

PUSHING DAISIES

"Robbing Hood"

Episode #3T7057

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FINAL DRAFT 

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. LONGBOROUGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS - DORM ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

YOUNG NED sits Indian-style on the floor, shooting marbles by his lonesome. Behind him, two LARGE GLASS TERRARIUMS house a SNAKE and a RABBIT.

NARRATOR

*When it came to the currency of popularity,
Young Ned was poor... but not the poorest.*

The door swings open and EUGENE MULCHANDANI, headgear and all, scuttles in.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*Eugene Mulchandani's thick accent and
unfortunate family history of disproportionate
jaw structure made him both extremely difficult
to understand and an easy mark for bullies.*

Eugene plops down beside Ned, who offers him a shooter.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*Young Ned knew that playing with Eugene meant
losing his marbles, but he considered the
sacrificed aggies, steelies and shooters a
donation to a good cause. For aside from Ned,
Eugene had only 2 other companions at the
Longborough School.*

ON THE TWO TERRARIUMS

One looks like a swath of jungle and houses the snake, while the rabbit's home looks like a farmer's garden.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*Bilbo, his lethargic Indian Python, and Ackbar,
a bunny suffering from a condition similar to
Attention Deficit, Hyperactivity Disorder.*

Ackbar, the rabbit, bounces anxiously in its cage.

BACK ON the boys and their marbles. Eugene's attempt to shoot a marble backfires, and we TRACK the MARBLE as it sails across the room and--

--SMASHES against the glass of Bilbo's cage and ricochets into the glass of Ackbar's, SHATTERING them both. A stare down between the animals lasts but a moment before Snake slithers toward Rabbit.

Eugene and Ned SCREAM as they watch helplessly. Eugene's scream cuts short when his eyes roll back and he faints!

OMIT

EXT. WOODS - DAY - FLASHBACK

Young Ned carries a shoebox and drags a large burlap sack into a clearing.

NARRATOR

*Eugene was devastated when he learned that,
upon attempting to eat Ackbar the Bunny,
Bilbo the Snake choked, killing them both.*

Young Ned kneels, opening the shoebox to REVEAL a very-dead Ackbar the Bunny.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*Under the guise of burying Eugene's pets,
Young Ned resolved to perform another act of
charity for his language-mangling friend.*

Ned touches Ackbar, bringing him back to life. He places the lid carefully back over the rambunctious bunny.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*He knew that giving Eugene his friends back
would require 2 innocent creatures to die...*

A SQUIRREL drops from a tree in front of Ned. Ned opens the burlap sack and grimaces a moment at Bilbo.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*...and a lie about how he found them both
barely breathing when he went to bury them.*

Ned darts his finger into the bag and quickly jerks it out, falling on his keister as he quickly pulls the now-squirming bag shut again.

INT. LONGBOROUGH SCHOOL - DORM ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eugene, upon seeing Bilbo back in his cage, Ackbar in his, pulls Ned into a slobbery hug.

NARRATOR

*But as long as the benefits outweighed the
costs, he also believed an act of charity
outweighed the consequences.*

EXT. PIE HOLE - PRESENT DAY

Establishing...

INT. PIE HOLE - KITCHEN

Several pie tins host empty crusts. Into one plunks some delicious strawberry filling.

NARRATOR

20 years, 16 weeks, 4 days and 9 hours later, the boy had grown into the Pie-Maker, and the Pie-Maker was at this very moment... troubled.

NED, all grown-up, gently covers the strawberry pie with dough for a crust. CHUCK pokes her head through the door, seeing that pies cover every inch of surface space.

CHUCK

You're stress baking.

Ned looks up, brow unfurrowing at the sight of Chuck.

NED

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

CHUCK

I'm talking about you've been up since before the sun and there's a traffic jam of pies waiting to exit into the oven. You're worried about something.

NED

"Worried" would imply an urge to action.
"Troubled" seems more apt.

CHUCK

About a mysterious man named Dwight who came asking questions about your dad and is now dating my Aunt Vivian?

OLIVE enters, stopping short at the plethora of pies.

OLIVE

You're stress baking.

NED

If he's dating your aunt, he's going to see a picture of you, and unless he has retrograde amnesia, he's going to recognize you. Or already has.

PLUNK-PLUNK! Two more pies filled up as Ned's stress level rises.

NED (CONT'D)

Why *is* he dating your aunt? Not to suggest that she's not datable and perfectly lovely, but it does seem more than a little coincidental.

OLIVE

(an epiphany)

Does Vivian's nice-smelling new boy toy have something to do with why you faked your death?

NED / CHUCK

No.

OLIVE

(to Chuck)

Because maybe he's been after you all along. Maybe he works for the IRS. If anybody's going to figure out you're not really dead, it's the Tax Man. Or maybe he thinks you really are dead and he's one of those paranormal investigators. Maybe he's the old priest and a young priest is coming.

NED

That would be a waste of religion. Because she's not.

(off their looks)

Dead.

Ned slops some pie filling on the floor as he overloads.

NED (CONT'D)

I find myself being urged to action.

CHUCK

Me, too.

NED

Public records. Criminal records. We need to find out who Dwight is and if he's after more than just your aunt's companionship.

CHUCK

(to Olive)

Do you mind finding out what he's told my mom and aunt? Maybe plant a bug in their ears that he has a penchant for untruths.

OLIVE

That way, if he realizes you're alive and rats you out, maybe they won't believe it...

Olive scoops up a nearby pie box.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

Counter-intelligence via pie delivery. Like gossiping with a purpose. My speciality.

INT. CHUCK'S AUNTS' HOUSE - DAY

The front door swings open to REVEAL Olive, pie box in hand.

OLIVE

Pie time!

REVERSE TO REVEAL VIVIAN, all smiles at the sight of Olive.

VIVIAN

Olive! What a surprise! And with a pie...
The second sweetest treat of my day.

OLIVE

Something sweeter than a Pie Hole pie?

Olive enters, where she sees DWIGHT and LILY sitting in the living room.

VIVIAN

The first was a surprise visit from a certain gentleman caller.

DWIGHT

The young lady of the Hole. And with a special delivery to heel.

He stands to greet her as he speaks.

OLIVE

No need to stand on my account. Just here doing my duty. No other reason that I can speak of. What type of duty are you in again? Clergy? Tax services?

LILY

Dwight collects and appraises antiques. Which I learned right after he told me he's dating my sister.

VIVIAN

Lily's naturally suspicious of new liaisons, but I felt compelled to come clean about our relationship. Sneaking around is for politicians in bathroom stalls.

DWIGHT

Not for a brisk and bucolic autumn-cum-winter afternoon on the park.

(tipping his hat)

Ladies.

He escorts Vivian to the door, following her out.

OLIVE

He seems nice.

LILY

I don't trust him further than I can spit.
And I can spit.

Lily pulls the curtain back from the window and peers.

LILY (CONT'D)

Ugh. Look at the way he drapes himself all
over her. Makes me want to stick a fork in my
eye. I need a drink.

She starts for the kitchen.

OLIVE

You're holding one.

LILY

I need a stronger one. And a fork.

Lily disappears into the kitchen.

NARRATOR

*While Olive pondered one sister blinded by
love and the other by distrust...*

INT. EMERSON'S OFFICE - DAY

NARRATOR

*...Emerson Cod pondered the exorbitant amount
of cash he'd just been offered.*

EMERSON sits across from DANIEL HILL, ESQ., 40ish, well-polished
and cucumber cool and a very LOUD TALKER.

DANIEL HILL

I demand justice for the decedent and will
not rest, settle or adjourn until I have it.

He pounds his fist on the table for impact.

EMERSON

Mind demanding it in your inside voice?

DANIEL HILL

Sorry. Years of litigation have made me a
loud talker.

EMERSON

Why's a dead man's lawyer so willing to shell
out his own green over a client's death?

DANIEL HILL

I have a special practice. Gustav was my one client and that client is now dead.

EMERSON

Ever hear about the difference between a lawyer and a leech?

DANIEL HILL

When you die, a leech will stop sucking your blood and drop off.

EMERSON

He dead now. Why you still hangin' on? Lookin' for a few stray cash capillaries?

DANIEL HILL

Gustav was more than a client. He was a cantankerous bombast with a violent temper and a lust for power and wealth. In lawyer speak, he was a friend.

EMERSON

Go to the police about your friend?

DANIEL HILL

The police station is run by a bunch of monkeys. You want the best, pay a premium.

EMERSON

And why ain't the family paying the premium?

DANIEL HILL

His family was his wife, and she was the biggest leech of all. Always after his will.

EMERSON

You think she found a way to his will through murder.

DANIEL HILL

I never trusted her and tried my best, as a lawyer and a friend, to protect Gustav. She ruined his life. She's going to ruin his legacy. But if I can prove she killed him, I can annul that will and send her to the big house where she belongs.

EMERSON

I smell a big ol' "but" heading my direction.

DANIEL HILL

Gustav was robbed the night he died. It happens, when you have a fortune like his.

EMERSON

What kind of fortune we talkin' 'bout?

DANIEL HILL

The kind built upon your tight balls.

Off Emerson's sidelong glance, Daniel nods to the row of YARN BALLS behind him. In the corner, an automatic yarn-baller WHIRS, quietly spinning a skein of yarn into a ball.

NARRATOR

The facts were these:

INT. INFOMERCIAL STUDIO - 1950 - DAY - FLASHBACK (BLACK & WHITE)

An ELDERLY WOMAN sits in an easy chair in front of a pleated curtain, slowly winding a ball of yarn. The ball comes undone, and the old woman shakes her head at the tangled mess.

NARRATOR

*The son of Eastern European potato farmers,
Gustav Hofer had lived the American dream.*

WIDEN to REVEAL SMILING, YOUNG GUSTAV (19), holding a large YARN-SWIFT, feeding yarn to the ELECTRIC BALL-WINDER behind him.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*His mechanized yarn-baller not only gave a
generation of frustrated grandmothers the
means to make unwanted gifts...*

Young Gustav hands the spun yarn ball to the grateful old lady. And the words, "IN STORES NOW!" flash on screen...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*...at the age of 19, it made Gustav Hofer his
first of countless millions.*

As Gustav continues to mug for the camera, his face MORPHS into:

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - RECENT PAST - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

GUSTAV HOFER, gray-haired and 80.

NARRATOR

*Unfortunately, his wealth attracted bad stock,
from gold-digging wives to desperate robbers.*

Gustav's head snaps skyward as--

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*Before Gustav Hofer could make one penny more,
someone arranged for his permanent retirement.*

--a giant crystal chandelier CRASHES down, crushing Gustav!

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Emerson, Ned and Chuck stand over the body of the late Gustav Hofer, still ensconced within his chandelier.

NED

He doesn't look like the richest man in town.

CHUCK

They say he had the Midas touch. You ever stop to consider that you're a lot like King Midas? Except substitute "life" for "gold." And you don't have donkey ears.

NED

Midas was a miser. Like Scrooge, but hungrier. I'm a philanthropist.

EMERSON

Magic-fingered philanthropists wake dead people and find out who killed 'em. You wake dead people, find out who killed 'em and take a third of my cut.

NED

Non-profits still incur costs. Without your donations, the Pie Hole would sink.

EMERSON

Touch the sucker.

Ned reaches down and ZAP! The chandelier lights briefly FLICKER ON with the familiar POP of electricity, then go dark as Gustav's eyes snap open--

CHUCK

Hi, Mr. Hofer. We'd like to ask you a few questions, but we've only got one minute.

GUSTAV HOFER

I presume I'm dead.

Chuck starts to respond. Before she can:

GUSTAV HOFER (CONT'D)

Let's get down to business. First, the matter of my will.

NED

It's in your lawyer's possessio--

GUSTAV HOFER

Not that will. And don't interrupt me, bucko. I have a new will. And you're going to track it down for me, roger?

NED

Roger. Now if you could--

GUSTAV HOFER

I like you, kid, but you talk too much. The will is in my trophy room. Go to the biggest trophy -- center of the wall. Turn it counterclockwise. Say it back to me.

EMERSON

Who killed you?

GUSTAV HOFER

Who are you? Who is he? Do you know who I am, Elmer?

EMERSON

You about to be the first man ever to be murdered twice. You want justice or--

GUSTAV HOFER

I don't want my hard-earned money going where it doesn't belong. Your generation has never understood the value of a dollar. I started working when I was 8 years old and I didn't--

CHUCK

Trophy room, big trophy, rotate counterclockwise.

GUSTAV HOFER

Smartest one of the bunch. I like your moxie, sass-o-fras. Find my will and make sure that no-good, gold-digging wife of mine doesn't get one damn dime. Got it?

EMERSON

Who killed you?

GUSTAV HOFER

The bellman did it. After I refused to pay him. Who expects money for nothing?

ZAP! Ned re-deads the hard-nosed businessman. The POP of electricity shorts the chandelier again, this time sending lightbulbs POPPING in a FLURRY OF SPARKS. They all duck.

As they peek their heads back over the table, we...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - FOYER - DAY

Emerson, Ned and Chuck are led by a BUTLER through the ostentatious hall.

NARRATOR

Assuming the bellman with an axe to grind was Gustav's longtime porter, and hoping that his new will might hold some indication of motive, Emerson Cod decided to kill 2 birds with 1 stone.

EMERSON

Dead Girl 'n' me will chat up the bellman while you track down the trophy room and find the will.

NED

I can do that.

EMERSON

I always know when you about to move from talking plans to talking personal by the way you get so helpy.

NED

I resent that. I'm helpy by nature.

(can't help himself)

That being said, what's your take on Dwight dating Vivian? How long before he sees Chuck's picture and says, "Hey, look, that waitress from the Pie Hole."

CHUCK

When I see an out-of-context picture of a nice-looking young girl, I don't think, "Hey, look, that nice-looking young girl who made my cappuccino at that one restaurant."

(then, noticing the wallpaper)

This wallpaper's vintage Osborne & Little. You could buy a small island for how much it cost.

Chuck turns around, almost crashing into ELISE HOFER, 24, Gustav's Anna Nicole-type widow, as she enters.

ELISE HOFER

Cool. I never even noticed. Isn't that awful? I'm, like, the worst widow ever.

(extending a dainty hand)

Elise. You must be the P.I.s.

CHUCK

We are... thanks for agreeing to help us. You must be devastated.

ELISE HOFER

Crushed. Please, pop a squat... James-Andrew, that's the bellman you want to see, is on his way. I told him to bring some of those awesome champagne-juice drinks he makes.

CHUCK

Mimosas?

ELISE HOFER

Sure. Whatever.

(yelling)

JAMES-Andrew! They want mimosas instead!
JAMES-ANDREW! I'm sure he heard me.

CHUCK

You have a beautiful... castle, Mrs. Hofer.

ELISE HOFER

Thanks... it's a wreck now, getting it all set up for the wake.

(then)

You should totally come. Everybody who's anybody is going to be here celebrating Gustav's death.

CHUCK

You mean "life."

ELISE HOFER

Same diff.

NED

Is there a restroom?

ELISE HOFER

Down the hall, second left.

Ned excuses himself.

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - TROPHY ROOM

The door swings open and Ned slides in and stops cold.

NED

Oh, no.

REVERSE SHOT TO REVEAL a game-hunting room -- the "trophies" are the stuffed animal heads that cover the wall and a PRIDE of STUFFED LIONS in the center of the room.

Ned stares at the giant LION poised on a rock in the center of all the other beasts.

NED (CONT'D)

"Turn the biggest trophy counterclockwise."
Great.

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM

JAMES-ANDREW, 29, Gustav's put-upon bellman, serves the mimosas.

CHUCK

Best champagne-juice drink I've ever had.

ELISE HOFER

I know, right?

JAMES-ANDREW

Mrs. Hofer said you wanted to see me. I
assume it's not just for my mimosa.

CHUCK

How does someone become a bellman, anyway?

James-Andrew takes umbrage.

JAMES-ANDREW

Bellmen wear monkey-suits and work in hotel
lobbies. I am a porter.

EMERSON

What were you porting the night your boss had
a close encounter with his light fixture?

JAMES-ANDREW

Nothing. I was at a key party. At least 15
people can vouch.

ELISE HOFER

James-Andrew is definitely not the killing type.

EMERSON

Mrs. Hofer, forgive me for being blunt, but
you stand to gain the most from your late
husband's death.

Elise GASPS, clutching her chest with exaggerated drama.

ELISE HOFER

Oh, my god. You think I totally did it?
Well, FYI, I was at a charity ball the night
of the murder.

They're all caught off-guard by the echo of a LION'S ROAR.

EMERSON

Was that a bear?

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - TROPHY ROOM - DAY

Ned rotates the pedestal that holds the (already dead-again) lion, which CLICKS open a metal door flush against the wall.

Taking extreme care not to brush against any of the other angry-looking animals, Ned pulls the door open, finding the safe EMPTY. Hastily-scrawled inside is the handwritten phrase: "ORBIS PRO VOX."

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - FOYER - DAY

Ned rejoins Chuck and Emerson, who are waiting for him.

NED

The safe was empty. No will. Nothing but a cryptic Latin phrase.

CHUCK

Poor Gustav... all he cared about was getting that will into the right hands.

EMERSON

We find the killer, we gonna find the will. Bad news is our case just went from slam dunk to buh-dunk-uh-dunk.

NED

Is "buh-dunk-uh-dunk" bad?

EMERSON

Buh-dunk-uh-dunk means "big," as in that's what our simple, little murder just became.

CHUCK

What happened to "the bellman did it"?

EMERSON

He's hiding something, but 15 strangers vouching is an airtight alibi.

NED

What is a "key party," anyway?

CHUCK

I love that you don't know that. It's like... a raffle.

EMERSON

Of the porno variety.

NED

Oh. Oh. Back to the case. How does a safe with some cryptic Latin phrase scrawled inside change anything?

EMERSON

You need to peel back the pie crust you working under and try turning on the news. Rich folks in this town are getting robbed right and left by some happy hooligan who leaves the same Latin calling card at every scene.

CHUCK

So that's why this is a "buh-dunk-uh-dunk."

EMERSON

If we dealing with a serial robber, there's gonna be more police attention than usual.
(then)

I got to go see a friend at the police station.

CHUCK

Great. Gives us an opportunity to start our research project on Dwight.

INT. PIE HOLE - COUNTER - DAY

Ned, Chuck and Olive sit before a stack of papers, files, phone books and so on.

CHUCK

It's like the mysterious Dwight didn't exist before checking into the Come-and-Sleep Motel.

OLIVE

Who knows... maybe he's not such a bad guy. He's very charming. And he still smells nice.

NED

What do Lily and Vivian think about him?

OLIVE

What you'd expect. Lily hates and Vivian is completely ga.

(to Chuck)

Good news is you're not on his radar.

Olive heads off. Ned and Chuck stare at their glut of paperwork.

NED

We know Dwight's got a strange preoccupation with your father's pocket watch. Maybe we give it to him and he goes away.

CHUCK

Or we could wake my dad and ask him.

NED

Chuck--

CHUCK

I'm just saying, it could be a big shortcut to figuring out who Dwight is and what he wants if we just woke my dad and asked him.

NED

I'm sorry... it's just, I know you want to say goodbye to your father, and I know that a lifetime of goodbyes can't be condensed into a single minute. Even if they could, you'd have to watch him die all over again, and I love you too much to make you suffer like that.

Chuck absorbs it all.

NED (CONT'D)

You understand? I hope?

She half-smiles, understanding but not liking it. Before she can say anything, Emerson enters and joins them.

EMERSON

I got us a good nugget. Police say our serial robber always makes a donation to charity day after he robs someone.

(then)

Am I interrupting something?

No.	NED	Yes.	CHUCK
-----	-----	------	-------

NED

How'd you get them to tell you?

EMERSON

They didn't know about the inscription in Hofer's secret safe, so we traded information.

CHUCK

Sounds like Gustav Hofer was robbed by a latter-day Robin Hood.

NED

And killed by him.

EMERSON

Call him whatever you want. I know where we gonna find a bellman with a charity streak.

INT. BELLMEN HQ - DAY

The Mod Squad stands in the midst of DOZENS AND DOZENS OF PEOPLE milling about in old-time bellhop uniforms, chatting casually.

Somewhere, a hand bell TING-A-LINGS and the group falls silent. ROB WRIGHT, 35, confident, friendly and head of the Bellmen, leaps onto the main counter.

ROB
It's a new day, friends! Another opportunity to help the needy. Ring your bells, collect spare change and remember: Ring for Right!

The congregation replies in cheery unison:

BELLMEN
Ring for Right!

The Bellmen produce their own bells and start RINGING furiously before picking up their large, red donation kettles and dispersing.

CHUCK
"Ring for Right." *Orbis Pro Vox.*

EMERSON
Which means "yo' ass is busted" in P.I. lingo.

Rob spots the strangers in his midst and heads over.

ROB
Welcome to the Bellmen Charities Headquarters. Are you here to make a donation? Volunteer?

EMERSON
One of your bell-ringers rang for wrong. To the tune of robbery-homicide.

ROB
I beg your pardon, but that's outrageous. And impossible. We screen our Bellmen regularly to make sure all who ring in these hallowed halls follow our motto: Ring for Right!

NED
Which just happens to be written at crime scenes all over the city. In a dead language, but still.

ROB
Friends, I assure you the Bellmen have nothing to hide. I fling my doors open to your investigation. And if there's anything I can do, don't hesitate--

CHUCK
"To ring"?

ROB

I was going to say "call." But if clever was
a contest, you would win.

Rob heads off. Ned's eyes are locked on their first target.

NED

I know where we should start...

He nods to the far wall. Several PHONE OPERATORS sit in small
booths, aggressively speaking into their phones.

NED (CONT'D)

Telemarketers. I hate these guys.

The Mod Squad approaches the first booth, housing the most
vehement of the group -- TAM FONG, 27, clearly misguided as he
wears the uniform for the power and the chicks.

TAM

(into the phone)

Somewhere, a starving street child is chewing
off his own fingers 'cause you're too cheap to
give fifty bucks!

He slams down the phone, surprised when he looks up to find the
Mod Squad. He quickly stashes his call list in a folder.

EMERSON

Emerson Cod, P.I. These are my associates.
Care if we take a gander at your phone list?

TAM

What phone list?

CHUCK

The one you just slid into that folder.

TAM

What folder?

He moves the folder to a drawer beneath his desk and locks it.

EMERSON

There's a comfort to knowing telemarketers are
as horrible in real life.

TAM

Shift change!

He puts a "Next Booth" sign on his desk and scurries away.

NED

He was very suspect-ish.

CHUCK

Very.

Emerson grabs a paperclip off Tam's desk and picks the drawer's lock lickety-split. He grabs the folder with Tam's phone list out before anyone glances his way.

EMERSON

Any of these phone numbers match up to Gustav's mansion, his ass gonna be very jailbird-ish.

The sound of a BENNY GOODMAN-esque CLARINET LOVE SONG carries us to:

EXT. PARK - DAY

A beautiful, autumn-cum-winter day. CAMERA FINDS Dwight, serenading Vivian on the clarinet as she sips soup from a thermos.

NARRATOR

After unearthing the grave of Charlotte Charles in search of a pocket watch and finding neither girl nor watch, Dwight resolved to use his masculine wiles to determine whether Vivian knew of her niece's final, final resting place.

He finishes his song, Vivian offers her applause.

VIVIAN

The clarinet is a lovely instrument. I always wanted to be a flautist, but unusually tight tendons in my pinkie finger made hitting D-sharp impossible.

Dwight takes her hand and examines her pinkie. Then keeps holding it, the sly devil.

DWIGHT

They look just fine to me. Perfect for holding.

VIVIAN

I'm not the kind of woman who slips notes into random men's coat pockets. But something about you...

DWIGHT

(wary)
And what might that have been?

VIVIAN

The charm you force to cover the brutish shell around your damaged heart. I like layers.

NARRATOR

For a moment, and only a moment, Dwight felt his cold heart warm ever so much.

VIVIAN

Funny. Lily was under the impression you were only looking to recover some personal property, then disappear like a puddle of gasoline in the sunshine.

DWIGHT

I was saddened to hear Charles's watch was buried with your dear late niece. But what a fine gesture that was. I imagine the service was magnificent.

VIVIAN

It was a big funeral.

DWIGHT

So others, beside yourself, were able to see poor Charlotte at peace with the watch, before her dear soul was committed to ground?

VIVIAN

Mary Suddbury leaned in and peeled back Charlotte's eyelids. Said there was a vigorous black market for stolen corneas, but I thought it was in poor taste.

(a sigh, then)

Charlotte meant the world to me. In a way, I feel responsible for her death...

She withdraws her hand, feeling a sudden (unexpected) swell of emotion.

DWIGHT

You know fine and well you can't shoulder the burden of blaming yourself for her death.

VIVIAN

Oh, but I do... I do. I encouraged Charlotte to take the pleasure cruise that ended so unpleasantly. I was tired of being a shut-in, but I couldn't bring myself to leave so I decided to leave vicariously and pushed Charlotte out the door. Poor Charlotte.

DWIGHT

Now, look. You've gone and set those pretty peepers a-weeping. Have a little more soup, honey.

Vivian reaches into her purse, removing a LAMINATED COPY of CHUCK'S OBITUARY.

CONTINUED: (2)

VIVIAN

I've carried this with me since the funeral...
as a reminder to stop living vicariously and
start living-living.

She hands the obit to Dwight.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You've probably seen her face before. She was
all over the news after she died.

Dwight fights to keep his mouth from dropping... he recognizes
her, all right.

DWIGHT

I've definitely seen her face before.

OFF him...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

OMIT

INT. PIE HOLE - BOOTH - DAY

Emerson, Ned and Chuck sit in a booth with Daniel Hill.

NED

Do you know if Gustav ever donated to an organization called the Bellmen?

DANIEL HILL

The Bellmen?

EMERSON

Every house that's been robbed got a call from a Bellmen telemarketer named Tam Fong.

DANIEL HILL

(impassioned, booming)

So this Tam Fong killed Gustav? Where is he? I'm gonna find that malfeas-ass and slam him down...

EMERSON

Inside voice.

DANIEL HILL

(whispering)

...and I'm not talking about the gavel of justice...

NED

Outside voice.

DANIEL HILL

...I'm talking about Southern-style, back-alley score settling doled out by a tribunal of me and a couple of homeless I'm gonna pay to pummel--

CHUCK

Conversational patio voice?

NED

Especially when it comes to talk of fisticuffs and threats of bodily harm.

DANIEL HILL

I have a thousand affirmative defenses for when I "snap" and smite Gustav's killer.

EMERSON

Whoa now. Before you go dolin' out blind justice, the smoking gun doesn't always point to the bad guy.

DANIEL HILL

So Tam Fong isn't the guilty party?

NED

Yes. No. Maybe. All we know is, maybe he had a hand in marking the mark.

CHUCK

The good news is, we have a reason to believe that Gustav completed a second will.

DANIEL HILL

That's great news! Hopefully that tarnished trophy wife of his is excluded. But I'm his lawyer. If there were a second will, I would have drafted it, drawn it up and drawn a tidy 20% commission for my troubles. So how would you know differently?

EMERSON

Let's just say our procedures would be inadmissible in court. Either way, the will appears to have been taken in the robbery.

DANIEL HILL

You people really mix the good with the bad.

CHUCK

The world would be a better place if everybody dabbed a little Calamine on welts of bad news.

DANIEL HILL

Gustav Hofer deserved better than the wife he had, and the wife he had doesn't deserve the money he earned. You find that will, I'll double your fee.

CHUCK

(sympathetically)
We'll find that will.

EMERSON

(avariciously)
We'll find that will.

Daniel stands and exits as Olive approaches.

NED

We know Tam's calling the houses to be robbed even if he's not robbing them. Maybe we should add our names onto his do-call list.

EMERSON

No burglar worth his burgles gonna take the bait when they see your tiny-ass apartments.

CHUCK

We could use my aunts' house?

OLIVE

Ooh! A sting! Can I sting? I wanna sting!

EMERSON

That ain't a bad idea.

NED

That's a very bad idea.

CHUCK

It's a good idea. Made doubly-good because while you're figuring out who brought the lights down on Gustav Hofer, I'll be shining a light on the true identity of Dwight. I have an old cigar box filled with my dad's letters hidden in my bedroom. If Dad did know Dwight, maybe I can find something about him inside.

NARRATOR

The Pie-Maker considered the wooden box in her old room a better alternative to the wooden box that contained her father, so a sting was set.

INT. BELLMEN HQ - DAY

Tam, at his desk, looks up to find Olive standing in the doorway, dressed as a multi-millionaire and leading Pigby on a diamond-studded leash. She hangs up his phone.

OLIVE

Mr. Fong, I am so sorry to interrupt. I'm Tessa Carville, wife of Clarence Carville, who I'm sure you're aware owns Carville Steel. I believe someone here called me yesterday?

TAM

(jumps to his feet)

Mrs. Carville, of course! Please, take a seat.

OLIVE

I won't be staying long, just long enough to explain how much I hate phone solicitations. Almost as much as I hate beggars and panhandlers. I believe I have the right to a net worth greater than most developing countries without being hounded by sponging ne'er-do-wells and sanctimonious bleeding hearts like yourself.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

OLIVE (CONT'D)

So unless you stop calling, I'll use a tiny fraction of my immense wealth to buy this building, knock it down and turn it into a glue factory so big the whole city will be smelling horse.

Tam's expression has, understandably, darkened.

TAM

If you please leave me your number, I'll see to it that nobody ever calls you again. Psych.

OLIVE

Did you say, "Psych"?

TAM

No.

Olive hands him her phone number.

OLIVE

Good, because I'm getting on a hovercraft for Saint-Tropez early this evening, and I expect it dealt with before I return tomorrow.

OFF Olive, gotcha--

INT. CHUCK'S AUNTS' HOUSE - CHUCK'S BEDROOM

Filled with CHEESE. The once-empty bedroom has big wheels, small wheels, moldy, holey, shelves, refrigerators, etc. The window slides open and Chuck crawls into the room. A second later, and Ned follows.

CHUCK

Aw. They've turned my old room into a cheese-locker! Can you smell the flowery overtones of the Stilton wafting through the air?

NED

It's nice that they filled this room with something you all loved so much.

CHUCK

It's amazing how a familiar smell can wrap you in its arms and coddle away any ugly memories between now and the last time you smelled it. Thank you. For letting me come along.

NED

I'm glad you came.

CHUCK

And don't worry about getting caught. I'll hear anybody coming before they even get to the staircase.

Chuck goes to the corner and pulls the loose sideboard away, revealing a TIN CAN with a STRING coming out the bottom.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

The other end is hooked to the big Victrola in the living room. I used it when I was a teenager to eavesdrop on my aunts.

NED

That's very crafty.

Chuck smiles. Ned ducks back out the window. Alone in her room, Chuck goes to the opposite corner, pulls a loose floorboard away and produces an ornate old cigar box from within.

NARRATOR

Alone in a room that was once hers, Chuck felt, for a moment, like a little girl again. Thinking of the mementos in the box, among them the birthday present she was never able to give her father, Chuck thanked her 8-year-old self for the kind act of leaving them here for her now-self to rediscover.

CHUCK

Thank you, 8-year-old self.

She pries open the box, smiling at the eclectic mix of old U.N. memorabilia and a handmade, leather wallet.

OFF Chuck...

INT. CHUCK'S AUNTS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Olive, Vivian and Lily eat cheese and sip tea in the dimly-lit room. Behind them, Emerson and Ned are casually SHUTTING OFF LIGHTS, BLOWING OUT CANDLES.

LILY

You must be out of you damn minds -- there's no way in Tinkerbell's bitsy buttcheeks you're going to be rolling out the welcome mat on my front porch to a bunch of thieves.

NED

We know it's an imposition--

LILY

"An imposition"? An imposition is ordering clams at a kosher deli.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LILY (CONT'D)

Robbers nowadays are multi-hyphenate hoodlums. They don't just rob. They strip you naked, lather you in lard, slide you into the walls and leave you there. *Then* they rob you. And burn your house down.

NED

When you put it that way--

LILY

Why don't I just grab a shovel and start digging my shallow grave now?

VIVIAN

I find a dash of danger titillating.

Lily rolls her eye.

LILY

You've certainly made that clear.

Vivian pulls Lily aside. Olive follows.

VIVIAN

I assume that's a passive-aggressive insult directed at my daring sashay into romance. So I choose to ignore it.

LILY

May as well, you've ignored every other warning sign on the road to abject heartbreak.

OLIVE

I find that interjecting at precisely the right moment often defuses a conflict. Wouldn't you agree?

VIVIAN

Lily Charles, you're jealous. It simply slays you that a man so tender and viscerally masculine as Dwight chose me over you.

OLIVE

Missed it by that much.

LILY

I'm not jealous. I'm worried about you. I love you and I don't want to see your fetish for raffish men hurt you the way it has in the past.

Ned approaches.

NED

On the topic of Dwight--

LILY

Keep out of this.

VIVIAN

Lily was just about to tell me that I let myself become seduced. By a bad boy named Charles Charles. But Charles was a good man. He was the one seduced... by some cheap harlot in pasties and a merkin that had the misfortune of dying in childbirth.

Emerson closes the BAY WINDOW BLINDS behind Lily.

LILY

Is my patch on the wrong eye or is it suddenly very dark in here?

OLIVE

Is it dark? I didn't even notice. They say extreme photosensitivity can be a sign of rabies. Or a hangover. Or a delicate optic nerve condition--

LILY

Or a bunch of part-time P.I.s trying to hoodwink a hoodlum by pretending my house is vacant. Wait... are we being robbed tonight?

VIVIAN

Ooooh, I just got a shiver.

Lily grabs her SHOTGUN.

NED

Good idea. Arm yourself. That way, if the robber comes, you can--

CLICK. Lily cocks the gun. Points it at Emerson. Aghast, the Mod Squad realizes she's pissed at them.

EMERSON

Put that pea shooter down. We're just asking you to aid in the apprehension of a robber.

NED

Slash-killer. Sorry. Not helpful.

LILY

Oh, what the hell.

Lily BLOWS out the last candle. In the darkness we HEAR her re-cock her gun.

LILY (CONT'D)

Got my dander up enough that I wouldn't mind shooting someone right about now.

(to Vivian)

Why don't you give Loverboy a call?

The CAMERA TRACKS into the blackness of the Victrola's mouth...

NARRATOR

While the bickering downstairs continued...

INT. CHUCK'S AUNTS' HOUSE - CHUCK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

...AND PULLS OUT again from inside the TIN CAN Chuck's just pulled away from her ear.

NARRATOR

...Chuck decided she had heard all the fighting she cared to, and turned her attention instead to her father's dusty belongings.

Chuck pulls a PHOTO from the box--

INSERT - A PHOTO OF YOUNGER DWIGHT, sitting on a camel's back and wearing a United Nations uniform. He is flanked by NED'S FATHER and CHUCK'S FATHER (photo drawn from IMAGE in Ep. 206).

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Seeing Dwight engaged in male bonding with her father and the Pie-Maker's father, she wanted to shout downstairs that Dwight was, in fact, who he said he was, and that perhaps there was nothing to worry about after all...

On Chuck, gazing at the photo.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...but as she was hiding from Lily and Vivian, she could not shout downstairs. Not about a photo...

BACK to include the OPEN WINDOW, and the SHADOWY FIGURE gazing down at Chuck--

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...or anything else.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. CHUCK'S AUNTS' HOUSE - CHUCK'S BEDROOM

DIRECT PICK-UP where we left off. Chuck leaps to her feet to find herself face-to-face with Rob Wright, head of the Bellmen.

ROB

Fear not -- OW!

Chuck hurls her wooden box, hitting him square in the head. Rob wobbles back against the wall, holding his head.

ROB (CONT'D)

Fear not, madam. I mean you no harm. Spectacular throw, by the way.

CHUCK

To be fair, I should warn you that I have a gun in my pocket.

ROB

To be fair, I don't really believe you.

CHUCK

To be even more fair, all I have to do is scream and a whole cadre of big, strong men and sweet middle-aged ladies with shotguns will come running.

ROB

Fair enough. And yet, you haven't. Perhaps because you understand society has a moral obligation to protect the least fortunate in its ranks... and where society fails--

CHUCK

You pick up the slack. Which sounds noble until you go and kill somebody. At which point it becomes plain evil.

ROB

I'm no killer, merely a soldier of fortune. Other peoples' fortunes for the underprivileged.

CHUCK

Gustav Hofer says otherwise. Or would, if he could speak, which he can't since he's dead. You and Tam Fong killed him two nights ago. After you robbed him.

ROB

First of all, Tam Fong is but another unwitting victim of my robberies. I swipe his phone list to choose my targets.

CHUCK

And Gustav?

ROB

I robbed him, it's true. Not because he was stingy and uncharitable, but because he asked me to.

CHUCK

He asked you to rob him?

ROB

He was writing a new will and needed to know whether to name his wife as the beneficiary. I know how this must sound, but the facts were these:

CHUCK

Huh?

ROB

These were the facts:

EXT. STOREFRONT - DAY - FLASHBACK

Gustav exits the store, passes a bell-ringing, Bellmen-outfit-wearing Rob Wright, who is collecting donations. Gustav doesn't make eye contact, patting for his keys as he makes for his ROLLS ROYCE.

ROB (V.O.)

I met Gustav in the midst of a crisis of faith. His decision to rewrite his will had made him question whether he had any true friendships, or merely a gaggle that clung to him for his wealth.

Gustav stops patting when he spies the keys in the ignition. He puts his head down on the roof of the car. Rob ambles over.

ROB (V.O.)

It didn't take much to push him over the edge into a full-fledged late-life crisis. And that's when we met.

ROB - Has been watching, removes the HANGER that hoists his donation bucket. Sets off.

AT THE CAR - Rob jimmys the lock of the Rolls, opens the car door. Gustav goes for his wallet, but Rob stops him.

ROB (V.O.)

He wanted to make a contribution, but I wouldn't let him. He said:

(as Gustav speaks)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

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

"Where I come from, people get paid for their services." But I said:

(as Rob speaks)

"Charity is an impulse, not a return for a friendly act."

Gustav looks at the collection pot, then at Rob.

ROB (V.O.)

So we talked. He told me his problems and I offered a solution.

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - TROPHY ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

INSERT - A CASE OF JEWELRY is emptied into a canvas bag. Next, a box of SILVERWARE...

ROB (V.O.)

I agreed to rob him. He would liquidate his bank accounts, put the money in his safe and appear to be an innocent victim. If his wife stayed faithfully by his side, his concerns could be laid to rest. Regardless, I'd return half his fortune and keep the other half for charity.

Rob inspects the trophies, then smiles as he spots a latch attached to the lion's paw. He gives the lion a twist and the safe door CLICKS open.

ROB (V.O.)

I was just unloading the contents of his secret safe when...

The LIGHT flicks on and Gustav's wife, Elise, stands in the doorway. She quickly snatches an ANTIQUE HUNTING MUSKET from the wall, points it at Rob, finger clearly on the trigger.

ROB (V.O.)

...Gustav's wife intervened with a musket...

As Rob dashes nimbly out a side door with his canvas bag.

ROB (V.O.)

...and I had to get out.

INT. CHUCK'S AUNTS' HOUSE - CHUCK'S BEDROOM

Resume, as before.

ROB

I read in the paper the next day about what happened to Gustav.

CHUCK

Even if you didn't kill him... you're still a criminal.

ROB

My duty is to the downtrodden, the meek, those unable to reach their own bootstraps let alone pull them. I take only what people can afford to lose, and that certainly doesn't include their lives. Do you like puppies?

CHUCK

Yes.

ROB

The Papen County Animal Shelter is going to be shut down tomorrow unless I get them the money to pay their mortgage. And with nowhere to house the animals, the dogcatchers are calling it "The Big Sleep."

CHUCK

And you can save them.

ROB

As long as the help outweighs the hurt, an act of charity always makes sense.

NED (PRE-LAP)

You let him go?

INT. PIE HOLE - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Ned stares at her, shocked. Emerson's beside him, not shocked at all.

NED

What if he's a cold-blooded killer?

CHUCK

It was an act of charity and... there were puppies involved. Besides, my Grueneberg ganglia hadn't activated.

NED

That sounds personal.

EMERSON

Maybe this is one of those feminine conversations you want to have with your lady friends.

CHUCK

There's a little bundle of nerves at the tip of your nose that can detect aggressive pheromones.

NED

As in, you can sniff out danger.

CHUCK

And what I smelled was a swashbuckling do-gooder in the wrong place at the wrong time.

EMERSON

Smells like puppy crap to me.

NED

You shouldn't have let him go. It was a mistake.

Chuck notices Ned clenching and unclenching his fists.

CHUCK

You're really mad at me, aren't you?

NED

I'm out of counter space, so I'm stress baking in my head.

CHUCK

I feel like you're stress baking me.

NED

I'm channeling fear into anger.

EMERSON

Anger leads to hate.

CHUCK

Hate leads to stress baking the people you love.

NED

Which is bad, but better than stress releasing. Like you did for the Bellman.

CHUCK

Maybe we should consider Rob Wright was telling the truth. Maybe his musket-toting wife dropped the chandelier on him.

(to Emerson)

You did say the bellman-slash-porter was hiding something. He may have an alibi, but maybe he knows who killed Gustav.

CUT TO:

INT. EMERSON'S CAR - NIGHT

Chuck and Ned sit with Emerson as he peers through binoculars at Gustav's mansion. Through the binocs, he spies James-Andrew readying for bed.

NED

Stakeouts are only fun when there's binoculars for everybody.

EMERSON

Stakeouts are only fun when you got a good football game to listen to and the stake you're outing is next to a hot dog vendor.

CHUCK

They seem like a good time to have weighty conversations--

EMERSON

No, they don't.

CHUCK

If Dwight figures out I'm not dead, it might be the best thing that ever happened to me.

EMERSON

You talking a lot like a dead girl who wants to go back in the ground.

CHUCK

What *is* the worst that could happen?

EMERSON

Pie-Maker becomes a sideshow in the Circus of Fun and I earn my wages peddling tickets.

NED

This is a cavalier conversation about a deep, dark touchy subject for me.

CHUCK

How deep, dark and touchy is it?

NED

Ever since I was little, I'd have this dream where somebody learned what I could do. It starts out with lots of ice cream and balloons, and ends up in a small white room where little bits are cut out of me until there's nothing left to cut.

CHUCK

That's awful. Dwight represents the embodiment of those anxieties and you still don't want to wake up my dad to find out about him. You put my emotional well-being above your fears. That's so courageous... and romantic.

NED

Thank you.

EMERSON

Well, looky, looky.

Emerson's peering through the binoculars again. James-Andrew has been joined by Elise in the boudoir for a heavy-petting session.

NED

Isn't that Gustav's widow? And the bellboy?
Petting?

James-Andrew and Elise kiss passionately and laugh.

EMERSON

Hello, motive, nice to see you again.

NARRATOR

*All that remained for Emerson Cod was to
confront the bellman and widow about their
illicit affair. And across town...*

INT. CHUCK AND OLIVE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CAMERA FLOATS TO FIND CHUCK'S WALNUT VANITY, where her FATHER'S POSSESSIONS have been lovingly arranged.

NARRATOR

*...all that remained of Charles Charles was a
daughter's loving box of memories.*

DRIFT PAST a blue beret, medals, aviator sunglasses, then the picture of Dwight, Ned's dad and Charles...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*The man who had set so much in motion was
long gone...*

CAMERA STOPS on her father's POCKET WATCH...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*...but the man who intended to bring it all to
a crashing end...*

A HAND reaches in and takes the watch.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...was not.

INT. LIBERTY APARTMENTS - ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Through the old-fashioned cage elevator, we find DWIGHT, studying the watch with a wicked smile. As the elevator drops OUT OF FRAME:

INT. PIE HOLE - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Olive is putting the chairs on the table, closing up for the night. The door JINGLES open--

OLIVE

We're closeuhhh...

She trails off when she turns to find Dwight standing menacingly in the doorway. She pulls it together.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

Excuse me. I have a rare type of narcolepsy where only my mouth falls asleep. I meant to say, "We're closed."

DWIGHT

So you're here, all by your lonesome.

He's dropped the charm for menace, and Olive suddenly realizes that she is indeed alone.

OLIVE

I'm not here all by my lonesome. Manuel, the big cholo janitor, is in the back. I think he was in one of those super-dangerous El Salvadoran gangs that murders older white men as a warning to the police not to mess with them.

(calling off)

Isn't that right, Manuel? He's probably cleaning the toilet.

DWIGHT

I'd like to leave a message for your friends.

OLIVE

Sure thing. I'll just go grab you a pad...

Olive moves to the counter and bends over to grab a pen and paper.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

I hope you don't need an envelope or--

She stands, surprised to find Dwight gone. He's left something on the table he was standing beside.

NARRATOR

While Olive Snook was unable to provide the pen and paper she sought...

Olive picks up the paper he left, and her eyes widen as she realizes -- it's Vivian's laminated clipping of Chuck's obituary.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

*...she'd received the mysterious Dwight's
message loud and clear.*

OFF her, freaked out...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. PIE HOLE - COUNTER - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: Vivian's laminated clipping of Chuck's obituary.

NARRATOR

1 hour, 23 minutes and 42 seconds ago, Olive Snook made 2 alarming discoveries: First, that the dark stranger, Dwight Dixon, had discovered Chuck, aka, Charlotte Charles's, true identity.

We PULL OUT to see the clipping is flecked with bits of pie crumbs. Dollops of ice cream plopped on the clipping.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Second, that in time of duress, the Pie-Maker's penchant for stress baking was matched only by the petite waitress's predilection for stress binging. Though this nervous habit greatly lightened her cleanup load...

PULL OUT FARTHER to see Olive, uncomfortably full, surrounded by EMPTY PIE TINS. One SWOOP sends all the tins into the trash.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...it did little to lighten the load in her heart as she anxiously awaited the Pie-Maker's return.

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - TROPHY ROOM - NIGHT

Emerson, Ned and Chuck confront a sheepish James-Andrew and Elise.

EMERSON

It's a classic tale. You bumped off Gustav so you could keep bumpin' uglies with the bellman while inheriting a fortune.

JAMES-ANDREW

I told you. Alibi. Key party.

CHUCK

(to Elise)

But your alibi didn't check out. You never showed up at the charity ball. Why'd you do it, Elise?

ELISE HOFER

I didn't do anything. Except James-Andrew. Who do you think got his key?

NED

Ooooooh. I was still really wrong about what I thought that was.

EMERSON

(back on the case)
You two backin' each others' alibis means
bubkes. You were canoodlin' and cahootin' and
you cahooted to kill.

ELISE HOFER

We cahooted to keep quiet about our affair.
Adulteresses, like, totally get the shaft in
estate law.

(then)

Whatever. That weasly, little lawyer probably
ratted me out ages ago.

EMERSON

Mr. Hill?

ELISE HOFER

Who else? He caught me with James-Andrew and
totally flipped his grits. Lectured us about
how Gustav was some great dude who deserved
respect and loyalty. But I'm great, too, and
I deserved nookie -- not just nights of sponge-
bathing some senior --

JAMES-ANDREW

(jealous)

You never sponge-bathe me...

ELISE HOFER

(showcasing her fingernails)

I don't sponge-bath anyone anymore, baby.
Since I grew these puppies out, my manicure
means I'm a *mani-can't* for manual labor.

EMERSON

You were a *mani-can* when it came to pointin' a
gun at the robber, Rob Wright, and almost
pulling the trigger.

ELISE HOFER

As if! I never saw the robber. Even if I did--

Elise strides toward the MUSKET hanging on the wall and grabs
it, pointing it at the Mod Squad. They back away, hands up.

EMERSON

Why's everyone pointin' guns at me?

ELISE HOFER

There's no way I could pull the trigger on a
gun. I'm too blinged out!

She demonstrates, trying to shove her TRIGGER FINGER through the TRIGGER GUARD. But her layers of HUGE DIAMOND RINGS make it impossible for her finger to fit.

NED

You could have taken off the rings.

CHUCK

But with those nails, it would have taken her forever. She wouldn't have had a shot at shooting Rob Wright.

ELISE HOFER

A-duh!

NED

If she's telling the truth and never stormed in on Rob Wright robbing the house--

EMERSON

Our Robbing Hood's had us hoodwinked.

EXT. CHUCK'S AUNTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Lily sits in the moonlight, popping cheese cubes and nipping from her flask when Dwight approaches. Her shotgun leans against the wall beside her.

LILY

You can turn your fanny right around and walk away, mister. We're done buying what you're peddling.

DWIGHT

Now, Lily, that's not entirely true. More accurate would be, "I'm not buying what you're peddling, but Vivian'll be right down."

LILY

How long you suppose she'll stay interested in the wares of a two-bit huckster pitching lies?

DWIGHT

I didn't think you were so concerned about lies. Shouldn't you be more worried about the truth?

He tries pressing past her to the door. She lays the shotgun from the arm of her chair to the arm of the chair across from her, blocking his path.

LILY

It's time to nip you in the budding romance. Before Vivian convinces herself that you really are the Second Coming.

DWIGHT

I assume you must be referring to my friend
and your lover, Charles Charles.

LILY

You're nothing like Charles.

DWIGHT

Oh, I think you'd find that me and Charlie
were more similar than you'd reckon. There's
a few stark differences, 'course, but we had
the same ambitions.

LILY

He made bad decisions, you were a bad decision.

DWIGHT

My bad decisions landed me in prison. His
landed him with a baby girl. I don't think
I ever had the opportunity to express my
condolences.

LILY

You got your thumb on a big, red button you
definitely don't want to push.

DWIGHT

Vivian said the services were beautiful. What a
lovely gesture it was to bury your daughter with
her father's watch. You're such thoughtful
women, who have loved and lost so much.

Lily lowers the shotgun, eye welling. Defeat? She flips open
the break-action barrel and loads a shell into each side.

LILY

And we're gonna lose you right now. Before you
get one inch closer to my little sister's heart.

She slams the shotgun shut with a CLACK and a menace.

LILY (CONT'D)

Get gone and stay gone.

Dwight thinks it over for a moment, but she's not joking around.
As she watches him go...

NARRATOR

*Lily's encounter with Dwight had stirred
the pot of her sentimental soup, one
spoonful of which gave her a terrible case
of the yearns...*

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Lily, carrying a jar of honey and some flowers, picks her way through the headstones. She arrives at Chuck's grave, stopping short when she sees the freshly-turned dirt.

LILY

What in hell's kitchen...

NARRATOR

...but when she saw the overturned dirt of Charlotte Charles's grave, she thought about the pocket watch and the man obsessed with its whereabouts -- and wondered whether Dwight Dixon had unearthed more than Vivian's buried emotions.

OFF Lily...

INT. BELLMEN HQ - NIGHT

Empty, closed for the night. The Mod Squad stands in the empty building, staring.

ROB (O.S.)

I've been expecting you.

Our heroes twirl to find themselves face-to-face with Rob, who has a dagger pointed at Emerson's chest.

ROB (CONT'D)

I'll thank you to keep your sidearm holstered, sir, lest I be forced to lunge.

Our heroes reluctantly raise their hands.

EMERSON

At least it's not another gun.

OFF our heroes...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. BELLMEN HQ - PHONE BANK - NIGHT

Where we left off, Rob has his dagger pointed at Emerson.

ROB

From one gentleman to another, allow me to apologize for our current predicament...

EMERSON

I'd be more receptive to that apology without a blade at my belly.

CHUCK

You're a lying liar and a murderer. Both of which are bad--

EMERSON

--one of which is worse. You slaughtered a senior citizen. That'll buy you ringside seats in Hell. But you might get a refund on those tickets if you put the knife down.

ROB

Gustav Hofer was supposed to surrender the money peacefully. We had an agreement upon which he reneged. When I insisted on honor and accountability, he attacked me.

CHUCK

I thought you were a noble Robin Hood, but you're just a murdering, manipulative middleman who took my desire to see the best in people and turned me into a cynic.

ROB

Gustav was the victim of a tragic accident! Born of good deeds, I might add...

NED

Running from the scene of the crime was no accident. Did you even stop to consider the consequences of your "good deeds"?

EMERSON

They weren't good deeds for Gustav's wife, his lawyer or his legacy.

ROB

Now that you mention it -- I can make that right.

He reaches into his pocket and hands Chuck an envelope.

ROB (CONT'D)

Gustav's will. It was in his safe. Now that's settled -- I trust my quest to rob from the rich to give to the poor may continue unabated.

EMERSON

Hell no. I plan on being very rich, and I want your ass in jail.

ROB

I was afraid you'd feel that way. So...

He grabs a rope anchored to the wall with one hand and quickly severs it with the knife. He shoots into the air as the giant "Ring for Right!" banner the rope was anchoring drops.

ROB (CONT'D)

Orbis Pro Vox!

Emerson whips out his gun and FIRES -- hitting the rope's ceiling anchor. Rob drops out of the sky with a CLUNK to find Emerson's gun trained on him.

EMERSON

'Bout time I get to do the gun pointin' 'round here.

NARRATOR

The facts were these:

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

The muffled sounds of CHEESY POP MUSIC as we are CLOSE ON: the cover of "TROPHY" MAGAZINE (the cover articles: "The Sweet Life of Arm Candy" and "Helping Yourself to the Help").

NARRATOR

Upon coming to the realization that his young wife may only have married him for his money, Gustav Hofer found himself questioning whether he should rewrite his will...

PULL OUT TO REVEAL Elise, rocking out to headphones as she reads her magazine. She endeavors to turn a page -- but is hampered by her long PRESS-ON NAILS. Out of nowhere, James-Andrew dives in and turns the page for her. He smiles flirtatiously. Gustav takes this in. Grimaces.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...and leave his fortune to someone who truly cared about him.

Gustav pulls his mouth shut in firm resolution.

EXT. DRUGSTORE - DAY - FLASHBACK (RE-USE SC. 26A)

Gustav and Rob shake hands as Gustav climbs into his car.

NARRATOR

Bellman Rob Wright afforded him the perfect plan: fake a robbery to learn his wife's true feelings.

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - FOYER - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Daniel Hill enters the foyer, stopping cold when he finds Elise and James-Andrew kissing and tearing off clothes.

NARRATOR

But Daniel Hill discovered those feelings first.

DANIEL HILL

After everything Gustav's done for you. He deserves the *crème de la crème*, not some sugar-stuffed Pop-Tart with a helium voice and hooker heels. One word from me and you're out of the will... but I won't crush Gustav's pride. You better clean up your act or--

Daniel continues MOS as the Narrator takes over.

NARRATOR

Though his lawyer shielded Gustav from his wife's treachery in order to protect his pride...

REVEAL Gustav, standing on the spiral staircase, tacitly observing the unfolding scene.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...Gustav had not only seen her adulteress ways, but also the way Daniel Hill defended his good name and honor.

INT. GUSTAV'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Gustav happily indulges in prunes while reading a newspaper, indifferent to his sulking wife -- who struggles to hold the stalk of her champagne-juice drink with her long nails.

NARRATOR

The billionaire resolved to leave his estate to his esquire.

Gustav's wife pecks him on the cheek and exits. Moments later, Rob swings nimbly in through the open window, landing with flair.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

When the Bellman arrived to act out the staged robbery, Gustav refused to play his role and forfeit his fortune.

Rob's smile drops as an MOS argument ensues.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Rob Wright insisted Gustav keep his end of the bargain. Gustav insisted more emphatically that Rob leave his mansion.

Gustav reaches for a mounted gun on the wall. The two men struggle for it. In the melee, THE GUN GOES OFF, piercing the chandelier and causing it to come CRASHING down on Gustav.

OMIT

EXT. DIRTY HIGHWAY - DAY (**FORMERLY SCENE 44**)

Rob Wright, much less dapper in prison orange, works in the middle of a CHAIN GANG. As he stabs at the roadside trash...

NARRATOR

Rob Wright's ensuing prison sentence was greatly reduced when he agreed to 5,000 hours of community service.

INT. BELLMEN HQ - MAIN LOBBY

TAM FONG is a new Bellman, ringing the bell.

NARRATOR

Though the bell had tolled for the original Bellman, the dramatic arrest caused the chimes of charity to ring in a new soul.

TAM

Hey! You ass! Can't spare a dime? Maybe if you spent less on that crap cologne.

OMIT

INT. EMERSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Emerson sits across from Daniel Hill. He hands the lawyer the will.

EMERSON

Gustav's revised will. You get the whole Hofer coffer.

DANIEL HILL

(booming, incredulous)

Me? All I ever did was give him my friendship.

EMERSON

All he wanted.

He puts an old-fashioned calculator on the desk with a THUD.

EMERSON (CONT'D)

Now let's talk about your next charitable donation.

NARRATOR

While Emerson Cod was able to deliver good news...

OMIT

INT. DWIGHT'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

NARRATOR

...Lily Charles sought to convince her sister that the mysterious Dwight was bad news...

The door JIGGLES, opens and Lily cautiously enters.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...but she needed more proof than some overturned dirt at a grave.

Her eye bulges at what she sees:

LILY

Holy crap.

The motel room is filled with an arsenal -- knives, guns, rifles.

NARRATOR

Lily had found the proof she sought.

She now spies Chuck's watch, right next to Dwight's, in a SMALL, FELT BOX. She GASPS, then A NOISE:

THE DOOR -- JIGGLES again. Dwight enters. He stops, scans the room. It's EMPTY NOW, but something's off. He stops cold when he sees THE EMPTY FELT BOX.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Dwight, believing the girl-who-was-not-dead stole back the watch he stole from her, set off to retrieve his stolen, stolen property.

Dwight grabs a high-powered rifle with a scope and exits. When he's gone, CAMERA PULLS THROUGH THE WINDOW TO FIND...

EXT. DWIGHT'S MOTEL ROOM

...Lily, perched on the ledge, clutching the watches to her chest, with a look of sheer panic.

NARRATOR

While Lily was able to escape certain demise at the hands of Dwight...

INT. PIE HOLE - NIGHT

NARRATOR

...the girl named Chuck, who had not been so lucky with death, learned that her death had come back to haunt her...

Chuck and Ned enter the Pie Hole, flush with the excitement of another case closed. Their smiles drop when Olive approaches and holds up Chuck's laminated obituary.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

...and that the Pie-Maker's deepest, darkest fears were on the verge of becoming reality.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Chuck and Ned dig to unearth the grave of Charles Charles.

CHUCK

I keep waiting for that euphoric high to rush through my system. Instead, I feel uncomfortable and nervous.

NED

It's going to be awkward hello, tender acceptance and rushed goodbye. Euphoric high barely figures in. It's gonna be very hard.

CHUCK

I don't think I understood that until now, now that it's too late to back out.

NED

It's not too late to back out. We have other options. We can leave town.

CHUCK

Even with Dwight knowing who I am, you're still willing to put my emotional well-being before your darkest fears.

NED

If I knew the consequences, I would never have alive-gained my mother.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

NED (CONT'D)

And I had seven hours with her. I'd rather take my chances with Dwight than make you go through this.

CHUCK

When you lost your mother, you had to go through it alone. I have you. I was wrong when I said I'd turned into a cynic. Rob Wright isn't Robin Hood. A hero doesn't kill people, he brings them back to life, if only for a minute. You're the real swashbuckling do-gooder, and I love you for it.

NED

I hope you still feel that way when this is over.

CLUNK! Ned's shovel hits metal. Chuck goes pale.

NED (CONT'D)

Ready?

CHUCK

I'm ready. I think.

With a deep breath, Ned flips the casket open and...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW