

# CAPISCE?

*by Kimberlee Mendoza*



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# **CAPIISCE?**

A '30s detective movie dinner theatre spoof  
by Kimberlee Mendoza

*CAST OF CHARACTERS*

Thursday Jones — Washed-up police detective

Tony “The Tough” Moretti — Head of the family business

Vivian Russo — Tony’s girl

Guido — Family bodyguard

Leo “The Mouth” Moretti — Tony’s younger cousin

Ella Moretti — Tony’s ditzy sister

Pamela De Luca — Waitress and undercover FBI agent

Nico “The Nose” Moretti — Tony’s brother and rival

Draco Moretti — Nico’s messenger and cousin

Mama Mia Moretti — Tony’s mother

Mike Smith [a.k.a. Michael Angelo] — The awful cook

There are parts for seven males and four females. Full character descriptions are on page 28.

## *PRODUCTION NOTES*

The title, *Capisce?*, is an Italian expression for “Do you understand?”

### SETTING

Time: Late 1920s — Early 1930s

Place: Italian restaurant in Chicago

Genre: Noir (old black-and-white detective films)

Spiritual Theme: Forgiveness

### THE SET

Everything is black, white, and gray, including the pictures on the walls and the costumes (except for Vivian’s dresses). In Act II, color may be introduced to the set. Tip: Consider switching out black-and-white paintings, tablecloths, curtains, flowers, etc. for colored ones.

There is an entrance door Upstage Center with fogged glass. A coat rack sits to its right. A kitchen entrance is far stage left. A podium with a phone is on far Stage Right. Two tables and four chairs are at Center Stage.

### PROPS

Menus, coffee pot, coffee cups, coffee, water pitcher, water glasses, plates of pasta, cannoli, breadstick, silverware, napkins, tablecloths, telephone, pencil, small notebook for detective, money-filled envelope, suckers, newspaper, dead fish, briefcase, bottle of grape juice, vintage magazine, violin case (filled with recipes and a sandwich), rolling pin, hankie, dishcloth, spatula, cane, knitting, handcuffs, and questions for audience

### SOUND EFFECTS

Ringed telephone, screeching cat, sounds at the door, violin music

### COSTUMES

Thursday Jones: Fedora hat, shirt, ties, dress slacks, and a trench coat

Tony “The Tough” Moretti: Mafia-style three-piece suit and fedora hat

Vivian Russo: Brightly colored dresses

Guido: Plain dark suit

Leo “The Mouth” Moretti: Pinstriped suit, has a scar on his cheek

Ella Moretti: Frilly dresses

Pamela De Luca: Waitress Outfit

Nico “The Nose” Moretti: Mafia-style three-piece suit, fedora, and big nose (Note: If Tony wears black, consider dressing Nico in white.)

Draco Moretti: Pinstriped suit

Mama Mia Moretti: Plain black dress

Mike Smith (a.k.a. Michael Angelo): White T-shirt, apron, nice pants

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** All costumes should be black, gray, and white until the final scene, after the detective’s monologue. Everyone will then enter in colorful clothes or ties. Also, all male actors should have hats, and possibly overcoats, appropriate to the time.

### THE PERFORMANCE

Have the characters or a waitstaff serve beverages as the guests arrive. If you have live entertainment, serve the main course during the pre-show. The dessert can be served at intermission.

### MEAL SUGGESTION

- Spaghetti or Lasagna
- Garlic Bread
- Salad
- Cannolis, Cheesecake, or Spumoni

Tip: Consider decorating the tables to match the table on the set. Keeping everything black, white, and gray.

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Guests arrive
- Cast mingles among audience
- Bread, beverages, and salad are on tables
- Possible musical entertainment while main entrée is served
- Act I
- Intermission/Dessert served (Ten minutes long. Cast mingles among audience members asking “whodunit.”)
- Act II
- Guests depart

### RUN TIME

Script: Approximately 51 minutes

Play, pre-show and full meal: Approximately two hours

## Act I

## Scene One

(At rise: A hat is silhouetted in the restaurant door Off-stage. Detective THURSDAY enters and the lights come up. He takes off his hat and coat and sits at the table. He speaks to the audience in a serious tone. Whenever he talks, the other actors freeze.)

**THURSDAY:** The name is Thursday. Detective Thursday Jones. I was born on a Monday just before the war. It was then I knew I'd spend my days trying to understand life's quirky mysteries. (He waves to PAMELA, who brings him a menu. He whispers and she walks away.) It was a cold, late November evening. I had just spent another afternoon feeling sorry for my pitiful existence and desperately needed to unwind with a cup of java and some solitude. (PAMELA returns with a cannoli and some coffee.) Though Tony's wasn't serving the best joe in Chicago, they had the best cannoli on this section of the block. I had just cracked into the fried pastry when she walked in. (VIVIAN dramatically swings open the door and enters with a huge smile on her face. GUIDO follows and takes her coat.)

**THURSDAY:** At once I noticed how very distraught she appeared. (VIVIAN quickly changes her expression to a frown and sits on the corner of his table.) Excuse me, miss, (To VIVIAN) but you're on my fork.

**VIVIAN:** (Dramatically throwing herself at him) How can you eat at a time like this, detective? (THURSDAY distances himself from her.)

**THURSDAY:** How do you know my name?

**VIVIAN:** You're a detective, are you not?

**THURSDAY:** Of course. What seems to be the problem?

**VIVIAN:** (Dramatic) Do you find me beautiful, Detective?

**THURSDAY:** (Clearing his throat) Um, I suppose you're not bad to look at.

**VIVIAN:** Do you think I look like a cold-hearted, evil, horrible, awful, no-good, terrible, blood-thirsty, too-bad-for-words, horrific, ghastly killer? Huh? (Beat) Does this look like the face of someone who could murder someone?

**THURSDAY:** Have you?

**VIVIAN:** No! Don't be ridiculous. (She sits in a chair.)

**THURSDAY:** Then why do you ask?

**VIVIAN:** What do you think of Tony "The Tough" Moretti?

**THURSDAY:** (Straightens up.) Tony the Tough?

**VIVIAN:** Don't act like you don't know the name, detective. I know you've been after him for years.

**THURSDAY:** I think you have me confused with someone else.

- 1 VIVIAN: I don't think so. *(She takes a sip of his ice water.)* Answer  
2 my question, detective. What do you think of him?
- 3 THURSDAY: Why ask me?
- 4 VIVIAN: We'll get to that. Just answer the question.
- 5 THURSDAY: Does it really matter what I think?
- 6 VIVIAN: If you're going to start asking questions for every  
7 question of mine, we're going to be here all night.
- 8 THURSDAY: Fine. It's assumed he is a famous crime boss, and  
9 from what I've heard ... *(He stands and starts to lean in on her.)*  
10 A cold-hearted, evil, horrible, awful, no-good, terrible, blood-  
11 thirsty, too-bad-for-words, horrific, ghastly killer. *(GUIDO*  
12 *comes up behind VIVIAN and THURSDAY, gulps, and sits back*  
13 *down.)* Oh, that, and he ruined my career. *(Smiles*  
14 *sarcastically.)* What do you think of him?
- 15 VIVIAN: There you go again, asking the questions.
- 16 THURSDAY: Job hazard. Go ahead. *(VIVIAN begins to cry.*  
17 *THURSDAY grabs a napkin for her, but she ignores it and grabs*  
18 *his hankie from his pocket and blows her nose loudly into it, then*  
19 *puts it back in his pocket. He pulls it out, disgusted, and throws it*  
20 *on the table.)*
- 21 VIVIAN: In this city there are only two things that exist: crime  
22 and murder. And I'm here to report that if you don't do  
23 something, possibly both will happen.
- 24 THURSDAY: I am not a cop, Miss ... ?
- 25 VIVIAN: La Russo. Vivian La Russo. *(She puts out her hand to be*  
26 *kissed, but he just shakes her pinky.)*
- 27 THURSDAY: Yes, well, I no longer do police work, Miss La Russo,  
28 and you can thank your boyfriend for that. I drink my coffee  
29 and take the occasional picture of some misconduct. That's  
30 it. I'm pretty low-key.
- 31 VIVIAN: Look, I know who you are, and I need your help. A  
32 crime is sure to happen, and things are going to get messy.  
33 I don't want to involve the police, Tony would kill me. I want  
34 to be involved with you. *(THURSDAY raises eyebrows.)* I mean,  
35 you to be involved with me. *(THURSDAY sits up straighter.)* I  
36 mean, you to be involved with the case. *(Frustrated, she begins*  
37 *to cry again, but then freezes.)*
- 38 THURSDAY: *(To the audience)* It was obvious this woman was not  
39 going to leave. She clearly had something to say, and she  
40 wanted me to hear it. *(Then, to VIVIAN)* All right, you have  
41 my attention. *(GUIDO almost always has a sucker in his mouth,*  
42 *so when he speaks, it's hard to understand him.)*
- 43 GUIDO: *(Mumbling)* Is this man bothering you?
- 44 VIVIAN: No, Guido. I am fine.
- 45 GUIDO: You better be nice to Miss La Russo, or else.

- 1 THURSDAY: Excuse me?
- 2 GUIDO: You better be nice to Miss La Russo, or else.
- 3 THURSDAY: I'm sorry, I can't understand you.
- 4 GUIDO: You better ... (*Stops and pulls sucker out.*) I said, you better
- 5 be nice to Miss La Russo, or else.
- 6 THURSDAY: Or else?
- 7 GUIDO: Or else. (*They lock eyes for a moment.*)
- 8 THURSDAY: (*To VIVIAN*) Your monkey has an elaborate
- 9 vocabulary.
- 10 GUIDO: My eye is on you.
- 11 THURSDAY: Only one? (*GUIDO backs off, but punches fist as he*
- 12 *does. To VIVIAN*) Now Miss La Russo, you have spoken of a
- 13 future crime and a murder. Would you like to elaborate?
- 14 VIVIAN: Please do call me Vivian. My mother was La Russo.
- 15 THURSDAY: You're stalling, Miss Vivian.
- 16 VIVIAN: So I am. (*Suddenly grabs his arm.*) Look, Mr. Thursday, I
- 17 am a desperate woman. You have to believe me — I need
- 18 your help.
- 19 THURSDAY: You've given me nothing to not believe. (*To audience*)
- 20 Getting this dame to spill her case was like getting a cat to
- 21 take a bath. It wasn't going to be easy, and the outcome
- 22 would hurt. I hated to play hardball, but I detested being in
- 23 the dark even more. (*Back to VIVIAN*) Answers, doll face.
- 24 Answers.
- 25 VIVIAN: I need you to uncover who is out to get my boyfriend.
- 26 THURSDAY: Tony the tough?
- 27 VIVIAN: Yes, of course.
- 28 THURSDAY: (*Nervously*) If he's so tough, why does he need my
- 29 help? Hmmmm? (*Clears throat.*) I'm sure the list is endless.
- 30 Look, Miss Vivian, I am not too excited about poking my
- 31 head around Tony's business. He destroyed my career, and
- 32 he's likely to kill me. Then what will I have left?
- 33 VIVIAN: Yes, that's probably true; therefore, I understand your
- 34 hesitation, detective. But I think I can change your mind.
- 35 Here, read this. (*VIVIAN slides a thick envelope across the table.*
- 36 *THURSDAY picks it up and thumbs through the money, making*
- 37 *sure the audience is aware of the contents.*)
- 38 THURSDAY: OK, Miss La Russo, we have an accord. I'll check it
- 39 out.
- 40 VIVIAN: Come sometime after eight. Tony is always here then.
- 41 Security is tight, but Guido will make sure you get inside.
- 42 Won't you, Guido?
- 43 GUIDO: (*Glaring*) You'll get in.
- 44 VIVIAN: Good-bye, Detective. Enjoy your joe. (*VIVIAN and*
- 45 *GUIDO exit.*)

1 THURSDAY: We'll see. (*Talking to audience*) I felt a little  
 2 apprehensive about this dame's story, but something about  
 3 this fat envelope kept me in the game. It wasn't a secret that  
 4 the dish was a looker, and her appearance could blind me  
 5 to the facts, not to mention my biased opinion. After all, I'd  
 6 been asked to save the very man who destroyed me. It's  
 7 your job to help me stay on track. Take notes, be observant,  
 8 and above all, listen. (*THURSDAY exits. Lights fade to black.*)

9

10

11

## Scene 2

12

13 (*LEO and TONY enter as lights come up.*)14 LEO: Come on, Tony, you've got to let me try. I can do the job  
 15 good and make some major cabbage. I just know it.16 TONY: Mouth, shut your bump gums, or your next move will be  
 17 floating without a raft down the Hudson. Do you catch me?

18 LEO: With kid gloves, Tony.

19 TONY: Good. Now dust out and get me my briefcase.

20 LEO: Sure thing, boss. (*He exits.*)21 TONY: (*Sits at a table. PAMELA brings him coffee and a paper.*)  
 22 Where's Vivian tonight?23 PAMELA: She hasn't been in. (*Calls to kitchen.*) Michael Angelo, you  
 24 seen Viv? (*MIKE pokes his head around from kitchen.*)25 MIKE: No, Tony. She hasn't been in. But she said something about  
 26 seeing her uncle. (*LEO enters with briefcase.*)27 LEO: (*Stuttering*) Here's your case, boss. (*Hands him briefcase.*)

28 PAMELA: To see her uncle? Her mother was an only child.

29 LEO: What about her father?

30 TONY: Don't be a putz. She didn't know her father. (*VIVIAN's*  
 31 *silhouette can be seen in the window. Door opens and VIVIAN enters*  
 32 *with Guido behind her.*)

33 VIVIAN: Hiya, Tony.

34 TONY: Where have you been?

35 VIVIAN: To see my uncle.

36 LEO: But you don't have an uncle.

37 TONY: (*Shoots LEO a dirty look.*) What an awful thing to say, Mouth.  
 38 Vivian wouldn't lie to us. Would you, Vivian?39 LEO: But ... (*A phone rings Off-stage.*)40 TONY: Get the phone, would ya? (*LEO exits to kitchen.*)

41 VIVIAN: Why does he doubt that I have an uncle?

42 TONY: Because he's a moron.

43 VIVIAN: Why don't you fire him? You know I don't like him.

44 TONY: Not now, Vivian. (*LEO enters.*)

45 LEO: Nico the Nose's pony Draco was on the horn. Apparently

- 1 he'd like a word with you.
- 2 **TONY:** Tony don't talk to the Nose unless he comes here.
- 3 **LEO:** I told him that, Tony. Draco's coming.
- 4 **TONY:** That's fine. *(To VIVIAN)* Make yourself scarce, doll. We have
- 5 work to do.
- 6 **VIVIAN:** But, Tony —
- 7 **TONY:** This ain't no place for a dame. Now, beat it.
- 8 **VIVIAN:** Why does Pamela get to stay?
- 9 **TONY:** Pamela is a waitress in this joint.
- 10 **VIVIAN:** *(Looks around.)* We're closed, Tony. Who is she waiting on?
- 11 **TONY:** Guido, take her home before I blow my top.
- 12 **GUIDO:** Sure thing, boss. *(GUIDO and VIVIAN start to exit through*
- 13 *front door. When it opens, THURSDAY enters.)*
- 14 **THURSDAY:** Yes, I seem to have broken down. I wonder if I might
- 15 use your telephone.
- 16 **GUIDO:** Wait here. *(GUIDO lets go of VIVIAN and walks to TONY.*
- 17 *ELLA enters and tries to talk to TONY, but he waves her off.)*
- 18 **TONY:** *(Rubbing temples)* The restaurant is closed. Who is it?
- 19 **GUIDO:** A man who says he's broken down.
- 20 **TONY:** *(Peeks over at THURSDAY.)* Yeah, I'll say.
- 21 **GUIDO:** He wants to know if he can use our phone, Tony.
- 22 **TONY:** Tell him he can use our phone, but watch him.
- 23 **GUIDO:** Yes, sir. *(To THURSDAY)* You can use the phone.
- 24 *(THURSDAY walks to the phone and taps on it. Suddenly, the lights*
- 25 *go out. VIVIAN screams. You hear a whack and then a thump.)*
- 26 **LEO:** Somebody get the phone.
- 27 **PAMELA:** I've got it. *(When the lights come back up, TONY is lying*
- 28 *slumped over the table.)*
- 29 **VIVIAN:** *(Screams)* Tony! *(She pushes him, but he doesn't respond.)* Oh
- 30 my, it's Tony! Somebody help him!
- 31 **THURSDAY:** *(Rushes over to body.)* Move back. *(He feels for a pulse.)*
- 32 He's dead as a doorknob. *(EVERYONE gasps.)*
- 33 **ELLA:** Doorknobs can die?
- 34 **THURSDAY:** No, wait. *(To audience)* I felt sorry for society; his heart
- 35 pulsed through his veins. It wasn't strong, but it was there,
- 36 pumping blood to his cold, black heart. *(Back to others)* He's
- 37 just been knocked out. Try and sit him up.
- 38 **GUIDO:** *(With sucker)* I don't think you should move him.
- 39 **THURSDAY:** What?
- 40 **GUIDO:** I don't think you should move him.
- 41 **THURSDAY:** I'm sorry, what?
- 42 **GUIDO:** *(Pulls sucker out.)* I don't think you should move him.
- 43 **PAMELA:** When did you take up thinking, Guido? *(GUIDO looks*
- 44 *confused.)*
- 45 **THURSDAY:** Anyways, that's for falling, not for being ...

1           (*THURSDAY sees a rolling pin. He pulls a hankie out of his pocket*  
2           *and lifts it up.*) **The weapon? OK, everyone put their hands**  
3           **in the air.**

4 **ELLA:** (*Claps.*) Oh fun, a game.

5 **PAMELA:** It's not a game, moron. Are we under arrest?

6 **THURSDAY:** That depends. There's flour on this handle, and I  
7           intend to see which one of you is guilty. Hands out, please.  
8           (*Everyone except GUIDO puts out their hands. THURSDAY looks*  
9           *at their hands and then stops at GUIDO.*)

10 **THURSDAY:** Do you have something to hide, ape man?

11 **GUIDO:** The name's Guido.

12 **THURSDAY:** Of course it is. Let me see your hands.

13 **GUIDO:** I have a nasty wart.

14 **THURSDAY:** I promise not to be disgusted. Now, stick out your  
15           hands.

16 **GUIDO:** (*Sticks them out reluctantly.*) See? (*There is a nasty bump on*  
17           *his hand big enough for the audience to see. THURSDAY sways*  
18           *back and forth and passes out. PAMELA catches him.*)

19 **PAMELA:** Oh, brother — a real man's man.

20 **THURSDAY:** (*To audience*) It was obvious that I had to resort to  
21           major tactics. As if a nasty, disgusting, most putrid thing I  
22           ever laid eyes on could actually cause me to faint. No, this  
23           was a time for eavesdropping. Better to play dead and learn  
24           than to be dead and die. (*TONY sits up, rubbing his head.*)

25 **TONY:** What happened?

26 **LEO:** Someone clocked you, Tony.

27 **TONY:** Who's the moron that wants to sleep with the fishes  
28           tonight?

29 **LEO:** It wasn't me, Tony. I'm loyal.

30 **TONY:** We'll see. (*MAMA comes flying in the door, crying.*)

31 **MAMA:** Where is he? Where's-ah mi' baby?

32 **TONY:** I'm here, Mama. I'm OK.

33 **MAMA:** Michael Angelo just told me someone tried to whack-a  
34           my baby. Tell me it ain't-ah true, Tony. Make-ah me feel all  
35           right-ah.

36 **TONY:** Nothing to worry about, Mama. I'm fine.

37 **MAMA:** You'd be fine if you'd-ah getta out of this life like-ah I  
38           told you. Someone will eventually kill-ah you, eh?

39 **TONY:** Mama, go back to bed. I'm fine. (*She pinches his cheeks and*  
40           *kisses him.*)

41 **MAMA:** (*To GUIDO*) You take-ah care of mi' baby, you-ah hear?  
42           (*To others*) If anything ah happens to mi' Tony, you all-ah be  
43           sorry.

44 **LEO and GUIDO:** Yes, Mama Mia.

45 **MAMA:** Good. (*MAMA exits through kitchen doorway.*)

- 1 TONY: Good night, Mama. (*Notices THURSDAY.*) Who's the putz  
2 carpeting my floor?
- 3 VIVIAN: That's Detective Thursday, Tony. I invited him to  
4 protect you.
- 5 TONY: Yeah, he's doing a great job. (*To GUIDO*) Get him up.
- 6 GUIDO: Yes, boss. (*GUIDO pours water in his face, then yanks*  
7 *THURSDAY up.*)
- 8 TONY: So, detective, you think you're going to help the likes of  
9 me, huh? (*Pauses.*) Wait — I know you. Yeah, you're the  
10 jobbie that tried to ice me once.
- 11 LEO: Detective Sunday.
- 12 ELLA: Ooooh, I love sundaes — especially with sprinkles. Can I  
13 have one, Tony? I think we have bananas.
- 14 THURSDAY: It's Thursday.
- 15 ELLA: No, it's not. Today's Monday. I know because I had art  
16 today and I always have art on Mondays. (*She stops and looks*  
17 *at THURSDAY, then makes a step toward him.*) You're cute.
- 18 TONY: Guido, take my sister upstairs. It's time for bed.
- 19 ELLA: It's not even nine, Tony.
- 20 THURSDAY: (*Under breath*) She tells time?
- 21 TONY: Don't make me sore. Now, Ella. (*GUIDO picks her up over*  
22 *his shoulder.*)
- 23 ELLA: (*Crossing arms and pouting*) You're such a party pooper.  
24 (*GUIDO and ELLA exit through kitchen.*)
- 25 TONY: Now, where were we?
- 26 LEO: Figuring out why this punk is in your place, Tony. (*To*  
27 *THURSDAY*) You up to no good, copper?
- 28 THURSDAY: Miss La Russo seems to think you're in danger and  
29 asked me to investigate. You just sustained a knock on the  
30 head. Doesn't that worry you?
- 31 TONY: No one can get to me, fuzz. I'm highly protected. (*GUIDO*  
32 *steps out from kitchen door.*)
- 33 THURSDAY: (*Sarcastic*) So if you were hit over the head with a  
34 rolling pin, oh, I don't know ... let's say in your own  
35 restaurant, then we can assume that one of your closest is  
36 at fault?
- 37 TONY: Are you putting down the family? Is he putting down the  
38 family? You wouldn't be putting down the family, because if  
39 you were —
- 40 LEO: Yeah, because if you were —
- 41 TONY: Shut up, Mouth.
- 42 LEO: Sorry, Tony. I didn't mean —
- 43 TONY: Still talking.
- 44 LEO: Right.
- 45 VIVIAN: No, Tony, he's just trying to figure this out. Give him a

- 1 chance. Someone is out to hurt you. You've been getting  
2 nasty letters for weeks.
- 3 TONY: Vivian, I thought I sent you home.
- 4 GUIDO: Sorry, boss. We didn't make it.
- 5 TONY: I'm curious. Why would you want to help me? You hate  
6 me. I'm the guy who destroyed your career for false  
7 accusations. (*Narrows eyes.*) You want a piece of me? You  
8 trying to rub me out?
- 9 THURSDAY: No, I'm here because Miss La Russo asked for my  
10 help. (*Beat*) Of course, a few dead presidents in the hand  
11 didn't hurt.
- 12 TONY: Ah, so you *can* be bought?
- 13 THURSDAY: We all have to eat. (*TONY slaps his back.*)
- 14 TONY: (*Laughing*) I like this guy. (*To PAMELA*) Get this guy some  
15 pasta, eh?
- 16 THURSDAY: (*Holding hands up*) No, that's fine. I already ate.
- 17 TONY: He already ate. Is he kidding? (*Looks to MOUTH.*)
- 18 LEO: When the boss offers you some pasta, you eat the pasta.
- 19 THURSDAY: Right. Of course. What was I thinking? (*To audience*)  
20 It was apparent that I should eat the pasta. Something told  
21 me to eat and get out. That a handshake with this man  
22 would be a lifelong commitment. How long a life was hard  
23 to determine. I only hoped it was long enough for dessert.  
24 (*PAMELA enters with a plate of pasta.*)
- 25 PAMELA: Eat it or don't. You'll probably die either way. But I'd  
26 eat it.
- 27 THURSDAY: (*Swallows.*) Thank you. Can't wait. Smells great. (*Takes*  
28 *a bite and spits it back out.*)
- 29 TONY: You'll find out who wants to hurt me then?
- 30 THURSDAY: I'll give it a try. (*To audience*) I knew the list was as  
31 long as the state of California. The thought of running away  
32 like a little girl seemed to be the sane thing to do, but I didn't  
33 move. Call it insanity, bravery, or the chili dog I'd had for  
34 dinner, but I wasn't moving. (*To TONY*) Who would want to  
35 hurt you, Tony?
- 36 LEO: That's Mr. Moretti to you.
- 37 TONY: I'm a good guy. Despite what you read in the papers, I'm  
38 nothing more than a businessman.
- 39 PAMELA: So to speak.
- 40 TONY: Didn't we fire her?
- 41 LEO: Several times, boss.
- 42 TONY: Well, do it again.
- 43 LEO: Won't stick.
- 44 TONY: Why not? Are you losing your touch? Do I need to fire you  
45 too?

- 1 PAMELA: I'm your mother's niece's cousin's sister's sister.
- 2 TONY: Badda bang. So you are. *(To PAMELA)* Bring me a cup of  
3 spumoni, huh? Earn your keep.
- 4 PAMELA: Sure, Tony.
- 5 TONY: So, detective, here's the skinny on my situation. There are  
6 cops who think they know me. There are Italians who want  
7 to know me. And mobsters who want to end me. Capisce? It's  
8 not easy being a man of my stature in this community. It  
9 takes loyal friends and family members. I trust everyone in  
10 this room with my life ... *(Beat)* Except for you. *(Stands.)*  
11 Funny how you arrived right before someone knocked me  
12 upside the head.
- 13 LEO: Funny. *(LEO, TONY, and GUIDO move in on him. Knock at the*  
14 *door. LEO answers. It is DRACO. LEO whispers in TONY's ear. He*  
15 *nods, then snaps his finger at LEO. TONY nods at THURSDAY,*  
16 *then at door. LEO looks confused. TONY does it again. LEO shakes*  
17 *head, not getting the connection. TONY rolls his eyes and nods*  
18 *again, overly dramatic.)*
- 19 THURSDAY: I take it you have business to conduct, and I'm in the  
20 way.
- 21 TONY: You are a smart one, isn't he, Vivian?
- 22 VIVIAN: Yes, Tony. I did good, right?
- 23 TONY: Guido, see Mr. Jones and Vivian out.
- 24 GUIDO: Yes, boss.
- 25 TONY: *(To THURSDAY)* You come around tomorrow about noon.  
26 We'll talk business then.
- 27 THURSDAY: *(Looks at pasta.)* Thanks for the pasta.
- 28 TONY: Take it with you. I insist. *(Hands THURSDAY the plate of*  
29 *pasta.)*
- 30 THURSDAY: Great.
- 31 TONY: Now, split. I'm a busy man. A very busy man.
- 32 THURSDAY: *(To audience)* It was apparent that he was a busy man.  
33 A very busy man. And I was in his way. I took my pasta and  
34 followed the ape man out the door, but I knew I'd be back.  
35 This investigation wasn't over. Noon. High noon. Yes, I'd be  
36 back. *(Lights fade as GUIDO, VIVIAN, and THURSDAY exit.)*
- 37  
38
- 39 **Scene 3**
- 40
- 41 *(TONY and DRACO sit at the table eating pasta. DRACO has a*  
42 *napkin tucked in his collar. LEO and GUIDO aren't far away, posing*  
43 *as guards. PAMELA is serving them. DRACO takes a bite and spits*  
44 *it out, then yanks the napkin from his collar and tosses it.*
- 45 DRACO: Your cook hasn't improved much, Tony.

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- 1 TONY: Michael Angelo tries.
- 2 DRACO: He's not even Italian. His papa cooked in prison where  
3 they serve Chef Boyardee.
- 4 TONY: How do you know he's not Italian?
- 5 DRACO: We've done some checking, Tony, and we know a lot  
6 more than you think we know. His name is really Michael  
7 Smith. You gave him that name to sway us from his true  
8 identity.
- 9 TONY: Are you calling me a liar? *(To LEO)* Is he calling me a liar?  
10 *(Back to DRACO)* Because I'd hate to think what would  
11 happen if you were calling me a liar.
- 12 DRACO: Nico is not happy with the way you're running the  
13 family business. You need to tighten the screws. People are  
14 growing restless, and our reputation is that of a weak  
15 stepsister.
- 16 TONY: You tell Nico that it doesn't matter what he thinks. He was  
17 kicked out of business matters years ago. His opinion means  
18 nothing to me.
- 19 DRACO: He's your mother's son.
- 20 TONY: That doesn't mean he's family.
- 21 DRACO: He's your flesh and blood, Tony. As am I.
- 22 TONY: Means nothing. *(To PAMELA)* Bring us some grape juice.
- 23 DRACO: I'm allergic to the vine.
- 24 TONY: *(Spits to the side)* You're a disgrace to Sicily and the family  
25 tree. You talk about my cook. You're an imposter.
- 26 LEO: An imposter.
- 27 DRACO: If you'd just listen to the new way, Tony. Let Nico tell  
28 you his plans. I promise you'll see we aren't so bad. Business  
29 could be booming again.
- 30 TONY: Business is fine. You, on the other hand, are not. *(Snaps to*  
31 *GUIDO.)* Power this pepperoni pizza to the door.
- 32 DRACO: You'll be sorry, Tony. Nico the Nose will sniff you out.
- 33 LEO: I think that's snuff.
- 34 TONY: Quiet, Mouth. *(To DRACO)* You tell Nico if he comes within  
35 a block of my door, he'll be sleeping with the fishes.  
36 Capisce? *(GUIDO and LEO toss DRACO out the door. There is a*  
37 *cat screech. PAMELA enters with the grape juice.)*
- 38 PAMELA: Here you go, Mr. Moretti. *(TONY grabs the bottle and*  
39 *stands.)*
- 40 TONY: You close up. I'm going to bed. *(He exits through the kitchen*  
41 *door. PAMELA starts stacking chairs, wiping counters, etc. MIKE*  
42 *and ELLA enter.)*
- 43 ELLA: Everyone is gone. Figures. I always miss the good stuff.
- 44 MIKE: *(Picking up uneaten food)* No one ever finishes my food.
- 45 PAMELA: That's because it comes from a can.

- 1 MIKE: Shhhh! You want Tough to silence me?
- 2 PAMELA: He's going to find out, and when he does, it won't  
3 matter. You'll be cooking six feet under. There's a war about  
4 to happen between the Nose and Tough, and we're going to  
5 be caught in the middle.
- 6 MIKE: That has nothing to do with me.
- 7 PAMELA: It has everything to do with you. *(Pause)* Did you hear  
8 Vivian talking about seeing an uncle?
- 9 MIKE: That's a code word.
- 10 PAMELA: Code word?
- 11 MIKE: Means she's done something Tony wanted her to do.
- 12 PAMELA: What do you suppose that is?
- 13 MIKE: Beats me.
- 14 PAMELA: Yeah, well, something fishy is ... *(There is a sound at the*  
15 *door.)*
- 16 MIKE: Shhhh! Did you hear that? *(Everyone stops to listen.)*
- 17 ELLA: I can hear my tummy growling. It's saying "gwerolleela."  
18 Want to hear? *(Sound again outside.)*
- 19 PAMELA: Shhhh! I heard it too. *(She grabs a rolling pin, MIKE*  
20 *grabs a spatula, and ELLA grabs a menu. PAMELA looks at her*  
21 *funny.)* What are you going to do with that?
- 22 ELLA: *(Shrugs.)* It kills flies.
- 23 PAMELA: Oh, brother. *(The door slowly opens and ELLA clocks*  
24 *THURSDAY with the menu.)*
- 25 THURSDAY: Ouch! What'd you do that for?
- 26 ELLA: What are you sneaking around for?
- 27 THURSDAY: I left my hat. *(He has a hat on his head.)*
- 28 PAMELA: Like the one on your head? *(THURSDAY pulls it off and*  
29 *looks at it.)*
- 30 THURSDAY: Yes, just like it.
- 31 PAMELA: You know you could get yourself killed sneaking  
32 around Tough's place.
- 33 THURSDAY: Is he around?
- 34 ELLA: No, he's gone up to bed.
- 35 PAMELA: But we're here. *(She raises rolling pin. MIKE raises his*  
36 *spatula.)*
- 37 ELLA: *(Raises menu.)* I'll swat you again.
- 38 THURSDAY: *(Amused)* I see. Give me just a minute of your time,  
39 and I'll be on my way.
- 40 PAMELA: Fine. You've got yourself a minute. *(She allows him to*  
41 *enter.)*
- 42 ELLA: You really are cute. *(She takes hold of his arm.)*
- 43 THURSDAY: *(Clears throat.)* Aren't you Tony's sister?
- 44 ELLA: Is Mike's food bad?
- 45 MIKE: Hey!

- 1 THURSDAY: (*Pushes her off.*) Well, then, I'll be staying clear.
- 2 MIKE: People like the cannolis and the coffee.
- 3 ELLA: That's because Mama makes the cannolis and Pamela  
4 makes the coffee.
- 5 PAMELA: What do you want, Mr. Jones? (*THURSDAY takes a seat*  
6 *at the counter.*)
- 7 THURSDAY: I'm curious about a few things, that's all.
- 8 ELLA: I'm curious about a few things, too. If number-two pencils  
9 are so popular, why are they still number two?
- 10 PAMELA: Like what, Mr. Jones?
- 11 ELLA: And if you arrest a mime, do you tell him to remain silent?
- 12 THURSDAY: (*To audience*) It was apparent that the dame had a  
13 leak in her tire. I had to get rid of her. (*To ELLA*) Maybe you  
14 should go to bed before Tony realizes you're missing.
- 15 ELLA: Like I care what Tony thinks. My big brother's just a big  
16 fuddy duddy anyway.
- 17 MIKE: Who supplies you with glad rags and diamonds?
- 18 ELLA: Oh, fine. But one more thing.
- 19 THURSDAY: What?
- 20 ELLA: If I melted dry ice, could I take a bath without getting  
21 wet?
- 22 MIKE: Night, Ella.
- 23 ELLA: Night. (*She exits.*)
- 24 MIKE: I think Mama Mia dropped that one on the head when she  
25 was born.
- 26 THURSDAY: (*To MIKE*) So you work here?
- 27 MIKE: (*Looks down at filthy apron.*) What gave it away?
- 28 THURSDAY: Do you know anything about the letters Tony has  
29 been getting?
- 30 MIKE: Not really. But what I do know is if Tony gets scared off,  
31 I'll be out of a job, so I'm pulling for you, detective. (*Slaps*  
32 *his back.*) Well, I'm exhausted and I'm scrambling out. (*To*  
33 *PAMELA*) Lock up, will you?
- 34 PAMELA: Sure, Michael Angelo. (*MIKE removes his apron, puts on*  
35 *his hat, and exits out the front door. PAMELA and THURSDAY*  
36 *stare at each other. Their attraction is obvious.*)
- 37 THURSDAY: Can I get a cup of joe?
- 38 PAMELA: (*Pouring him a cup*) So why are you really here,  
39 detective?
- 40 THURSDAY: I'm trying to uncover who is out to get Tony. I  
41 wasn't really given the opportunity to scope the place  
42 earlier. Thought maybe I could now.
- 43 PAMELA: That's not it.
- 44 THURSDAY: What's not it?
- 45 PAMELA: Your reason for being on this case. You're here to get

- 1 something on Tony. No leopard changes his spots. Your  
 2 reputation precedes you.
- 3 THURSDAY: Chasing Tony lost me my job. I'm not stupid twice.
- 4 PAMELA: But you were once?
- 5 THURSDAY: Apparently.
- 6 PAMELA: So why help him?
- 7 THURSDAY: Fifty G's, darling.
- 8 PAMELA: That's disappointing, Detective.
- 9 THURSDAY: You can call me Thursday.
- 10 PAMELA: No, I don't think I will. *(Pause)* If money is your only  
 11 reason for being here, you need to leave this alone.
- 12 THURSDAY: What are you afraid I'll find? *(He steps towards her.)*  
 13 Should I haul you in? *(He grabs her wrist.)* What do you have  
 14 to hide, doll face?
- 15 PAMELA: Nothing. *(She snaps her arm back.)* I'm just warning you.
- 16 THURSDAY: Like you care about my well-being. I'm not buying  
 17 it.
- 18 PAMELA: It won't cost you a dime, detective. This is for free. Get  
 19 out while you still can, and maybe you won't get hurt.
- 20 THURSDAY: Funny how you knew where to grab the rolling pin  
 21 when you thought I was a predator. *(He leans into her.)* Is it  
 22 you? Are you a spy?
- 23 PAMELA: Shhhh, will you?
- 24 THURSDAY: *(Raises eyebrow.)* Am I warm, Miss De Luca? What  
 25 does Tough have on you that makes you want to bring him  
 26 down? After all, you're barely family. Am I right? *(She looks*  
 27 *over her shoulder.)*
- 28 PAMELA: You have a really big mouth, you know that?
- 29 THURSDAY: I'm just good at my job.
- 30 PAMELA: No, you're an imbecile. *(She stuffs a breadstick in his*  
 31 *mouth.)* Put that in your mouth so I can get a word in. I'm  
 32 not out to get Tony. Not in that way, anyway.
- 33 THURSDAY: How's that?
- 34 PAMELA: *(Deep breath)* I'm undercover.
- 35 THURSDAY: *(Stares at her.)* And you're really ... what? A pro  
 36 skirt? *(She slaps him.)*
- 37 PAMELA: I'm FBI.
- 38 THURSDAY: FBI? But you're a dame, a broad, a dish kitten, a  
 39 babe —
- 40 PAMELA: Who's about to kick you in the teeth if you don't hush  
 41 your mouth. *(He places his hands up.)*
- 42 THURSDAY: Fine, you're FBI. What are you doing working in a  
 43 dive run by the mob?
- 44 PAMELA: I was sent here to flush out Tony's dealings. To get  
 45 answers about his real business. And since I showed up on

1 his family tree, they sent me. No one seems to know what  
2 his racket is.

3 THURSDAY: And you never will. *(He leans forward.)* Take my  
4 advice and leave this one alone. I know. *(Then, to himself)*  
5 Trust me, I know. *(Back to PAMELA)* He's got connections all  
6 over Chicago. He'll ruin you like he did me.

7 PAMELA: But this is Chicago — just one city in the scope of  
8 things. I work for the federal government. He can't pay  
9 anyone to hurt me.

10 THURSDAY: You're pretty naive, doll. I know Tough. I'm betting  
11 he most likely would.

12 PAMELA: You think a lot of yourself, don't you, Mr. Jones?

13 THURSDAY: Not so much. *(He gets up and crowds her again.)* I  
14 think you're quite the looker for an FBI waitress.

15 PAMELA: And I'm thinking it's late. You need to leave, and I  
16 need to close up.

17 THURSDAY: Fine. *(He grabs his hat.)* Look, I found my hat.

18 PAMELA: Funny how it looks like the one you came in with.

19 THURSDAY: Yeah, funny. *(Beat)* Good night, Miss De Luca. *(Pause)*  
20 You be careful.

21 PAMELA: I can take care of myself.

22 THURSDAY: *(To the audience)* As she showed me to the door, I  
23 couldn't help but wonder if that was true. And oddly  
24 enough, I cared. No dame had turned my head in over five  
25 years. I'd better beat it before she had my full attention. *(To*  
26 *her)* Night.

27 PAMELA: Night. *(Lights fade as she locks the door behind him. If you*  
28 *haven't already served the entrée, consider doing so at this point.*  
29 *Salad plates may be cleared also.)*

30

31

32

#### Scene 4

33

34 *(Lights come up on NICO and DRACO, who are looking around.)*

35 DRACO: Nico, we shouldn't be here.

36 NICO: Relax. My family owns the joint.

37 DRACO: They don't accept you no more.

38 NICO: And I aim to change that. That's why we're here. It's a new  
39 day, Draco. A new day. *(Looks around.)* Just look at this  
40 place. My papa, God rest his soul, would whack my brother  
41 for what he's done to it. *(Spits.)* I won't rest until ... *(PAMELA*  
42 *enters through kitchen door.)* Pamela!

43 PAMELA: Nose, you really shouldn't be in here. Tony's in a  
44 mood.

45 NICO: Pamela, you're looking better than ever. If we weren't

1 family, I'd take you out on the town. *(Pause)* And don't  
 2 concern yourself with Tony. The Nose ain't worried. Your  
 3 pretty face shouldn't be either. Now how about some service,  
 4 eh?

5 PAMELA: Sure. What'll you have, Nico?

6 NICO: Hmmmm ... *(Flips through menu and hands it back.)* You  
 7 know, we'll try whatever you think is the best Italian cuisine  
 8 in the kitchen.

9 PAMELA: Are you sure you're not in the mood for dessert?  
 10 Mama just made spumoni ice cream.

11 NICO: Pasta, Pamela.

12 PAMELA: Sure, Nico. You're the boss.

13 NICO: *(Smiles.)* That's right. I am. *(She exits to the kitchen. ELLA*  
 14 *enters.)*

15 ELLA: Nico!

16 NICO: Ella! My beautiful sister. Come here and hug your brother.  
 17 *(She hugs him. PAMELA enters with pasta.)* Wow, you're  
 18 growing up — so tall and beautiful. Maybe I should start  
 19 coming around more, keeping an eye on you.

20 ELLA: I wish you'd come around more, but don't chase the boys  
 21 away. I like them.

22 NICO: It's a brother's job to chase the boys away. No one is good  
 23 enough for my baby sister.

24 ELLA: Tony does that already, and I'm lonely.

25 NICO: Good to see my brother has some usefulness.

26 ELLA: Does Tony know you're here?

27 NICO: No. Why don't you let him know?

28 ELLA: Because I haven't left the room.

29 NICO: Why don't you leave it then?

30 ELLA: This will not end pretty. *(ELLA exits. THURSDAY enters and*  
 31 *takes a seat at the stool. He seems very interested in the fact that*  
 32 *NICO is there. GUIDO and LEO enter through outside door.*  
 33 *PAMELA stays back.)*

34 THURSDAY: *(To audience)* As I took in the scene before me, I  
 35 couldn't help but wonder what was about to go down. *(He*  
 36 *glances at his watch.)* Almost noon.

37 DRACO: You know we shouldn't be here.

38 NICO: Say that again, and I'll cut you out of the family tree.

39 DRACO: *(Hands up)* My lips are sealed.

40 NICO: We have every right to be here. It's Tony that should be  
 41 disposed of. Capisce? *(LEO walks over to NICO.)*

42 LEO: You got a lot of nerve showing your face in here.

43 NICO: Look who's talking.

44 LEO: Now, breeze on out of here before I have Guido break you  
 45 in two.

- 1 GUIDO: (*Cracks his knuckles.*) Just give me the order, boss.
- 2 NICO: Fine. No violence. Wouldn't want to ruin my family's  
3 carpet with your blood. Just give something to your boss  
4 from me. A present, so to speak. (*DRACO hands LEO a*  
5 *wrapped-up newspaper with a fish inside.*) Tell him we'll be  
6 talking real soon. (*NICO snaps at DRACO.*) Let's go. (*THEY*  
7 *exit. LEO opens the newspaper and holds the fish up for the*  
8 *audience to see. PAMELA steps forward. THURSDAY walks up*  
9 *behind him. ELLA enters.*)
- 10 ELLA: Oh, I missed saying good-bye to Nico. (*Sees fish.*) What's  
11 with the dead fish?
- 12 PAMELA: Swimming with the fishes. It's a message.
- 13 ELLA: Oh, I thought it was a replacement for Mike's pasta.
- 14 MIKE: (*From Backstage*) I heard that! (*LEO exits out the front door,*  
15 *angry.*)
- 16 GUIDO: What are you doing back here, copper?
- 17 THURSDAY: (*To GUIDO*) I'm here to meet with your boss. Can  
18 you fetch him? (*GUIDO exits.*) Good dog. (*PAMELA approaches*  
19 *him.*) So, what do you make of the fish? Do think Nico is  
20 going to make a move?
- 21 PAMELA: Pretty bold move.
- 22 THURSDAY: But effective. If he gets Tony out of the way, there's  
23 nothing stopping him from taking over.
- 24 PAMELA: Except the law. He can't dangle a fish in Tony's face  
25 and then axe him. Everyone would be looking at Nose as the  
26 prime suspect.
- 27 THURSDAY: So he's too obvious.
- 28 PAMELA: Obviously.
- 29 THURSDAY: (*To audience*) Beauty and brains. Out of all the cities  
30 and all the cases, she had to walk into mine. (*GUIDO enters*  
31 *with a sucker in his mouth.*)
- 32 GUIDO: The boss isn't here.
- 33 THURSDAY: I'm sorry, what?
- 34 GUIDO: The boss is missing.
- 35 THURSDAY: I'm sorry, I don't understand you. (*GUIDO pulls out*  
36 *sucker. LEO enters.*)
- 37 GUIDO: Tony's gone.
- 38 THURSDAY: Why didn't you say so? (*To LEO*) Did he have  
39 anywhere to be today?
- 40 LEO: He was supposed to meet with you. (*VIVIAN enters,*  
41 *distraught, and runs to THURSDAY.*)
- 42 VIVIAN: I think Tony has been taken for a ride. Someone's  
43 kidnapped him! (*She faints and THURSDAY catches her. Lights*  
44 *out.*)
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*(PAMELA is cleaning up. THURSDAY enters and sits at the counter.)*

THURSDAY: How about some coffee?

PAMELA: You again?

THURSDAY: Admit it — you like me.

PAMELA: I like the zoo too, but it still stinks. *(She pours him a cup.)*

THURSDAY: I need to ask you a few more questions.

PAMELA: Can't figure this one out on your own, Detective? I told you ... walk away.

THURSDAY: Better yet, how about we partner?

PAMELA: I don't partner. Especially with a washed-up detective who has a foot in the sewer and works for rats with money.

THURSDAY: Listen here, you. This isn't just about the money.

PAMELA: Oh, yeah? Then why save a man who hurt you? Ruined your life? Why eat in his restaurant and take his money? You want something, Detective, and I intend to find out what.

THURSDAY: None of us are deserving of forgiveness, Miss De Luca.

PAMELA: Some more than others.

THURSDAY: And yet we get it freely, don't we?

PAMELA: What are you talking about?

THURSDAY: Ever been to Sunday school?

PAMELA: Ah, I see. Well, just because Jesus can look past Tony's indiscretions doesn't mean you can.

THURSDAY: Aren't we all called to be like him?

PAMELA: Jesus didn't take money to save the sinner. He did it for free.

THURSDAY: So you judge me because I took a payment?

PAMELA: I judge you for being here. Why are you here, Detective? Don't tell me you've forgiven Tony and his family for what they did to you. I won't buy it. You're hardly a saint.

THURSDAY: Listen, doll face, things aren't always as they seem.

PAMELA: Enlighten me, please.

THURSDAY: Tell me about Michael Angelo. What do you know about him?

PAMELA: You're not going to answer my question?

THURSDAY: Answer mine and we'll see.

PAMELA: I don't know much about him. He's not much of a cook, that's for sure. And definitely not Italian. I found out he's Portuguese.

- 1 THURSDAY: And yet he does all the cooking for a well-known  
 2 Italian restaurant. Doesn't that seem a bit odd?  
 3 PAMELA: No odder than you agreeing to do this case.  
 4 THURSDAY: You're relentless!  
 5 PAMELA: And you're stubborn! *(They stare at each other for a long*  
 6 *moment.)*  
 7 THURSDAY: *(To audience)* I didn't know if I wanted to hit her or  
 8 kiss her. Being around her made my heart beat faster and  
 9 my mind work slower. Dames! *(Looks up.)* Lord, you're going  
 10 to have to help me with this one. *(To PAMELA)* Fine. The  
 11 truth is, I've been hanging around this joint for months,  
 12 hoping that I would find evidence against this family. Miss  
 13 La Russo just gave me the green light, that's all.  
 14 PAMELA: So you're the one who's been sending the letters?  
 15 THURSDAY: Yes.  
 16 PAMELA: And you hit him over the head?  
 17 THURSDAY: No, that's the real case. I'm simply a conduit to get  
 18 the ball rolling.  
 19 PAMELA: I could turn you in, Detective. *(THURSDAY moves closer*  
 20 *to PAMELA.)*  
 21 THURSDAY: Yes, you could. But then we'd never know the truth,  
 22 huh?  
 23 PAMELA: I'm a good agent.  
 24 THURSDAY: Maybe that wasn't the truth I was getting at. *(He*  
 25 *leans in as if to kiss her.)*  
 26 PAMELA: *(Visibly swallows.)* What truth? *(He holds position for a*  
 27 *second, then pulls back, leaving her visibly shaken.)*  
 28 THURSDAY: I guess you'll have to trust me to find out. *(Lights*  
 29 *fade as he exits.)*

### Scene 6

- 34 *(This scene takes place in the audience. The answers to the*  
 35 *questions are distributed to audience members before the play*  
 36 *starts. THURSDAY starts by talking to the audience, then mills*  
 37 *around looking for specific guests. See Appendix C for slips to*  
 38 *hand out to audience members.)*  
 39 THURSDAY: I knew that before I could figure out who was out  
 40 to get Tony, I'd have to talk to the people who knew him  
 41 best. *(Pause)* The first person on my list was Baby Face  
 42 Maruco. Baby Face was an old school mobster who wasn't  
 43 part of the Moretti family, but he definitely had some insight  
 44 into the business. Excuse me; is Baby Face in the room?  
 45 *(When audience member raises hand, THURSDAY goes to him.)*

- 1 Hello, Mr. Face. Mind if I call you Baby? (*Wait for answer.*)  
2 Great. What do you know of the Moretti family business?
- 3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: The Morettis are a sham. They're not who  
4 you think they are. Their business isn't my business,  
5 capisce? Now if you'll excuse me, I'm eating my dinner.
- 6 THURSDAY: Thank you for your time. (*To audience*) I could tell I  
7 wasn't going to get far with the crime boss and figured I'd  
8 better try another route. The next person on my list was  
9 Liza Lemon. She was a maid in the family home for years  
10 and knew the brothers well. Has anyone seen Ms. Lemon?  
11 (*Crosses to audience member who raises her hand.*) Hello, Ms.  
12 Lemon. I wondered if you could answer a few questions for  
13 me. (*Waits for response.*) You knew the Moretti brothers pretty  
14 well. Can you explain what happened to Nico and Tony?  
15 What caused them to go their separate ways and start this  
16 war?
- 17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Tony, being the eldest son, inherited the  
18 business from his father, even though Nico was the better  
19 choice. They had a falling out over who should run it.
- 20 THURSDAY: Thank you, Ms. Lemon. (*To audience*) I checked off  
21 another name and moved onto the next: Jelly Bean Permetti.  
22 (*Crosses to audience member who raises hand.*) Hello, Mr.  
23 Permetti. I hear you did some time with Guido, the Moretti's  
24 bodyguard. Can you tell me about him?
- 25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ah, old Guido. Very loyal dog. He'll do  
26 almost anything his boss tells him to do. Hey, are you here  
27 to arrest me? 'Cause I ain't going back to the slammer.
- 28 THURSDAY: No, no. Just need information, that's all. Enjoy your  
29 dessert. (*To audience*) The look in his eye made me realize I  
30 needed to check my list and move on. The next up was the  
31 owner of the Blue Lounge, Paula Blue. The woman owned  
32 the joint from when her late husband passed on. Is Ms. Blue  
33 in the audience tonight? (*Moves to the audience member that*  
34 *raises her hand.*) Good evening, Ms. Blue. I understand that  
35 you are Miss Vivian La Russo's employer. (*Waits for response.*)  
36 Have you noticed anything unusual about her behavior or  
37 anything that would suggest she could be up to no good  
38 where Tony is concerned?
- 39 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She loves Tony, everyone knows that. But  
40 she's a gold digger. If the Moretti family business folds, she'll  
41 be long gone. She'll be on the side of the money. Always is.
- 42 THURSDAY: Interesting. Thank you. (*To audience*) The question of  
43 the family business was bugging me. I'd been led to believe  
44 they were part of organized crime. Mafia men. Those  
45 responsible for much of the debauchery in the

1 neighborhood. The more I talked to those who knew them,  
 2 the more I doubted that was true. (*Looks at list.*) I'm looking  
 3 for Christoff, the cook. (*Walks to audience member who raises*  
 4 *hand.*) Hello, Christoff. You used to work in Moretti's kitchen  
 5 until you were fired, am I right? (*Waits for response.*) What are  
 6 your thoughts on the kitchen staff being to blame for Tony's  
 7 disappearance?

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I wouldn't put anything past that Michael  
 9 Angelo. Did you know he isn't even Italian? Ah! But he gains  
 10 the most by Tony sticking around. Tony hired him, and trust  
 11 me, no other Italian restaurant owner would do the same.  
 12 Tony doesn't deserve the business, but he'll get what's  
 13 coming to him.

14 THURSDAY: I see. Don't happen to know what that is? (*Waits for*  
 15 *response.*) Well, I used to enjoy your lasagna. I hope  
 16 everything works out for you. (*To audience*) I only had one  
 17 more name on my list. I hoped it would give me more  
 18 answers than questions. Their old waitress, Kitty Lomore.  
 19 (*Moves to audience member who raises her hand.*) Hello, Kitty.  
 20 Do you remember me? You had Tony fire me from the police  
 21 department.

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: You can't pin that rap on me. Tony's  
 23 mama pulls the punches. She doesn't like you saying  
 24 anything bad about her son. If she doesn't like something,  
 25 she puts a stop to it.

26 THURSDAY: Yeah, well, thanks for nothing, doll. (*To audience*) My  
 27 list was empty, but my head was full of questions. I had  
 28 some thinking to do. I figured I should catch a few z's and  
 29 get my head on right. Maybe then I could begin to put the  
 30 pieces together. (*Starts for the exit.*) To me, the smart thing  
 31 would be to take a ten-minute break, use the restroom, refill  
 32 my cup of joe, and wait for the flashing lights. But then,  
 33 that's just me. (*THURSDAY exits.*)

34

35 *Intermission. Entrée plates are cleared and dessert and coffee may*  
 36 *be served at this point. Cast members circulate among the tables*  
 37 *and ask the audience members "whodunit." The intermission*  
 38 *should last about ten minutes.*

39

40

41

## ACT II

42

43 *Note: During the intermission, change the set over to color. Have*  
 44 *the actors' costumes in the last scene all have hints of color. If you*  
 45 *want to distract the audience from seeing the scene change,*

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1       consider having VIVIAN <sup>27</sup> sing in another location with only a  
2       spotlight and a piano.

3

4       *(Begin this scene when all dinner guests have their dessert and*  
5       *coffee. Have THURSDAY start somewhere else other than the*  
6       *stage. MAMA and ELLA are on the stage, knitting. PAMELA is*  
7       *cleaning the counter.)*

8       **THURSDAY:** After hours of studying my notes, the picture in my  
9       head began to take on some color, vivid and clear. *(Pause)* I  
10      wasn't positive, but I was sure. *(LEO and GUIDO enter through*  
11      *outside door.)*

12      **LEO:** What is the meaning of this? I run the family now. How can  
13      he call a meeting? He's nobody. Nothing.

14      **GUIDO:** *(Mumbles.)* I don't know, boss. *(VIVIAN enters dramatically.*  
15      *No one notices, so she tries again. Finally, she throws herself into*  
16      *LEO's lap, and he pushes her off.)*

17      **LEO:** Viv, make yourself scarce, huh?

18      **VIVIAN:** I'm looking for Tony.

19      **LEO:** There's a new lion in town, and that's Leo.

20      **VIVIAN:** Tell me you didn't do it, Leo. Not to your own brother.

21      **LEO:** Do what?

22      **VIVIAN:** Hurt Tony. Get him out of the way so you could take  
23      over the business.

24      **LEO:** No, I'm just collecting what's been left behind.

25      **GUIDO:** Vivian, you want me to clobber the cat?

26      **VIVIAN:** *(Glances at MAMA.)* I'll let you know.

27      **GUIDO:** *(Cracks knuckles.)* Just say the word.

28      **LEO:** You better show respect, Guido. You're working for me now.

29      **GUIDO:** I work for Miss Vivian.

30      **LEO:** Yes, and without Tony running things, Vivian has no reason  
31      to be here.

32      **VIVIAN:** You better not have hurt Tony, you hear me?

33      **MAMA:** It no matter what Leo's done. The business ain't his  
34      anyhow. Nico be here shortly. He take-ah care of everything.

35      **LEO:** Mama Mia, what are you saying? Tony trained me.

36      **MAMA:** Trained you? To be what? Es stupido. Ah! Tony don't  
37      know-ah the first thing-ah about runnin' a ristorante. He's  
38      thick-headed like his papa.

39      **VIVIAN:** Is that any way to talk about your son? He's missing,  
40      and —

41      **MAMA:** Now-ah, you listen here. You come here flaunting your  
42      hourglass and thinkin' you know-ah my son. I diapered him.  
43      I know-ah my son. I know who can do good and who run  
44      mi' ristorante into the terra. Tony hadda his chance-ah.  
45      *(Angry, to GUIDO)* Esca della mia vista.

- 1 GUIDO: (*With sucker in mouth*) Yes, Mama. (*To VIVIAN*) Come, Miss  
 2 Vivian. She wants me to get you out of here.
- 3 VIVIAN: I thought you worked for me.
- 4 GUIDO: I do, but she scares me. (*To MAMA*) We'll be going now,  
 5 Ms. Mia.
- 6 MAMA: Fine. (*Looks at face.*) And spit that out. You look-ah like  
 7 you gotta the mumps. (*GUIDO starts to exit with VIVIAN, but*  
 8 *then NICO and DRACO enter.*)
- 9 NICO: Mama. (*Kisses her cheeks.*) How've you been?
- 10 MAMA: Good, son. (*To PAMELA*) Pamela, bring my prodigal son  
 11 una caffè. (*PAMELA exits. LEO and NICO pair off. THURSDAY*  
 12 *enters.*)
- 13 NICO: You got a problem, Mouth?
- 14 LEO: Yeah, you, Nico. You've got a lot of nerve showing your nose  
 15 in this joint again after your last visit.
- 16 NICO: You better not be shooting off your *mouth*, or I'll close it  
 17 permanently.
- 18 MAMA: Shutta your bocca, both of you. (*She looks at THURSDAY.*)  
 19 Keep famiglia stuff to the famiglia. (*Pronounced "fam-eel-ee-*  
 20 *ah."*)
- 21 THURSDAY: (*To audience*) The air in the room was hot, and I was  
 22 about to turn on the furnace. (*To group*) I'm glad you all  
 23 could make it.
- 24 DRACO: You here to arrest us, copper?
- 25 THURSDAY: Should I?
- 26 LEO: He ain't no copper. He lost his shield years ago.
- 27 THURSDAY: Yeah, and you ain't no mobster. But I still walk on  
 28 the side of the law that's about to set the Moretti family  
 29 straight once and for all.
- 30 DRACO: Should I pump him full of lead, boss?
- 31 NICO: (*To DRACO*) What lead, eh? (*To THURSDAY*) What you  
 32 think you're going to do? Arrest us for our pepperoni being  
 33 too spicy? Maybe a non-Italian like you should eat in a safer  
 34 neighborhood. Get yourself some Wonder bread.
- 35 ELLA: Pepperonis are scary, but pepperoncinis are worse. (*She*  
 36 *grabs her tongue but continues to talk.*) I burnt my tongue really  
 37 bad once.
- 38 THURSDAY: That's just it, isn't it, Nico? The family business has  
 39 been misinterpreted for years.
- 40 NICO: I don't know what you're talking about.
- 41 THURSDAY: Don't you? You and Tony have led everyone in  
 42 Chicago to believe you're both crime bosses.
- 43 DRACO: Now, Nose?
- 44 NICO: Why would I do that? We run a restaurant here.
- 45 THURSDAY: That's what you want everyone to think, but not

- 1 think, and that's what they think.
- 2 NICO: I don't want anyone to think about thinking anything.
- 3 THURSDAY: If they think that you're doing crime, but act like
- 4 you want them to think you're not doing crime, when in
- 5 reality you're only making them think you are doing crime,
- 6 then what they think is wrong.
- 7 ELLA: All this thinking is hurting my head.
- 8 NICO: You're asking for it, copper.
- 9 DRACO: (*Lifts the violin case and snaps it open.*) Now, boss?
- 10 THURSDAY: Go ahead. Open it. (*DRACO opens it and finds a violin*
- 11 *case full of recipes and a sandwich.*)
- 12 DRACO: Where's the heat?
- 13 NICO: (*Hits DRACO's head.*) There is no heat. The family business
- 14 is a restaurant. Whatcha thinking, eh?
- 15 THURSDAY: Plain and simple. (*Looks at PAMELA.*) It's just a
- 16 restaurant.
- 17 PAMELA: What? That can't be true.
- 18 THURSDAY: The more I dug around, the more I realized the
- 19 family feud started due to one man: (*Looks toward kitchen*
- 20 *Michael Angelo.*)
- 21 ALL: (*Together*) Michael Angelo?
- 22 MIKE: (*Pokes head out.*) Yeah?
- 23 PAMELA: He couldn't have done anything to Tony. Tony
- 24 protected his job.
- 25 THURSDAY: I didn't say he did anything to Tony. I said he was
- 26 the cause of this family feud.
- 27 MIKE: Ooooh ... (*Pokes head back in kitchen.*)
- 28 THURSDAY: (*To MAMA*) You're being awfully quiet, Mrs. Moretti.
- 29 MAMA: I have nothing to say to you. Why should I talk-ah?
- 30 THURSDAY: I think you have plenty to say. Like where Tony is.
- 31 MAMA: I'm an old woman. How should I know?
- 32 THURSDAY: Yes, but Cristoff and Guido are big strong men, loyal
- 33 to do whatever you say. Isn't that right, Guido?
- 34 GUIDO: Whatever she says.
- 35 MAMA: You can't-ah prove-ah nothing.
- 36 NICO: Mama?
- 37 MAMA: Nico, shush.
- 38 THURSDAY: When your husband died, he left Moretti's Italian
- 39 Restaurant to your eldest son, Antonio, even though
- 40 everyone knew that Nico was the one who helped you out
- 41 in the kitchen when he was a young boy. Tony had no nose
- 42 for business or how to make Italian cuisine. Nico tried to
- 43 talk his brother into letting him run the restaurant, and
- 44 Tony ousted him. Cristoff got wind of this and backed Nico
- 45 up. Tony then had Cristoff fired. Well, he needed a cook fast



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