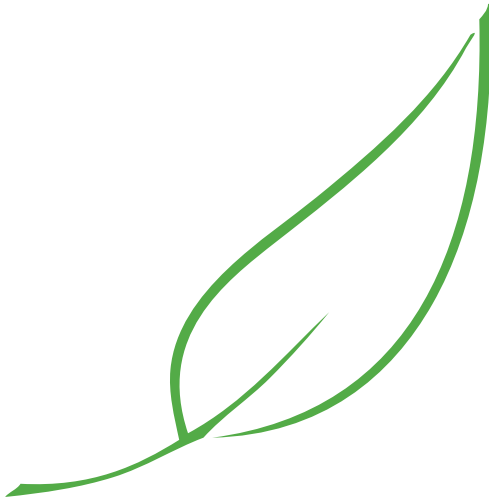


Lazy Daze Inn

By Steven Cross



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SYNOPSIS: No one visits Lazy Daze Inn any more, much less to spend the night. Is it because John, the owner's ghost, haunts the inn? Or is it because the place is just a roach-infested dump? One night, mysterious guests arrive with letters from John requesting their presence. This odd assortment of strangers, including a famous poet, two hillbilly sisters, and a home-sick space alien, seek answers to why they're together. Will John's ghost be able to execute his plan, settle old scores, and heal old wounds so he can finally rest in peace? A comedy about setting things straight.

CAST OF CHARACTERS*(8 female, 5 male)*

CLERK	Manager of the Lazy Daze Inn. An obnoxious smart aleck and petty thief
BOSS	Real name is John. He used to be the owner of the Lazy Daze. Unfortunately, he is now dead.
DAISY JANE MCCOY	The last survivor of the McCoy Clan. On the prowl for a man.
MARY LOU HATFIELD	The last survivor of the Hatfields. Also on the prowl. Enemy of Daisy Jane.
TRIXIE GOLDEN	An heiress
BILLY BOD	A would-be professional golfer who lacks one thing - talent
SHANIA REBA RHYMES	A would-be country singer
CORD MINOR	A one-time rock star; now, his brain is pretty much fried
MINNIE BUCKS	A wealthy widow who's received a lot of money when her husbands have died of that dreaded illness "Mysterious Circumstances"

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LOTTIE BUCKS	The very spoiled daughter of Minnie whose idea of a good time is anything having to do with a casino.
ISABELLE CLAIRE NOOZ	The boss' former girlfriend, now a journalist who uses a lot of "yellow" ink.
NATHANIEL WILSON ROGERS III	In high school he was a geek. Now, he's worth millions of dollars.
MICHAEL TRAVIS SPACE.....	An alien looking for his Ante (anti-gravitational air craft.)
DEE PREST	The mysterious young girl who will affect everyone in the story.

PROPS

ACT ONE:

A money box

Some bills

A little bell -- one used to ring for service

Two pipes, preferably corn cob

A suitcase for each guest, one befitting their stations in life

Two pistols

Registration pad and pen

A set of golf clubs

Putter, glass, and several golf balls

A small video recorder for Isabelle

A middle-sized card table and six folding chairs

A deck of cards

A note pad for I.C.

ACT TWO:

Each character has a letter

Minnie has a wad of money

A letter the clerk pulls from the front desk

ACT THREE:

Golf club for BILLY BOD

A suitcase such as what a salesman might use

The two guns the clerk confiscated in act one

A small pill in M.T.'s shirt pocket

Something resembling a diamond

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Lazy Daze Inn is a simple play to direct. It has one interior set only which consists of a desk stage left with some kind of cash box or register on it. A little bell would be nice to set on the desk, but it isn't essential. The other furniture consists of a couch and a chair center and right stage. One medium-sized card table and six, if you can find them, folding chairs are brought out on stage.

The few sound and light effects used in the play are simple and are explained in the text. The director can use flats or curtains for the back and side walls. If flats are used, one window flat stage right and one door flat stage left would help the overall look of the play. Plain flats can serve for the rest of the walls. One thing to remember in setting up this play is that the overall appearance is shabbiness. Nothing new and in good shape should grace the stage.

The characters' movements on and off stage are indicated in the text. The only possible problem in stage movement is the appearing and disappearing ghost of the boss. Walking away from the clerk and then having the clerk search for the boss should serve as an indicator to the audience that the clerk can no longer see the ghost. These movements are also detailed in the script.

Some general notes on costuming: The characters should dress according to their stations in life. Mary Lou and Daisy Jane could, for instance, wear overalls and straw hats. Billy Bod could dress in clashing golf wear. Cord might want to dress in black. Shania, in rhinestone and boots etc. Costuming can be effective without being bothersome or expensive.

ACT ONE, SCENE I

Interior lobby of a dilapidated motel -- morning

The furniture is worn and broken down. The registration desk, DL, has a bell on it. A shabby couch and two easy chairs are DR. Exits UC, R and L.

AT RISE: CLERK sits at his desk and counts some money. He slips one or two bills into his shirt pocket. BOSS --whose real name is JOHN-- saunters in R and stands by the desk.

BOSS: What are you doing with that money?

(CLERK is startled as HE sees his BOSS for the first time)

CLERK: I was, uh, taking out some petty cash to purchase some amenities for our guests.

BOSS: It looks like you were stealing it.

(BOSS takes the money from him.)

CLERK: I'm not a thief.

BOSS: On your first day of kindergarten, you stole a total of ten dollars from the other kids.

CLERK: I didn't steal anything. I contracted out my special protection services -- hey, how did you know...

BOSS: I have connections.

CLERK: I forget.

BOSS: Appearing and disappearing at will are one advantage of being a ghost. Of course, I would still be alive --

CLERK: Don't throw that in my face again.

BOSS: You killed me.

CLERK: It was an accident.

BOSS: Moving the ladder while I'm standing on it is an accident? Pardon me for being skeptical.

CLERK: The Grand Jury couldn't prove anything.

BOSS: I know the story: A bug landed on you. You swatted at it. I died. ***(CLERK shudders. HE looks to the R. DAISY JANE MCCOY and MARY LOU HATFIELD, dressed in bib overalls, wearing straw hats, carrying corn cob pipes and beat-up suitcases, enter.)*** Our first guests. I better go. ***(CLERK jumps, looks around, acts as if HE doesn't see anything. HE checks***

behind the desk, the furniture etc. as the ghost walks away and sits on the couch.)

CLERK: ***(after looking over the guests)*** Asylum escapees.

DAISY JANE: ***(drawls)*** Hello.

MARY LOU: ***(drawls)*** Hello.

CLERK: Did you two bounce out of your rubber rooms?

DAISY JANE: I begs your pardon; my room's made of logs.

MARY LOU: And the finest Arkansas mud.

DAISY JANE: And we both got an inside outhouse.

CLERK: Fascinating. Do you have TV?

MARY LOU: What's TV?

DAISY JANE: Seems like that's what my uncle died from. But we buried him real fast and burned his clothes.

CLERK: ***(CLERK takes a pen in hand)*** Names?

MARY LOU: Mary Lou Hatfield.

DAISY JANE: Daisy Jane McCoy.

CLERK: ***(HE writes, then suddenly pauses)*** Give me your guns. ***(DAISY and MARY LOU open suitcases, pull out pistols)*** I thought the Hatfields and McCoys were feuding?

MARY LOU: We was, but we done killed everyone else off.

CLERK: Why are you here? Together?

DAISY JANE: We need younguns.

MARY LOU: We're gonna follow that Biblical edict to be fruitful and multiply.

DAISY JANE: Our seed will number the grains of sand in the ocean.

CLERK: Give us strength.

MARY LOU: We done got enough of that in case we have to rassle our men.

(BOSS stands and walks toward the desk)

CLERK: Room 13. Fifty dollars, cash up front.

(They pay and then exit. CLERK puts some money in the drawer and stuffs some in his pockets)

BOSS: Why didn't you call an ambulance after I fell?

CLERK: ***(CLERK whirls to face BOSS, startled)*** Don't do that! That very morning you told me not to waste so much time on the phone. Besides, I took you to the hospital.

BOSS: And stopped at McDonald's on the way.

CLERK: I used the drive through, and I didn't eat until after you died. What else do you expect?

BOSS: CPR would have been nice.

CLERK: My mouth is not touching yours. Why are you still hanging around here anyway? Why not go on to that Holiday Inn of the skies? Why not just leave me alone so I can dump this place and go my separate way?

BOSS: Unresolved issues.

CLERK: If you have unresolved issues, go to a shrink and leave me alone.

BOSS: You are one of those issues. So are my guests.

CLERK: If any more of them come, it'll be a miracle. In fact, I'd say that you don't have a ghost of a chance to get them here.

BOSS: They'll be here.

CLERK: Just like you said we'd make millions of dollars when we bought this place.

BOSS: It's not the only mistake I've ever made. **(HE pauses and glares at the CLERK.)** Mysterious letters always work. So will the two I wrote.

CLERK: Two?

BOSS: One says, "Your past has not passed. You are invited to a special reunion with your past and a glimpse into your future."

CLERK: That's stupid.

BOSS: It'll work for two reasons. I signed it "President of the Letterman's Club, class of '78." I was quite a jock when I was in school.

CLERK: **(aside)** Now, you're just jock itch.

BOSS: And two, as I said, I have connections.

CLERK: Okay. So some of the guests knew you in high school.

BOSS: They're like you. They hate me. The other guests ignored my existence, and I'm going to teach them a lesson.

CLERK: Haven't you basically ignored everyone else's existence?

BOSS: Our next guest. Better go.

(CLERK jumps, looks around, acts as if HE doesn't see anything. HE checks behind the desk, the furniture etc. as the ghost walks away and sits on the couch.)

CLERK: I hate it when he does that.

(TRIXIE enters from R and stands at desk while CLERK looks around)

TRIXIE: How about some service?

CLERK: Try the Ramada Inn down the road.

TRIXIE: I wish I could. Have any of the guests arrived?

CLERK: I'm surprised you did. A night's lodging costs \$50.

TRIXIE: Do the roaches pay?

CLERK: We throw them in at no additional charge. Sign the register please. **(SHE does.)** You're Trixie Golden -- the heiress. Is there anything you'd like for me to do for you?

TRIXIE: Leave me alone, scumbag.

(SHE picks up her suitcase.)

CLERK: Your net value must be in the millions.

TRIXIE: And your net value is lower than roach droppings. Now, where is John?

CLERK: Go down the hall and to your left. Be careful; sometimes it overflows.

TRIXIE: The owner, idiot.

CLERK: The owner, idiot, is dead.

TRIXIE: Good riddance.

CLERK: I am the other owner, idiot. I also happen to be the manager of John's affairs.

TRIXIE: That should be quite an undertaking. Here's your \$50. I'm going to my room.

(CLERK pockets a few bills, puts the others in the register as TRIXIE exits UC.)

(BILLY BOD enters from R. HE carries a suitcase and a set of golf clubs. HE wears your typical golfer's gear, only it should be badly mismatched.)

BILLY BOD: I'd like a room please.

CLERK: Name please.

BILLY BOD: Billy Bod.

CLERK: One D or two?

BILLY BOD: I'm a golfer.

CLERK: I should have guessed: another athletic supporter. One D or two?

BILLY BOD: One D. That's me, Billy Bod. Great golf champion. Well, one day... hopefully.

(HE turns away and flexes his muscles.)

CLERK: Are you married?

BILLY BOD: My putter is my only love.

CLERK: In that case, take room 14. Right next door to room 13. Sixty dollars. Cash up front.

(BILLY pays and then exits UC. BOSS walks to the desk and stands right behind CLERK as HE puts some of the money in the register and pockets the rest.)

CLERK: Talking about hazards.

BOSS: That's four.

CLERK: **(CLERK whirls around and stares at him.)** You're going to kill me if you keep that up.

BOSS: We have a prophet, I see.

CLERK: This place never showed a profit.

BOSS: That's not the prophet I meant... never mind. You'll find out soon enough.

CLERK: How many total losers are coming to this place?

BOSS: Counting you, 11.

CLERK: It won't happen.

BOSS: Don't forget about the second letter.

CLERK: The one to the people who have no clue as to who you are. Yeah, I'm sure that one will work.

BOSS: I told them they'd been invited to a contest. If they won the contest, they'd get their greatest desire.

CLERK: Which is a lie. And you criticize me.

BOSS: I didn't lie to the Grand Jury.

CLERK: What's that supposed to mean?

BOSS: It means it's time to make amends.

CLERK: I don't pray. So you think this letter is supposed to work?

BOSS: You forget.

CLERK: I know. You have good connections. Put in a good word for me.

(SHANIA REBA RHYMES enters L)

BOSS: I haven't thought of one yet.

SHANIA: I sincerely doubt if I could find a good word for you or for this place.

CLERK: **(CLERK whirls around and sees her. BOSS goes to couch.)** Who are you?

SHANIA: Shania Reba Rhymes.

CLERK: You're not on my guest list.

(HE looks around and does not see BOSS.)

SHANIA: Check for my real name. Myrtle Jones. Shania Reba Rhymes is my stage name. Make sure you spell the last name correctly. R-H-Y-M-E-S. All my songs rhyme. One of these days I'll be a country star.

CLERK: You better work fast.

SHANIA: Are you implying I'm old?

CLERK: I'm not implying nothing. Look at a mirror, Myrtle. The skin on your face has sagged so low, it'll take a crane to pull it back up.

SHANIA: You've done great, too. This place is a dump.

CLERK: This dump will cost you \$60 a night. Even if you do make it rich one day, we still require cash up front. **(SHE pays.)**

SHANIA: I need to visit the John.

CLERK: Tough luck. John's dead.

SHANIA: I'm glad he's dead, but I need to use the bathroom.

CLERK: Down the hall and to your left.

(As SHE exits UC, CLERK pockets the money. CORD MINOR enters from R. HE carries a beat up suitcase.)

CLERK: What's happenin', man?

CORD: **(CORD looks out each exit like HE's looking for someone.)** No, man, Minor. Cord Minor. I don't remember... what's happening? Where am I, anyway?

(HE checks under the furniture.)

CLERK: Everyone knows this is nowhere.

CORD: **(CORD goes to the desk.)** No police?

CLERK: They don't come near this place.

CORD: Good. I'm a rock star. Where do you want my autograph?

CLERK: On a check. On second thought, make that a money order.

CORD: You got any of my records?

CLERK: No, the police station won't give them out.

CORD: Cops ain't cool, man. I meant my music, man.

CLERK: Yeah, man. I use them to torture clients who don't pay their bills.

CORD: Cool! I used torture in my concerts.

CLERK: When was the last time you had a concert?

CORD: About five years ago.

CLERK: Washed up now, huh?

CORD: No, man. I'm never washed up. Dirt goes with rock and roll. But people have said I'm ate up.

CLERK: Brain damage? **(CORD nods.)** What a shame. Looks like you didn't have much to spare. **(CORD nods. CLERK motions down the hall.)** Your room is down the hall. Number 8. Go in, relax a while and vegetate.

CORD: Wow, that sounds like a song.

CLERK: Go ahead, move along. But give me \$65 cash up front.

CORD: I only have \$65. How about a break, man?

CLERK: The only thing you'll get broken around here is bones when you don't pay your bill. Pay or hit the road.

(CORD hands it over. GHOST gets up from the couch and walks over to the desk as CORD exits UC. CLERK pockets half the money. MINNIE BUCKS and LOTTIE BUCKS enter from R.)

LOTTIE: ***(angrily)*** Mother, I wanted to go to Vegas.

MINNIE: If this works out, we'll own our own casino.

CLERK: Do you like to gamble?

LOTTIE: Give me \$1000 and I'm happy for hours.

CLERK: Coming here is a gamble. ***(laughs)***

MINNIE: A big gamble, I might add.

CLERK: Do us all a favor and don't multiply.

MINNIE: Well, I never --

CLERK: Then how'd you get this thing. ***(indicates LOTTIE)***

MINNIE: I wish I knew.

LOTTIE: You can always send me back to Daddy.

CLERK: Don't do that to Dad.

MINNIE: You're talking about my child, you impudent peasant! We happen to be very rich.

CLERK: Anything rich gives me gas. You want a room or not?

LOTTIE: Mother, I want to go to Vegas. ***(folds her arms across her chest like a pouting child)*** I want to gamble.

CLERK: Then eat in the kitchen -- although we don't have steaks.

LOTTIE: I hate this place.

CLERK: Everyone does. You want a room?

MINNIE: Not for long. I want a view.

CLERK: Fifteen has a view. \$200. Cash up front.

MINNIE: \$200!

LOTTIE: Cheap places have cheap rates. You get what you pay for. I told you that.

MINNIE: As long as it has a view.

(SHE pays and CLERK takes the money. They exit UC.)

CLERK: From fifteen there's a perfect view of the town dump.

(GHOST shakes his head in disgust, then smiles as the next guest, ISABELLE CLAIRE NOOZ, comes in.)

IC NOOZ: Don't lie to me, clerk. I know Cord Minor is here. This is just the kind of sleazy, run-down place he frequents. I'm surprised there isn't a thick haze of marijuana smoke.

CLERK: Just hang around until supper. When they start cooking, you'll get a thick haze of smoke. Who are you?

IC NOOZ: I.C. Nooz.

CLERK: **(looks around)** Where?

IC NOOZ: Where what?

CLERK: Where do you see news? Wherever it is, it's news to me.

IC NOOZ: I.C. Nooz is my name. Isabelle Clair Nooz. I'm a reporter.

CLERK: I can give you an exclusive on Cord Minor, but it'll cost you.

IC NOOZ: Cord Minor is a washed-up has-been. I don't have to pay anything to talk to him. Give me a room and tell me where John is.

CLERK: The room will cost you \$70.

IC NOOZ: It's a good thing I have an expense account. I wouldn't pay my own money to stay here.

CLERK: You have an expense account?

IC NOOZ: I'm a good reporter with the makings of a good story. Of course I have an expense account.

CLERK: Are you going to write about me? About the motel?

IC NOOZ: You and this, uh, motel are simply backdrops in a dramatic episode of the great human drama.

CLERK: Very nice. An expense account. Did I mention that with tax the room comes to \$90 a night?

IC NOOZ: Did I mention that I could tell several hundred thousand readers what a low-life, pondscum crook you are?

BOSS: I.C. never minced words.

CLERK: **(to BOSS)** Don't do that to me.

IC NOOZ: All right, but I expect your full cooperation.

CLERK: The room's \$20 a night.

BOSS: Ten, you moron.

CLERK: I'm not a moron. Ten bucks a night. The room is ten bucks a night.

IC NOOZ: I thought you said \$70?

CLERK: Don't pay attention to me. I'm a moron. **(to GHOST)** Just get out of my sight.

IC NOOZ: I've never seen such rudeness.

CLERK: I wasn't talking to you.

IC NOOZ: If you were talking to yourself, I'd suggest counseling.

CLERK: I'm sorry. It's just that things... **(HE looks at GHOST)** Are a little unsettled around here.

IC NOOZ: Where's John?

CLERK: John who?

IC NOOZ: The owner. The one who sent us the letter.

CLERK: I'm sure you'll be happy to know... **(HE pauses, looks at GHOST, smiles)** That jerk is dead.

IC NOOZ: Oh, no!

(SHE covers her face and runs off stage UC.)

CLERK: What was that all about?

BOSS: I'm not sure.

CLERK: She acted like she didn't hate you.

BOSS: She didn't. Izzy was the only girl I really ever loved. I thought she loved me too, but ... it didn't work out.

CLERK: Oh, such a tale of misery between the boss and his Miss Izzy.

BOSS: Shut up. Here's our final guest. Goodbye.

(CLERK looks around, doesn't see anything. NATHANIEL WILSON ROGERS III enters R.)

CLERK: Could I help you?

NATE: I'm Nathaniel Wilson Rogers III. I need a room.

CLERK: Aren't you the motel millionaire?

NATE: Yes, and I owe it all to John.

CLERK: I'm his business partner.

NATE: If it weren't for that wretched piece of human garbage --

CLERK: We were never that close.

NATE: I'm sorry. I don't lose my cool often. Fortunately, when I do, my lawyers are usually able to get me off. I will rest and regain my composure. Then, I'll want to talk to John.

CLERK: John's dead.

NATE: How unfortunate. Then, I'll have to talk to you. ***(HE exits UC.)***

BOSS: Boy, he doesn't forget anything.

CLERK: ***(CLERK whirls around.)*** You're going to give me a heart attack.

BOSS: With your lifestyle, it won't take much to give you a heart attack.

CLERK: My lifestyle. All these people don't hate me.

BOSS: Not yet anyway.

CLERK: It looks like everyone but this Michael Travis Space guy has shown up.

BOSS: M. T. Space will show.

(On cue MICHAEL TRAVIS SPACE, dressed in outdated clothes, enters from R and walks toward the desk. HE looks a little lost.)

CLERK: What kind of loser is this?

M.T.: Hello, earthling.

CLERK: What's up, man?

M.T.: Not man. Alien.

CLERK: You're from another country?

BOSS: You won't believe this.

CLERK: **(to BOSS)** I don't believe you.

M.T.: I didn't say anything.

BOSS: He didn't say anything.

CLERK: Will you shut up?

M.T.: You are very uncivil.

CLERK: He's uncivil.

BOSS: M.T. can't see me.

CLERK: I forgot.

BOSS: Only you can see me.

CLERK: I don't want to see you.

BOSS: Are *you* in for a surprise.

M.T.: If you don't wish to see me, I will leave. Somewhere there is a nice person on this planet.

CLERK: Sorry. I was talking to myself. You're from another country?

M.T.: Bore.

CLERK: Must be in Africa.

M.T.: No. In the next solar system.

CLERK: **(CLERK pauses, looks at BOSS who laughs.)** Where's your spaceship?

M.T.: At the bottom of the ocean. I'm waiting for another Borin Anti-Gravitational Craft. Ante, for short.

CLERK: Well, M.T. Why not just phone home?

M.T.: The magnetic resonance satellite systems are down.

CLERK: Would you like a room then? Or do you want to sleep under the stars? Or perhaps on them? Or --

BOSS: Enough.

CLERK: Room 21. Ten bucks.

M.T.: What are bucks?

BOSS: Just give him a key.

CLERK: We'll bill you. **(M.T. starts to exit.)** That looks like all of the guests. **(DEE PREST enters from R and looks around. Clerk looks up and sees her.)** Except for one. Who's she?

BOSS: I don't have a clue.

FADE OUT

ACT I SCENE II

(Interior lobby of a dilapidated motel)

DEE: I'm Dee Prest. I need a room.

CLERK: I'm depressed too, but I work here. Getting a room will only make it worse for you.

DEE: I'm not depressed. I'm Dee Prest.

CLERK: Can't make up your mind, huh? Do you want a room?

DEE: Yes, I'd like a room.

CLERK: What in the world for?

DEE: Believe me, this slime bucket slop house is not my first choice.

CLERK: **(CLERK looks around and does not see BOSS.)** The room costs \$50 a night.

DEE: In your dreams. I won't pay a dime more than \$10, and if you try to charge me more than \$10, I will sue you for misrepresentation and I can also get the health department to inspect your roach-infected kitchen. Am I clear?

CLERK: Perfectly, enjoy your stay.

DEE: I'm sure I won't. In fact, I wouldn't even be here if I didn't have a good reason.

(SHE starts to exit but stops when SHE sees M.T.)

M.T.: May I help you, Miss...

CLERK: She's depressed.

M.T.: May I help you Miss Prest.

DEE: I'm perfectly capable of helping myself, you male chauvinist pig.

(SHE exits UC. BOSS again walks to desk. MT calls after her.)

M.T.: You are mistaken. I'm M.T. Space, Borin. **(exits UC)**

CLERK: Wonderful. Depressed and Borin'.

BOSS: I wonder what her reason is for being here. **(CLERK starts.)**

Never mind. Time to move on to phase two where all these folks get what they really need.

CLERK: Psychiatric care?

BOSS: Enlightenment. Follow me. We have to prepare the meal.

(As BOSS and CLERK exit, BILLY BOD with putter, glass, and several golf balls appears. HE sets the glass DC. HE putts; the first ball misses by a long way and bounces off the stage into the audience. The second does the same. DAISY JANE and MARY LOU enter from L as BILLY BOD putts.)

MARY LOU: A Man!

(The putt is terrible. BILLY BOD turns in terror as MARY LOU charges and then tackles him. DAISY JANE is right behind her.)

DAISY JANE: I saw him first.

(SHE drags MARY LOU off of him)

MARY LOU: I caught him. I keeps him till death do us part.

DAISY JANE: That ain't gonna be long.

BILLY BOD: You sows messed up my putt.

MARY LOU: Who you callin' a sow? ***(SHE kicks him. HE hops on one foot until DAISY JANE pushes him down. MARY LOU grabs his shirt.)*** Show some respect for your woman.

(SHE faces DAISY JANE.)

DAISY JANE: You know I love him more'n you.

MARY LOU: I loves him more'n I love my cow.

(BILLY crawls away.)

DAISY JANE: I loves him more'n I love my pigs.

(Out of reach, HE jumps up and scampers off.)

MARY LOU: I loves him more'n -- where'd he go?

(CORD MINOR enters. HE plays an air guitar and screams out a bit of song.)

DAISY JANE: Heavenly noise!

MARY LOU: Sweeter than the mating call of a bull moose!

(They both turn)

DAISY JANE: A man!

(SHE charges and tackles him)

MARY LOU: He's mine.

CORD: Not mine, man. Minor. Cord Minor. Do you want my autograph?

DAISY JANE: Just on a marriage license.

CORD: No way, man.

DAISY JANE: Since I ain't got no shotgun, I guess my fists will just have to do.

(SHE gives him an uppercut. HE falls on the couch and it tips over.)

CORD: Punk rockers! Cool!

(HE stands. MARY LOU knocks him down again.)

MARY LOU: Put up your dukes, Daisy.

(They circle around each other with fists up. I.C. NOOZ enters from L. SHE has a video recorder SHE talks into.)

IC NOOZ: Two groupies are fighting over Cord Minor. Both, uh... **(lying)** have blades. Cord lies in a drug-induced stupor. Blood flows in the sordid world of rock and roll. **(CORD wakes up and crawls off stage.)** The two frenzied girls have not noticed Cord has crawled away like a dog. They have lost touch with reality. The question is, how low will these people sink in their sleazy world?

(The girls finally notice CORD is gone.)

MARY LOU: You done let him get away.

DAISY JANE: Let's just up and retrieve him. **(They exit R.)**

IC NOOZ: This journalist will bravely follow these decadents into the sickening sludge of their cesspool existence. **(clicks off the recorder.)** This should be fun. **(exits R)**

(CLERK enters carrying a table. HE grunts and groans under its weight.)

CLERK: You could at least help.

BOSS: I'm a ghost. I can't lift things.

CLERK: Why don't we have a dining room?

BOSS: You never built it like you were hired to.

CLERK: Catering an expensive dinner is not good money management anyway.

BOSS: What do you know about money management? You're a thief.

CLERK: I could have cooked hot dogs or something.

BOSS: I don't want these people dying on me before

CLERK: I'm hurt.

BOSS: Not yet.

(CLERK sets the table up as DEE enters from R)

BOSS: Who is this girl?

CLERK: I don't know but she sure has a lot of problems.

BOSS: Find out who she is and what she wants.

CLERK: I don't care who she is or what she wants.

DEE: I don't care about you either.

CLERK: I wasn't talking to you.

(DEE looks around)

BOSS: They can't see or hear me unless the big guy wants them to.

CLERK: I don't want to see or hear you.

DEE: And I don't want to see or hear you. Just stay out of my way.

(DEE walks to the sofa and says under her breath) Freak.

(I.C. NOOZ re-enters)

DEE: Isabelle Claire Nooz. I've always wanted to meet you.

IC NOOZ: Who are you?

DEE: A fan. I'm Dee.

IC NOOZ: My nose for news tells me you're not here by accident.

DEE: I'm a journalism major. I'd like to observe you and interview you for the paper I'm writing.

IC NOOZ: How did you find me here?

DEE: I have a nose for news, too.

IC NOOZ: I don't do interviews.

DEE: Listen Ms. Nooz, you're my favorite journalist. I want to be just like you. May I at least watch you work?

IC NOOZ: Alright, but stay out of my way. I'm hot on a story. **(exits)**

CLERK: I hope you learn more from her than I learned from --

DEE: I don't want to learn anything from her. **(pushes past CLERK and exits)**

CLERK: I tried, Boss. Now leave me alone.

BOSS: I can see right through that story and your efforts.

CLERK: I can see right through you.

BOSS: Very funny. There's something I like about this Dee. She's feisty, she's devious, she knows what she wants. Like me when I was her age.

CLERK: She looks like you too -- ugly.

BOSS: Ugly is going to be your life if you don't get this table ready.

(GHOST exits R)

CLERK: I didn't like him when he was alive. I don't like him dead either. What was I thinking? **(exits)**

(LOTTIE, MINNIE, and M.T. enter from L. They sit at a table and LOTTIE pulls out a deck of cards.)

LOTTIE: Ante up. **(M.T. jumps to his feet, runs to R, stares into the sky)** Three hundred dollars.

M.T.: What are dollars?

MINNIE: We'll keep a tab.

M.T.: **(M.T. throws down his cards)** I have three ones and two one-oh's.

LOTTIE: Aces over tens!

M.T.: **(coming back)** Is that good?

MINNIE: Of course not. The rules say all your cards have to be different. You owe us 300 bucks.

M.T.: What are bucks?

LOTTIE: Never mind. Ante up.

(M.T. jumps up, runs R, looks up, and then comes back to his seat)

MINNIE: What do you have?

M.T.: None of mine are alike.

(HE throws his cards down. LOTTIE looks at her mother.)

LOTTIE: ...4, 5, 6, 7, 8 all in hearts.

MINNIE: A straight flush!

LOTTIE: That never wins in cards.

M.T.: Boring. Let's play baseball. I want to score.

LOTTIE: One more hand for 1,000 bucks. Ante up.

(Again HE runs to the R only to return disappointed.)

M.T.: I wish the antes would slow down.

LOTTIE: We'll play 21. The idea is to get as close to 21 as possible without going over.

MINNIE: Me first. **(LOTTIE deals her a card.)** Ten. All right. Hit me.

M.T.: What?

MINNIE: Hit me! Hit me!

M.T.: Strange.

(HE knocks her down. LOTTIE pauses and looks at her mother.)

LOTTIE: She's still in. **(SHE deals her a card)** Mother will stay at 19.
(SHE deals herself two cards) I'll stay at 20. **(She deals to M.T.)**
Ten. **(SHE deals another)** An ace!
M.T.: Is that good?
LOTTIE: Aces count as one. You have 11. **(SHE deals him another card)** A nine.
M.T.: We're tied.
LOTTIE: I had 20 first. According to the rules you have to take another card.

(SHE deals him another one)

M.T.: An ace. Twenty-one. I win. I will take Visa, Mastercard, or American Express. Don't leave home without it.

(MINNIE stands groggily to her feet. BILLY, CORD, DAISY, and MARY run across the stage and cross in the middle, then go in opposite directions. I.C. follows them. DEE stops as LOTTIE helps her mother exit UC.)

M.T.: Greetings and salutations, Miss Prest. How is this world treating you?
DEE: This world stinks.
M.T.: True. When I get home, I will have to change my nose filters.
DEE: I doubt if I'll ever go home again.
M.T.: Is your Ante gone too?
DEE: I never had an ante.
M.T.: No wonder you can't go home.
DEE: Come to think of it. I never had a home either. People stealing, killing, and hurting. People ditching their kids because they don't want to mess with them. Are there any good people left in this world?
M.T.: You seem to be okie dokie.
DEE: Don't kid yourself.
M.T.: Tell me more about you.
DEE: Is this a pick-up line?
M.T.: I could never pick you up.
DEE: At least you're honest.
M.T.: No, not honest. M.T.
DEE: I'm empty too.
M.T.: I thought you were Dee Prest.
DEE: You've lost me.
M.T.: No. You're still here.
DEE: **(SHE backs away from him.)** Are you crazy?
M.T.: No. I'm Borin.

DEE: I don't think you're borin'.

M.T.: On the contrary, I *am* Borin. Borin is a planet in the next solar system, and I live there... well, lived there, until I came here and my Ante sank.

DEE: The most interesting person I've seen in years and he's insane.

M.T.: I've wondered where I was ever since I lost my map. So I'm In Sane. Thanks, you have been very helpful.

FADE OUT

ACT I SCENE III

Interior lobby of a dilapidated motel

(CORD enters L. HE is out of breath and very worn out. I.C. NOOZ comes in from R. CLERK and BOSS are DR by the table and chairs.)

IC NOOZ: Cord Minor!

CORD: I know who you are now, Izzy. ***(SHE goes to him and shakes his hand. SHANIA enters L and watches this exchange.)*** It's been 20 years. Nice to see you. How are you, Izzy?

IC NOOZ: I'm fine, but what about you? How does it feel to be an aging, washed up, and untalented rock star?

CORD: Same old Izzy. I *am* old. So are you. *There's* an exclusive for you. Here's another exclusive. Unless I can find some new musical inspiration, I'm hanging up my guitar.

(HE turns away. I.C. goes toward him.)

IC NOOZ: What will you do with your life if you don't have your music? What do you say to the allegations that cocaine--

SHANIA: He says, "No comment." Just leave him alone.

CORD: Myrtle?

SHANIA: It's Shania now. You can't give up your music.

CORD: I don't have it anymore.

CLERK: ***(to GHOST)*** Did he ever have it? According to critics --

BOSS: Critics didn't know him when I did.

SHANIA: Sometimes creative people get a little stale; all we need is some fresh inspiration.

CLERK: Sometimes our food is a little stale, and all it needs is to be tossed in the garbage. You people are a little stale and should be tossed --

SHANIA: (**glares at him**) You can't let anyone discourage you, Cord. You were successful for a while despite what John said.

CORD: I hated him! I was gonna punch his lights out, but he died on us.

SHANIA: I'll never forget how he laughed at us when we played together in the school talent show.

CORD: That very day was the day I vowed to make it as a musician.

(I.C. sits in a chair and starts to write notes)

SHANIA: He was such a jerk.

CORD: If he was such a jerk, why did you start going out with him a week later? That's what really killed our act.

SHANIA: Oh. I hoped you'd forgotten that. He was a charming jerk. He always told me how much talent I had and how I didn't need you. I believed him. I'm sorry. It's 20 years late, but I'm sorry.

CORD: Apology accepted. We were great together.

SHANIA: Were. That's the key. (**TRIXIE enters from L**). Now it's your turn to apologize, Cord.

TRIXIE: If it isn't the wicked witch of the class of '78.

SHANIA: (**SHANIA whirls around and sees her**) Trixie! I can explain.

TRIXIE: (**TRIXIE goes up to her until they stand toe to toe**) What's to explain? You stole John -- my fiancée -- the only man I ever loved. You don't know how much I've wanted to slap you in the face. (**SHE turns away from SHANIA**) Lucky for you, I'm too dignified for that.

CLERK: Interesting. You stirred up this trouble?

BOSS: Yes. I was evil, and I loved it. I didn't care about anyone but myself.

CLERK: There are worse things--

BOSS: I'm a back stabber and a loser.

CLERK: Do you want me to find you a fan and a cooler?

BOSS: I've paid for my behavior, and I intend to change some things if I can.

SHANIA: I do apologize. It was a misunderstanding. (**SHE turns to CORD**) I think you owe both of us an apology.

TRIXIE and CORD: What for?

SHANIA: You know what for.

CORD: No, I don't.

TRIXIE: Neither do I.



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