasn't about having a homosexual on staff, but was actually about Phil diddling Mrs. C.

CATE: See Dani! I didn't do this. I'm not a vigilante.

BETTY: No, you're a tattle tail.

PHIL: *(enters)* Does anyone have Imodium?

(the doorbell sounds. Terror takes hold of the group)

BETTY: Everyone hide!

(They all try to hide)

SAUL: Sssshhhh.

DANI: Someone needs to see who it is.

(The doorbell sounds again)

CATE: Oh, God! Dani's right. Saul, you're closest to the door, take a peek out the peephole.

SAUL: But what if some bad guy is waiting to see my eye, so he can pull the trigger on his silenced gun? Or what if...what if I look and see another eye looking back at me? You don't want me to commute an hour to work but you want me to stand up and risk getting a bullet through my eye. It's going to be the mobster guy with your phone.

CATE: *(Loud Whisper)* Saul!

(Saul goes to the door and reluctantly puts his eye to the hole. Just as he does, there is a booming knock at the door. Saul drops to the ground in mortal fear.)

PHIL: *(Stealthy, makes his way to the door and keeping his body to the side takes a quick peek through the peep hole. He elegantly dive-rolls back into the middle of the living room.)* It's Arnold Pitts.

DANI: *(Whispers)* Oh, God, you almost gave me a heart attack. I thought it was a Mafia hitman!

SAUL: Arnold's worse!

(A cell phone starts ringing to the theme from Scooby Doo. There is a mad moment of crawling on the floor to get Saul's phone to him.)

SAUL: *(answers in a whisper)* Thomaso Tenor here.....Okay, bye-bye. It was the same mobster. He had some guy named Franco do a reverse phone number look-up. We're done for. They got our address from the damn white pages. The mafia gunmen are coming here!

RALPH: Something is bothering me about the mobster. Something vaguely familiar... *(To Phil)* Would you play the beginning of your message again? Saul, pay attention to this. You're excellent with voices, but I can't put a finger on it... *(listens)* There! The throat clear. Who is that?

PHIL: We're nincompoops!

SAUL/PHIL: Mickey! / It's Mickey.

DANI: Mickey is a Mafia hitman?

RALPH: No, no, he's a wannabe tough man.

BETTY: Tough guy.

RALPH: But he thinks we're the REAL thing. He wants in so bad that he's still calling after I threatened his limbs.

DANI: Wait a minute. Exactly how is it, that Mickey knows Phil? Doesn't this now mean that it was Mickey who called you a figure skating fanook?

BETTY: And a cheating fanook. How's he know you?

PHIL: Mickey hangs out at the rink with the loser who drives the Zamboni. A loser named...Franco. Franco the Tank-o.

CATE: What do we do?

RALPH: Keep hiding.

BETTY: What will we say to Arnie about all our cars being here?

PHIL: We went out with a friend of mine from out of town. He has a big van so he was our designated driver. We met here.

DANI: You're always quick with the answers, a very accomplished liar.

PHIL: I got good at lying during my teens. I had to hide who I really was for fear of being pummeled to death by my school's homophobic football team.

DANI: *(flutters air through her lips in exasperation)*

CATE: *(making a dig at Betty)* That's the other thing they're going to cut at the school, huh. The football team and typing—they're *both* too expensive.

BETTY: Who's making the wisecracks now?

RALPH: Sneak a look-see and make sure Arnie's gone back home.

SAUL: I don't see him.

PHIL: Do you think Arnold Pitts is the type to actually look in windows?

CATE/SAUL: *(In whispered chorus)* Yes.

BETTY: Pitts defends himself whenever he's caught snooping. He says he has a curious mind. Like it's due to his grand intelligence. The fact is he's the biggest nose parker on the planet. He snoops through our mail slots at school.

DANI, PHIL, RALPH: *(Whispered at same time)* Really? No joke? I knew it.

CATE: Is he gone for real? Or is trying to look through the windows?

BETTY: Saul, check properly. We're gonna have to do something fast before Mickey and Franco the Tanko get here. It's just a ten minute drive.

SAUL: *(Peeps through the eye hole again)* Don't see him. *(Opens the door and tentatively sticks his head outside)* The upstairs light just went on in Pitt's house.

PHIL: *(loudly)* Jeez, I feel like I've done a million sit-ups tonight. Vomiting is exhausting.

RALPH: It is said that Alexander the Great, he slept with boys you know, well Alexander provided his soldiers with licorice root to chew before battle. It could have been for its effect against pre-battle nausea but also licorice root stimulates the adrenals. That flying somersault you did just now was altogether an unexpected feat of daring-do.

PHIL: I'm a figure skating coach and one that can actually still skate! *(proudly)* Look at my bum.

RALPH: Believe me, I already have.

CATE: Mr. Hickey! What are you doing?

RALPH: Rolling a spliff, we have ten minutes to figure out what we should do.

SAUL: Why don't you turn that into a giant doobie.

CATE: Saul! We should all just get out of here now! *(goes to put on her boots)*

SAUL: Is it your stuff with all the buds?

CATE: Saul! You don't smoke dope! *(Her boots are wet. She finds her shoes)*

BETTY: I agree. Turn that thing into a big mo-fu joint.

DANI: This is great. If the police get involved...I'm going to say I was stoned and passed out. I'm certain I've lost my job anyway. You know I really enjoy teaching. I love my job! Yes, I'm using the stoner defense.

PHIL: Pass that thing my way - it helps with nausea. I'd be fine, if there hadn't been pumpkin in the ravioli! Cate, that was a dessert you served us for an appetizer. Pumpkin gives me terrible gastric problems. But mixed with Crème de Menthe, that's just nasty—

BETTY: The drunk and stoned defense. I'm using it too. Cate's already killed my career!

SAUL: That's really too bad because you're both great teachers.

CATE: *(to Saul)* Let's go! What are you doing?

SAUL: Dumping Mickey's coffee and having a big toké off Ralph's reefer.

RALPH: *(checks his watch)* Voltaire drank 80 cups of coffee per day.

SAUL: Peruvians eat 65-million guinea pigs per year.

RALPH: Montezuma, King of the Aztecs, drank 60 cups of hot cocoa per day.

PHIL: There are roughly four grams of fiber per cup of cocoa. Montezuma was ingesting 240 grams of fiber per day.

BETTY: That explains Montezuma's revenge. It must have gone in that man and right out the other end.

DANI: I LOVE chocolate. I mean I LOVE chocolate. Who needs a man! Especially a lying, skating, philandering Phil—

PHIL: What—

DANI: Saul saw you with Beverly Carlson! He saw you making out! I'm way better looking than Beverly! Pass me that joint.

CATE: I knew it! Stacy told me! She said Mr Hickey smokes-up at school!

(Everyone looks at Cate, horrified)

SAUL: Cate, you didn't! Did you tell Carlson?

CATE: Of course I told him. What do you think? Stacy's boyfriend told Stacy that he'd smoked marijuana with Mr Hickey. I had to tell Mr Carlson. But as usual... *(puts her coat on)*

RALPH: Actually as usual, Pete did do something about it. You told him today. Fridays I have an early lunch and Pete hauled me into his office like I was a truant teen.

SAUL: Oh, Cate, no-no-no-no.

RALPH: There's a problem though, sweetheart. Your tattle was going to topple an entire department. A great department. Truly great teachers.

SAUL: Oh, Cate! Our school is famous for its history department.

DANI: Give me that thing. (*inhales and passes off the joint*)

PHIL: Actually, more kids are enrolled in senior grade history here than anywhere else in the country! Well that's what Admin is always telling the Science department.

SAUL: It's because of Ralph.

CATE: He's supplying them with drugs!

SAUL: NO, he isn't! It's because he's the best teacher in the school! Any historical date he gives you, you *remember* because he has this weird amazing bit of historical trivia that coincides with the date. He's the whole reason I went into history. He's the whole reason I didn't turn into some useless pothead.

RALPH: I dedicate this joint to the Stone Age. I made a mistake. I thought Grossman was going to be like you Saul.

CATE: Let's go already, wait, who's Gross Man?

DANI/PHIL: Stacy's boyfriend!!!!

RALPH: He must have bragged to his mutant girlfriend about smoking up with me.

SAUL: Cate, the whole history department smokes... in the office. It always has. It's tradition.

RALPH/SAUL: (*sing the word tradition from Fidler*) Tradition!

CATE: (*to Ralph*) You deal drugs to students!

EVERYONE: NO!!!!

SAUL: Never, Cate. We...I don't even know how to explain this to you, so I've always hid this from you because...because you freak about everything! You've just taken an entire department down. We'll end up fired, in jail... Me too! You just sent me to jail! *Do not pass GO, do not collect two hundred—*

BETTY: Oh, Ralph. Oh, you poor soul. You had to do it. Dear oh dear, it was you. You had no choice. You had to kill the man.

RALPH: *(inhaling from the Doobie, long exhalation while speaking)* Yeah...but I didn't really mean to. I should have smoked a joint instead of having coffee.

SAUL: What?

RALPH: Six people. Six smart, dynamic, people. My department!

BETTY: Not just six. There's Dani and me too.

DANI: Eight. But I'm really innocent.

BETTY: I'm not innocent, but I'm not changing anything about myself for anyone.

PHIL: Now I feel like I'm the odd man out. Because Science.... and the Humanities. I'm the other end of the building. What are you all talking about?

SAUL: Cate, just have a puff.

CATE: NO!!!

BETTY: Don't bother tempting her to the dark side. She's too far gone the other way. Cate's already sent you to prison.

CATE: Mr Hickey killed Mr Carlson!!!!

SAUL: *(to Ralph)* Our department is the *best* because of you. Everyone wants to work with you, that's why it's so hard to get a position here in history.

DANI: You've killed us all, Cate!!! I've never ever done anything inappropriate with a student.

BETTY: Ralph?

RALPH: Saul said he was going to shooting practice, that he didn't have time to go home. I had an early lunch. Saul was teaching. His car keys were lying on his desk, his keys were right there. It was the whole department whose lives were going to be ruined. My heart was racing. I thought I might die. I had to do something to fix the situation.

BETTY: (*frowns and shakes her head*) Cate.

RALPH: I still can't believe that I borrowed the gun from Saul's trunk. I did it right after Pete had reamed me out. I didn't know what I was going to do with it even, I thought about using it on myself even. I just sat in my car after school with the gun. Then Pete went for his usual after-school jog, down the old rail trail. You know how you can access the trail by car from the 4x4 track off Valley View Drive?

SAUL: Yeah, lunchtime make-out hang-out for the kids.

RALPH: (*looks at his watch*) Pass that back this way would ya? I waited half way down the trail at the bridge. I confronted Carlson. Thanks (*intent on his joint*) He wouldn't back down. He didn't believe my denials. He said he was going to interview all the teachers in my department. I was just going to threaten him. By the end of our argument, he said he was going to the police. I shot him. Coffee is terrible stuff, makes you do crazy things. I should have smoked a joint instead.

BETTY: Cate killed Pete Carlson!!!

CATE: I did not! You heard Ralph. He just confessed. I'm calling the police before Mickey gets here!

SAUL: If you do that, all our lives are ruined! I could end up in jail too you know! So much for the new fulltime job!

DANI: It's all Cate's fault!

CATE: Mr. Hickey is a murderer!

PHIL: You're a snitch! Your tongue has done a lot of damage. I agree with Betty. In a way it's you that killed Pete.

CATE: What's going on here? Holy-shit, what's that noise?

SAUL/CATE: The toilet. / Toilet is overflowing. (*Cate runs into the bedroom*)

BETTY: I'm sorry, Ralph. I've misjudged you for years. (*Sincerely*) I'm really sorry. You're a very decent person.

RALPH: It strikes me that all of you would have covered up my murder, if I was the victim.

BETTY: If you want to be invited to any more of our parties, you need to stop complaining about that!

SAUL: We need to dispose of Pete's body.

CATE: What?! No no no. (*Cate runs from the bedroom and gets the plunger from under the sink and runs back into the bedroom*)

BETTY: We have to. Maybe the remains will never be found and people will think Pete ran off.

DANI: But if there's any evidence of any of these complaints... The police will end up investigating the usual suspects. Us teachers.

PHIL: I loved that film! *Usual Suspects* was a tour de force for Kevin Spacey and for Benicio del Toro. Benicio—

DANI: Oh, quit with the Val Kilmer, Benicio del Toro! Wait until the world finds out you are having an affair with Mrs. Carlson! Talk about looking guilty.

PHIL: You know?

DANI: You've embarrassed me! (*to Ralph*) There will be files on all of us.

RALPH: I took all the paperwork.

SAUL: Carlson will for sure have something on his computer at school, though.

BETTY: Well, let's hope he left it on. (*sits at the computer*)

PHIL: They always leave the computers running in the office. It's a waste of energy.

BETTY: Not good for the computers to be always turning them off and re-booting.

CATE: *(re-enters. To Betty)* What are you doing? *(looks for mop)*

BETTY: Hacking into Carlson's computer.

CATE: You know how to do that? *(Saul hands Cate a mop and paper towels)*

BETTY: While the rest of you are wasting your evenings with that huge marking load and lesson planning load that you all have—I have free time. One of the perks of teaching typing.

CATE: I can't even figure out how to program my phone. *(to Phil)* You used way too much toilet paper! *(exits on run with armloads of cleaning supplies)*

DANI: *(to Cate as she exits)* Hurry! Franco the Tanko and Mickey will be almost here. *(downs the Tia Maria straight from the bottle)*

PHIL: I suspect we can use Mickey somehow.

BETTY: *(claps her hands)* I'm in! Okay, let's see. *(types)*

PHIL: *(to Saul)* Sorry about the toilet. What's with Cate's cooking? *(to Ralph)* Your phone call with Mickey—uh, did he really buy that we're the Mafia? He didn't recognize even me, when we were at the shop?

RALPH: He thinks we're the Cosa Nostra from Sicily.

PHIL: Ah-ha! This might work for us. We can definitely use Mickey. Someone should call him, and tell him that he's to go back to the store. We're coming to him!

SAUL: Yeah. We put Pete back in the pond behind Mickey's, and we get Cate's cell phone back from Mickey and threaten him. *(pulls his toy gun)* He'll never give up the body. He won't say a thing if he's scared we're the mob. Or... we could whack him. Maybe we should whack Mickey and Franco.

RALPH: No, no whacking. We don't need to whack anyone else. Enough whacking.

PHIL: Yes! We go out there in our mystery costumes. In our characters again. I'm Roberto Baritone. I'm the Don's numero uno. I have killed many people. Where's my fake mustache and side burns?

DANI: *Lo sai che non mi piacciono I maschioni.*

PHIL: What's that mean?

DANI: (*translates*) You know I don't like macho men. (*whispers*) You've humiliated me! Why did you lie to me? Why did you tell me you were gay?

PHIL: Because I didn't want to date you.

DANI: You could have just said 'no'.

PHIL: I didn't want to hurt your feelings.

DANI: So it was easier to pretend to be gay for years and years?!

PHIL: Yes.

RALPH: We don't need to even threaten Mickey. He wants to work for us. We put him to work for the family.

PHIL: The Sicilian Cosa Nostra is moving into town!!!

SAUL: (*to Phil*) You should be the one to make the call to Mickey. Just call Cate's phone, he's been using it.

PHIL: Okay, (*retrieving his phone*) just let me think of what to say.

BETTY: (*from the computer yells to the bedroom*) Jesus, Cate, did you tell Carlson that Dolly swears in her Family Studies classes?

CATE: No! That wasn't me. It wasn't. (*enters*) I didn't know she did that. Dolly uses profanity in class?

BETTY: (*hits delete*) Not any more! You know, I'm thinking that maybe I should write up Arnold Pitts while I'm in here. (*she weeps with laughter*)

(*Cate exits with Liquid Plumber back to bedroom*)

SAUL: (*to Ralph*) Hey, save some Tiramisu for the rest of us. Where'd you put the cookies?

PHIL: (*getting into character as Roberto*) Hey, you. Have-a some respect. Ehh?

SAUL: (*to Ralph*) Um, what did you do with my rifle?

RALPH: Sorry. I had to dispose of it. I tossed your gun off the old train bridge. It's at the bottom of the river.

SAUL: Oh man, my stepdad, it was really expensive. But why didn't you dump Carlson in the river too?

RALPH: I didn't want his body floating down-river right through town. I'll give you the money for a new gun. I'm hoping that that journalist Betty found online earlier is accurate when she said, "the best way to kill someone is with a gun, because the rate of crimes solved is so low, that you have a better chance of being struck by an airplane, than getting caught!"

PHIL: Those sound like good odds. Okay, I know what I'm gonna say.

BETTY: Done. All records of philandering, drinking, swearing and smoking are gone! And Pitts is going down for snooping through our mail! It's a criminal offense you know.

PHIL: *(has dialed the land line)* This is Roberto Baritone. It has been brought to my attention that you are going to a house to deliver a phone. Well do not do this. Instead we are going to come to you. It has been brought to my attention that you and your friend-a are interested in becoming members of our family.....Good. Then we have a test for you. You will help us this evening. Wait for us at Mickey's Milk, out back.....Ciao. *(hangs up)* He bought it. How stupid do you actually have to be to buy that? Those two inhale way too much Zamboni diesel.

(Cate enters wearing huge rubber gloves, carrying mop, bucket, and wet towels)

RALPH: So now Mickey is working for us... Mickey will love working for us. He'll work hard. Okay, let's take Pete back to Mickey's pond. My back is shot. You folks are going to have to do the lifting.

PHIL: You betcha Don Vibrato, of course. Gina and Bambi, you get Carlson's legs. Thomaso Tenor across from me!

DANI: Your mustache is crooked. *(she starts laughing uncontrollably)*

PHIL: Betty, are you good at walking backwards?

BETTY: I'd need another box of wine before that became a problem. And it's Mrs Vibrato to you. *(she starts laughing again)*

PHIL: Okay, Mrs Vibrato, you get Pete's head.

CATE: NOOOO!!! We can't do this! I can't do this. NO! Not for anyone!

(Nobody knows what to do. Silence)

SAUL: But I w-ove you. No, I w-eally w-ove you!

(Silence)

PHIL: Daniel Day Lewis, *My Left Foot*! He was gorgeous in *Last of the Mo—*
(Dani kicks Phil)

CATE: Oh, Saul, I love you too!

SAUL: Marry me.

CATE: What?

SAUL: Marry me. Marry me..... Marry me.

CATE: I thought you'd never ask ... Oh, yes! *(huge long kiss)*

DANI, PHIL: YES! EXCELLENT!

CATE: Okay, I'm in, I'm helping. What do we do on Monday?

BETTY: What we do every Monday—complain that the weekend is over.

PHIL: On three everyone. One, two, three. Oh, my stomach!

CATE: He's heavy! The jogging wasn't doing him much good. He should have cut back on the carbs.

DANI: Fat.

BETTY: Calories.

(Ralph opens the door and makes sure the coast is clear)

CATE: Just a sec. I'm losing my grip— (*Pete's body drops to the floor and everyone starts laughing, crying with laughter. Cate removes her oversized rubber gloves*)

DANI: I wonder if we can get Mickey to do other things for us...

BETTY: Oh, yeah, I'm thinking we keep giving him chores. You name it. Laundry, get him and Franco to beat up Arnie Pitts. Maybe we can even use them somehow to make a little extra on the side.

DANI: Oooo, very good. I might actually be able to afford being a teacher with a little extra on the side. I do a lot of things at school that come out of my own pocket. Ooo, I could give really good prizes to the winners of pop quizzes if I had more money!

BETTY: You know, Mickey called us babes. He said we were three babes fishing around at the pond. I think I'll shop at Mickey's more often, in my sexy outfit.

SAUL: Mickey's wonky eye must need a tune-up.

BETTY: (*slaps the back of Saul's head.*) Watch it, you cugine!

CATE: You can't keep hitting people on the back of the head! It's not right! I've heard you do that to students. It's not allowed. Someone could report you!

EVERYONE: Cate!

SAUL: I still have my new job right? If we pull this off? I mean this was all about me, right? I will still have my fulltime position in the department?

PHIL: I could really use some Imodium.

RALPH: (*becomes the Don*) Stop your bellyaching, Baritone. Let's get outta here! Uno, due, tre up! Principal goes back in the pond.

BETTY: And then more pot?

RALPH: Marijuana and cookies for everyone!

(*Louis Prima's Buono Sera. Teachers exit with body.*)

FINITO